

Manage Your Weight

Excess weight is associated with hypertension. Try to maintain a healthy weight. If you need to lose weight, speak to a dietitian. Once you reach a healthy weight, maintain it by eating balanced meals.

Limit Alcohol Consumption

There is a strong link between hypertension and consumption of 4 or more drinks per day. It is recommended that you limit your consumption of alcohol to a maximum of 2 drinks per day. Men should not exceed 14 drinks per week and women should not exceed 9 drinks per week.

Healthy eating habits affect overall health!

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High Blood Pressure

Nutritional Approach



High blood pressure (or hypertension) increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, and kidney damage. It is often difficult to determine the exact cause of hypertension. While making dietary changes may not eliminate the need for medication, it can improve treatment efficacy and reduce the risk of developing cardiovascular disease.

DASH Diet

The DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet is an eating plan aimed at lowering high blood pressure. It focuses on increasing fruits, vegetables,



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You can limit salt intake by avoiding salty foods such as:

- Deli and smoked meats
- Chips, cookies, and salted nuts
- Large amounts of cheese (except cottage cheese and salt-free cheese)
- Vegetable and tomato juice
- Seasonings (celery/onion/garlic salt)
- Olives and pickles
- Canned soups, soup mixes, and concentrated broths



low fat dairy products, whole grains, chicken, fish and nuts, while decreasing fats, red meat, and sugar in your diet.

Reduce Sodium Intake

Eating too much salt can increase blood pressure. If your blood pressure is already high, decrease your sodium intake. The Canadian Hypertension Education Program recommends limiting sodium intake to 2000mg (2g) per day.

Tips to reduce sodium consumption:

- Choose low sodium, reduced sodium, or no salt added foods
- Choose fresh, frozen, or canned (low-sodium or no-salt-added) vegetables
- Eat fresh poultry, fish, and lean meats rather than canned, smoked, or processed versions
- Choose low sodium, ready-to-eat breakfast cereals
- Limit cured foods like bacon and ham, foods that are packed in brine including

- pickles, pickled vegetables, olives, and sauerkraut, as well as condiments like mustard, ketchup, soy sauce
- Cook rice, pasta, and hot cereal without salt. Cut back on instant or flavoured rice and pasta
- Rinse canned foods to remove some of the sodium
- Flavour foods with herbs, spices, lemon, lime, vinegar, or salt-free seasoning blends
- Use salt substitutes under medical advice only. (These substitutes can be harmful to people with certain medical conditions)
- Remove the salt shaker from your table
- Read the nutrition labels on foods to compare products. Review the sodium content and choose foods that contain less than 5% of the daily value. Foods with more than 20% of the daily value are considered to have a high sodium content

Increase Potassium Intake

Potassium appears to reduce blood pressure in those with hypertension. It is found in fresh foods such as potatoes, tomatoes, mushrooms, oranges, bananas, cantaloupes, dates, dairy products, nuts, whole grains, legumes, lean meats, peanuts, almonds, and dried apricots. Potassium can interact with several medications and can increase potassium levels in the blood. If you are taking blood pressure medication, talk to your pharmacist to make sure that you can safely increase your potassium intake.

