

for treating hypertension

What is hypertension?

Hypertension is the medical term for high blood pressure. Blood pressure is the force of blood on your arteries as it travels through your body. If blood pressure stays high over time, it can cause damage to your heart and other organs without any noticeable symptoms.

How is hypertension managed?

Your doctor may prescribe medication to treat hypertension, but **healthy lifestyle changes** are just as important in controlling your blood pressure.

Follow a heart healthy diet



- choose non-fried lean proteins such as fish, shellfish, skinless poultry, beans, peas, lentils, tofu, tempeh, low fat Greek yogurt and lean meats (tenderloin, sirloin, flank steak).
- Use low fat cooking methods including baking, broiling, grilling, steaming or roasting.
- Choose heart healthy fats found in nuts, avocado, vegetable oils, and fish. These fats help to lower blood pressure.

Use less salt

- High sodium diets cause the body to hold onto fluid which can raise blood pressure.
- If you have high blood pressure, aim for less than 1,500 mg of sodium each day.
- Packaged items will list the amount of sodium on the Nutrition Facts Label.



- 1 teaspoon of salt contains 2,300 mg of sodium.

Maintain a healthy weight with diet and activity



- Weight control is important, as being overweight can worsen blood pressure.
- If you need to lose weight, do so slowly through healthy eating and physical activity.
- Keep a food diary for each meal. Write down what you eat, how much, when, and why.

Manage stress



- Your body responds to stress by releasing hormones that can raise blood pressure.
- Take a break, listen to calming music, or practice deep breathing exercises to reduce stress.
- Walking, biking, and yoga can help manage weight and double as stress-relievers.

Limit alcohol

- Alcoholic drinks can raise your blood pressure. If you drink, do so in moderation.
- Limit to no more than 1 drink per day for women; 2 drinks per day for men.



Stop smoking

- Each time you smoke a cigarette, your blood pressure stays high for several minutes.



Eating

- Use the MyPlate method to help plan balanced meals. For more tips on healthy eating, visit – www.choosemyplate.gov.
- Remove the salt shaker from the table and use natural herbs and spices to flavor your food.
- Buy foods labeled low sodium, sodium free, or no-salt added.
- Treat meat as a portion of the meal, rather than the focus. Your portion of meat should be the size of a deck of cards, or up to the size of the palm of your own hand.



Exercise*

- Aim for 30 minutes of activity 5 days a week to strengthen your heart and control stress.
- Short on time? Break down the activities into quick, 10 minute sessions.
- Start slowly and find exercises that you like!
- If you love the outdoors, combine it with exercise and enjoy the scenery. Hiking, biking, tai chi, and tennis are fun ways to be active outdoors.
- If you love listening to books, enjoy them while using a treadmill or stationary bike.
- Use exercise to meet new people. Join walking groups or take fitness classes and dance lessons.

*Talk to your doctor before starting a new physical activity program.



Heart-Healthy Sample Menu:

Breakfast:

- 1 whole wheat English muffin
- 2 Tbsp natural peanut butter
- 1 medium banana
- 1 cup low fat milk

This menu, without snacks, provides:
1750 calories, 100 g protein,
45 g fiber, 1300 mg sodium

Lunch:

- Chicken Burrito ~
- 1 whole grain tortilla
- 3 oz. grilled chicken breast
- ¼ avocado, sliced
- ½ cup black beans
- Sauteed bell peppers
- Diced tomatoes or salsa
- 1 medium fruit

Dinner:

- 3 oz. baked salmon with dill sauce
- 1 cup baked sweet potato
- 1 cup of sauteed bok choy with 1 tsp. olive oil
- 6 oz. nonfat yogurt with seasonal fruit

Snack ideas:

- 1 oz. unsalted nuts
- 1 low-sodium string cheese
- sliced cucumbers
- 3 cups unsalted popcorn
- 1 cup melon or berries
- unsalted whole grain crackers
- baby carrots
- 1 hard-boiled egg