

Managing your high blood pressure



A conversation with your healthcare provider about your high blood pressure

- ▶ What is my current blood pressure and what is a healthy goal for me?
- ▶ Can I manage my blood pressure through lifestyle changes alone, or do I need medication?
- ▶ What dietary changes should I make to help lower my blood pressure?
- ▶ Should I monitor my blood pressure at home, and if so, how often?
- ▶ Based on my family history, am I at a higher risk for complications from high blood pressure?
- ▶ Are there any over-the-counter medications or supplements that could worsen my blood pressure or interact with my blood pressure medication?

Steps to lower your blood pressure

Eat a healthy diet

- ▶ Consider the D.A.S.H. (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) eating plan, which has been shown to reduce elevated blood pressure.
- ▶ Read food labels. Consume less than 2,300 mg of sodium a day.

Stay physically active

Your goal should be to engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate-level physical activity on most days of the week, such as brisk walking, bicycling, raking leaves or gardening.

Maintain a healthy weight

Losing even 10 pounds can lower blood pressure and has the most significant effect on those who are overweight and already have hypertension.

Limit alcohol intake

Drinking too much alcohol can raise blood pressure. Check with your healthcare provider about how your health may be affected by drinking alcohol.

Don't use tobacco

Quitting smoking isn't easy, but it's one of the best things you can do for your heart. And the results start almost immediately after your last cigarette. After a year without cigarettes, your risk of heart disease is cut in half.

Take your medication

If your healthcare provider has prescribed medication for your high blood pressure, make sure you take it as prescribed.

Get regular checkups with your healthcare provider

Visit your healthcare provider regularly and schedule preventive health screenings.