

Know Your Numbers

A patient reference sheet for common health parameters | Dr. Harshini Makala, MD (General Medicine)

General adult reference ranges to help you understand your reports. Not a diagnosis. Ranges vary between laboratories, and your personal target may differ by age, pregnancy, and existing conditions. Your doctor sets your target, not this sheet. Bring this to your next consultation.

BLOOD SUGAR (DIABETES)

PARAMETER	HEALTHY RANGE	WHAT IT TELLS YOU
HbA1c	Below 5.7%	3-month average sugar. 5.7-6.4% is pre-diabetes; 6.5% and above is diabetes.
Fasting blood sugar	70-100 mg/dL	After 8 hrs fasting. 100-125 is pre-diabetes; 126 and above is diabetes.
Post-meal (2 hr) sugar	Below 140 mg/dL	2 hrs after eating. 140-199 is pre-diabetes; 200 and above is diabetes.

BLOOD PRESSURE

PARAMETER	HEALTHY RANGE	WHAT IT TELLS YOU
Blood pressure	Below 120 / 80 mmHg	120-129/<80 is elevated; 130-139/80-89 is Stage 1; 140/90 and above is Stage 2 hypertension.

CHOLESTEROL (LIPID PROFILE)

PARAMETER	HEALTHY RANGE	WHAT IT TELLS YOU
Total cholesterol	Below 200 mg/dL	Overall cholesterol. Can look normal while LDL is high.
LDL (bad)	Below 100 mg/dL	Clogs arteries. Lower is better, especially with diabetes or heart risk.
HDL (good)	Above 40 (men) / 50 (women) mg/dL	Protective cholesterol. Higher is better.
Triglycerides	Below 150 mg/dL	Blood fats. Rise with excess sugar, refined carbs, and alcohol.

THYROID, VITAMINS & KIDNEY

PARAMETER	HEALTHY RANGE	WHAT IT TELLS YOU
TSH (thyroid)	0.4-4.0 mIU/L	Controls metabolism and energy. High TSH suggests an underactive thyroid.
Vitamin D	Above 30 ng/mL	20-30 is insufficient; below 20 is deficient. Very common in Indians.
Vitamin B12	200-900 pg/mL	Low levels cause fatigue and tingling. Common in vegetarian diets.
Creatinine	0.7-1.3 (men) / 0.6-1.1 (women) mg/dL	A marker of kidney function.
Haemoglobin	13-17 (men) / 12-15 (women) g/dL	Low levels mean anaemia, a common cause of tiredness.

BODY MEASUREMENTS (INDIA-SPECIFIC THRESHOLDS)

PARAMETER	HEALTHY RANGE	WHAT IT TELLS YOU
BMI (Asian-Indian)	18.5-22.9 kg/m2	23-24.9 is overweight/at-risk; 25 and above is obese. Indian cutoffs are lower than Western ones.
Waist circumference	Below 90 cm (men) / 80 cm (women)	Belly fat predicts metabolic risk better than weight alone.

Note: for BMI and waist, South Asians face higher metabolic risk at lower numbers, so these thresholds are stricter than standard Western cutoffs. This is deliberate, not an error.

Important: This sheet is for general awareness only and is not medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Reference ranges differ between laboratories and individuals. Do not start, stop, or change any medication based on this sheet. Always consult your physician to interpret your own reports.