

7 Ways to Control Your



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High Blood Pressure



Ideal blood pressure is under 120/80 mmHg!
High blood pressure is 130/80 mmHg or higher.

If you have high blood pressure, take these 7 steps to help control it:

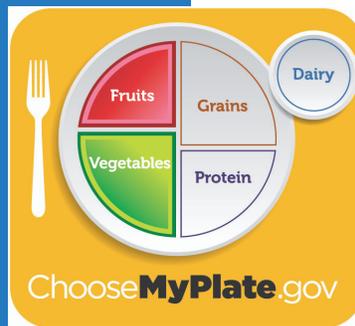
- 1 Eat more fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products
- 2 Eat less sodium
- 3 Be active 30 minutes or more a day at least 5 days a week
- 4 Lose weight if you are overweight
- 5 Limit alcohol
- 6 Don't smoke
- 7 Take your blood pressure medicine



Contact your local Extension agent at:

1 Eat more fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products

- Slowly increase your intake of fruits and vegetables to 8 servings per day (2 per meal and 1 per snack)
- Have 3 servings of non-fat or low-fat dairy foods per day (1 per meal)
- Choose whole grain breads, cereals, pastas, etc. instead of white bread, low-fiber cereals, and refined grains
- Eat no more than 6 ounces of meat, fish, or poultry per day (3 ounces or less per meal)
- Have only 2-3 small servings of soft or liquid margarine and vegetable oils per day
- Eat nuts, seeds, and dried beans 4-5 times per week



2 Eat less sodium



- Eat less than 2300 milligrams (mg) sodium per day (nutrition labels tell you how much sodium a food has!)
- Eat more fresh foods and fewer convenience foods, canned vegetables and soups, salty snacks, and cured meats
- Use low sodium or no-salt-added foods
- Eat out less often (restaurant foods

tend to be high in sodium)

Take the salt shaker off of the table

Slowly cut the salt added during cooking by at least half

The nutrition recommendations above are part of the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet, a diet proven to lower blood pressure.

3 Be active!

Get at least 30 minutes of moderate activity a day at least 5 days a week!



- Try moderate activities such as brisk walking, cycling, swimming, dancing, racket sports, house cleaning, lawn care, gardening, or walking a golf course
- Divide 30 minutes of activity into 10-15 minute periods if needed
- Try listening to your favorite music to make the activity even more enjoyable!

4 Lose weight if you are overweight

If you follow the DASH diet and become more active, you will likely lose weight. Losing weight will help you feel better and put less stress on your heart!

5 Limit alcohol

Drinking more than 1 drink per day seems to increase blood pressure.

1 drink =
12 ounces beer
5 ounces wine
1 1/2 ounces liquor

6 Don't smoke

Smoking makes your heart work harder and your blood pressure rise. Following the DASH diet may prevent weight gain when quitting smoking.

7 Take your blood pressure medicine

- If your doctor prescribes blood pressure medicine, don't stop taking it!
- Report any side effects like dizziness, nausea, or fatigue to your doctor. There are many medicines to choose from, so you can always try another one.
- With time, if you eat better and exercise more, you may be able to cut your medicine down, but only with your doctor's OK.



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