

Healthy Hypertension

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1. INTRODUCTION

Hypertension (HTN or HT), also known as **high blood pressure (HBP)**, is a long-term medical condition in which the blood pressure in the arteries is persistently elevated. High blood pressure typically does not cause symptoms. Long-term high blood pressure, however, is a major risk factor for coronary artery disease, stroke, heart failure, atrial fibrillation, peripheral arterial disease, vision loss, chronic kidney disease, and dementia.

Blood pressure is expressed by two measurements, the systolic and diastolic pressures, which are the maximum and minimum pressures, respectively. For most adults, normal blood pressure at rest is within the range of 100–130 millimeters mercury (mmHg) systolic and 60–80 mmHg diastolic. For most adults, high blood pressure is present if the resting blood pressure is persistently at or above 130/80 or 140/90 mmHg. Different numbers apply to children. Ambulatory blood pressure monitoring over a 24-hour period appears more accurate than office-based blood pressure measurement.

Lifestyle plays an important role in treating your high blood pressure. If you successfully control your blood pressure with a healthy lifestyle, you might avoid, delay or reduce the need for medication.

BENEFITS OF LIFESTYLE MODIFICATION

The BHS and international guidelines advocate diet and behavioural modification with all patients, regardless of weight, severity of hypertension, or intake of medication. The advantages include a significant drug cost reduction, a beneficial effect on other conditions, such as diabetes and hypercholesterolemia, and avoidance or delay of drug treatment with its potential for adverse effects.

Lose Extra Pounds And Watch Your Waistline

Blood pressure often increases as weight increases. Being overweight also can cause disrupted breathing while you sleep (sleep apnea), which further raises your blood pressure. Weight loss is one of the most effective lifestyle changes for controlling blood pressure. Losing even a small amount of weight if you're overweight or obese can help reduce your blood pressure. Besides shedding pounds, you generally should also keep an eye on your waistline. Carrying too much weight around your waist can put you at greater risk of high blood pressure.

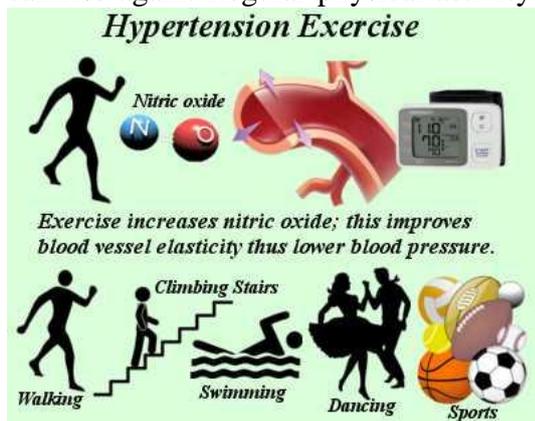


In general:

- Men are at risk if their waist measurement is greater than 40 inches (102 centimetres).
 - Women are at risk if their waist measurement is greater than 35 inches (89 centimetres).
- These numbers vary among ethnic groups. Ask your doctor about a healthy waist measurement for you.

Exercise Regularly

Regular physical activity — such as 150 minutes a week, or about 30 minutes most days of the week — can lower your blood pressure by about 5 to 8 mm Hg if you have high blood pressure. It's important to be consistent because if you stop exercising, your blood pressure can rise again. Regular physical activity can bring your blood pressure down to safer levels.



Eat A Healthy Diet

Eating a diet that is rich in whole grains, fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy products and skimps on saturated fat and cholesterol can lower your blood pressure by up to 11



mm Hg if you have high blood pressure. the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet.

This eating plan is known as

Reduce Sodium In Your Diet

Even a small reduction in the sodium in your diet can improve your heart health and reduce blood pressure by about 5 to 6 mm Hg if you have high blood pressure. The effect of sodium

intake on blood pressure varies among groups of people.



In general, limit sodium to 2,300 milligrams (mg) a day or less. However, a lower sodium intake — 1,500 mg a day or less — is ideal for most adults.

Limit The Amount Of Alcohol You Drink & Quit Smoking



Alcohol can be both good and bad for your health. By drinking alcohol only in moderation — generally one drink a day for women, or two a day for men — you can potentially lower your blood pressure by about 4 mm Hg. One drink equals 12 ounces of beer, five ounces of wine or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof liquor.

Drinking more than moderate amounts of alcohol can actually raise blood pressure by several points. It can also reduce the effectiveness of blood pressure medications.

Each cigarette you smoke increases your blood pressure for many minutes after you finish. Stopping smoking helps your blood pressure return to normal. Quitting smoking can reduce your risk of heart disease and improve your overall health. People who quit smoking may live longer than people who never quit smoking.

Reduce Your Stress



Chronic stress may contribute to high blood pressure. Occasional stress also can contribute to high blood pressure. If you can't eliminate all of your stressors, you can at least cope with them in a healthier way. Try to:

- **Change your expectations.**
- **Focus on issues you can control and make plans to solve them.**
- **Avoid stress triggers.**
- **Make time to relax and to do activities you enjoy.**

- **Practice gratitude.**

Monitor Your Blood Pressure At Home And See Your Doctor Regularly

Home monitoring can help you keep tabs on your blood pressure, make certain your lifestyle changes are working, and alert you and your doctor to potential health complications. Blood pressure monitors are available widely and without a prescription. Talk to your doctor about home monitoring before you get started.



Regular visits with your doctor are also key to controlling your blood pressure. Doctor may recommend you check your blood pressure starting two weeks after treatment changes and a week before your next appointment.

Cut Back On Caffeine

The role caffeine plays in blood pressure is still debated. Caffeine can raise blood pressure up to 10 mm Hg in people who rarely consume it. But people who drink coffee regularly may experience little or no effect on their blood pressure.

Although the long-term effects of caffeine on blood pressure aren't clear, it's possible blood pressure may slightly increase.

To see if caffeine raises your blood pressure, check your pressure within 30 minutes of drinking a caffeinated beverage. If your blood pressure increases by 5 to 10 mm Hg, you may be sensitive to the blood pressure raising effects of caffeine. Talk to your doctor about the effects of caffeine on your blood pressure.

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