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How to keep Blood Pressure in a Healthy Range

High blood pressure increases the risk of heart disease and stroke, but your numbers are not fixed. Even if hypertension runs in your family, lifestyle changes can make a meaningful difference.

Your daily habits play a powerful role in managing blood pressure. Research shows that following heart-healthy eating patterns, staying active, and making mindful lifestyle choices can lower your risk and support long-term heart health.

Six ways to eat for healthier blood pressure

- 1. Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables.**
Produce provides antioxidants, anti-inflammatory compounds and potassium, all of which support healthy blood pressure. Beets, berries, spinach, tomatoes and bananas are strong choices.
- 2. Choose whole grains.**
Oatmeal, quinoa and brown rice are rich in fiber, vitamins and minerals. They also contain plant compounds that help lower cholesterol and stabilize blood sugar. Look for "100% whole grain" on labels.
- 3. Limit saturated and trans fats.**
Butter, full-fat dairy, palm oils and processed foods often contain unhealthy fats. Aim for less than 3 grams of saturated fat per serving and avoid trans fats altogether.
- 4. Select lean protein.**
Skinless chicken, turkey, fish and lean beef cuts labeled "loin" or "round" provide protein without excess fat. Fish is especially heart healthy because it contains omega-3 fatty acids.

continued on next page >>

Blood Pressure

5. Watch your sodium.

Too much sodium raises blood pressure. Most adults should stay under 2,300 milligrams per day, and people with hypertension should aim for less than 1,500 milligrams. Read labels carefully since packaged foods often contain hidden salt.

6. Include heart-healthy fats.

Replace saturated fats with monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. Omega-3-rich foods such as salmon, tuna, chia seeds, flax and walnuts can reduce blood pressure and improve blood vessel health.

Beyond diet, tips for lower blood pressure

- **Manage weight:** Losing even 5 to 10 pounds can make a difference.
- **Reduce stress:** Relaxation techniques, deep breathing and mindfulness can help.
- **Limit alcohol:** No more than two drinks a day for men and one for women.
- **Check for sleep apnea:** If you snore or often feel tired after sleeping, talk to your doctor about testing.

Take charge of your numbers. Track your blood pressure and follow up with your provider to keep your blood pressure in check.

Quick Tips for Healthy Blood Pressure

Eat smart

- Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables
- Choose whole grains like oatmeal, quinoa and brown rice
- Add potassium-rich foods (bananas, spinach, beans)
- Keep sodium under 2,300 mg/day (1,500 mg if you have hypertension)
- Avoid trans fats and limit saturated fats

Live healthy

- Lose 5–10 pounds if overweight
- Stay active with regular exercise
- Limit alcohol (2 drinks/day for men, 1 for women)
- Manage stress
- Get checked for sleep apnea if needed

Partner with your provider to keep your blood pressure in check.

Importance of Annual Physicals

It's easy to put off your yearly checkup when you feel healthy. But an annual physical is one of the most important steps you can take to protect your long-term health. These visits are designed to help prevent problems before they start. Your plan covers some preventive care services at little or no out-of-pocket cost when you choose an in-network provider.

Know your risk factors

Many people feel well but have risk factors they don't realize. Routine blood tests, blood pressure checks and physical exams can reveal early signs of conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. Identifying risks early allows you and your provider to take steps that may prevent future illness.

Stay current on cancer screenings

Cancer screenings can detect cancers or pre-cancers early, when treatment is often easier and more successful. Your provider will recommend screenings based on your age, medical history and personal risk factors.

Share your family history

Tell your provider about your family's health history. Even without a history of chronic conditions, you may still face risks. Because many diseases develop without a family connection, preventive care is important for everyone.

Keep vaccines up to date

Annual vaccines can prevent illness and reduce the risk of hospitalization. Your provider can review your vaccine record and make sure you're protected.

Catch subtle symptoms

It's easy to ignore problems like frequent headaches, poor sleep or ongoing fatigue. Your provider can help identify whether these issues point to something more serious.

Support mental health

Good health is not just physical. Your provider can screen for depression, anxiety and other concerns and connect you with resources. Annual visits are also an opportunity to talk openly about substance use or stress in a safe, supportive setting.

Connect to community resources

Your provider can link you to support services for food, housing, transportation and other needs that affect your well-being. Case managers and social workers often partner with providers to help patients access these resources.

Invest in your health

An annual exam creates a record of your health over time, making it easier to spot changes early. These visits are a chance to address concerns, review preventive screenings and plan for a healthier future.

Make your health a priority: Schedule your annual physical with your primary care provider.



Sleep and Your Health

Sleep is essential for overall health, influencing everything from mood and concentration to memory and energy levels. While occasional poor sleep is normal, chronic sleep deprivation can have serious health consequences.

Impact of poor sleep on health

Sleep is crucial for restoring and maintaining good health. When you don't get enough rest, it can affect various aspects of your well-being. Chronic sleep deprivation has been linked to a range of health problems, including:

- **Mental health issues:** Poor sleep can contribute to mood swings, anxiety and depression.
- **Cognitive decline:** Insufficient sleep can impair memory, concentration and decision-making.
- **Weakened immune system:** Lack of sleep can make you more susceptible to illness.
- **Increased risk of chronic conditions:** Sleep deprivation is linked to higher risks of heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure.
- **Weight gain:** Poor sleep can interfere with hormones that control hunger, leading to overeating and weight gain.
- **Reduced life expectancy:** Long-term sleep problems can affect longevity by contributing to various health conditions.

Tips to improve your sleep

If you're struggling with sleep, consider these strategies:

- **Stick to a consistent routine:** Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day.
- **Eat regular meals:** Avoid heavy meals close to bedtime.
- **Exercise early:** Be active during the day, not late at night.
- **Limit alcohol:** Skip nightcaps that disrupt deep sleep.
- **Watch caffeine use:** Avoid caffeine after 2 p.m. to prevent interference with sleep.
- **Keep naps short:** Rest 20–30 minutes and avoid napping late in the day.
- **Dim lights:** Lower light exposure before bed to support your natural sleep cycle.
- **Control stimulus:** Leave the bedroom if you wake up; return once sleepy.

Consult your doctor

If sleep problems persist, it may be time to consult your provider, especially if sleep apnea or insomnia is suspected. Avoid relying on sleep medications or supplements without professional guidance, as they may have unintended effects.

Prioritizing healthy sleep is key to maintaining good overall health.

Talk with your provider for personalized advice if your sleep problems continue.

Resources to Remember

Concierge Team

Call 866.434.1369

Available Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., to help you find a provider or schedule an appointment.

Henry Ford MyCare Advice Line

Call 833.262.1949

Staffed by nurses and supported by a physician on-call 24/7 for adult and pediatric medical advice, you have access to immediate guidance for unexpected health concerns at no cost.

HenryFord.com/MyChart

The Henry Ford MyChart online tool gives you access to your medical records, test results, a way to communicate with your provider and schedule/conduct virtual visits.

HAP.org/Find-A-Doctor

Check online to see if your provider is in-network (Tier 1) by visiting HAP.org/Find-A-Doctor.

HenryFord.com/YourHealthCarePlan

Learn more about the HFHS Advantage Tiered Access and CDHP Comprehensive HFHS Preferred Network plans.



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