

## Blood Pressure

Elevated blood pressure increases your risk of heart disease, stroke and kidney disease. The higher the blood pressure rises above normal, the greater the health risk. Early treatment and control can prevent future health problems.

### Classification of Blood Pressure

Category	Blood Pressure Goals	Treatment Recommendations
Normal	less than 120 / 80	
Hypertension - Diabetic	less than 130 / 80	Life Style Modifications + Medications
Hypertension	less than 140 / 90	Life Style Modifications + Medications

**Lifestyle Modifications** – If you are not diabetic and do not have target organ disease your doctor will probably begin with lifestyle modifications for 6-12 months.

- **Obtain/ Maintain a Healthy Weight** (BMI of 25 or less). Weight loss of as little as 10 pounds will reduce blood pressure in many overweight people with high blood pressure. (Average reduction of 5-20 mmHG per 10 Kilograms or approximately 22 pounds weight loss)
- **DASH Diet** (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) Eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables and low in animal fats and sugar has been shown to lower blood pressure (Average reduction of 8-14 mmHG)
  - \* Eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day, the more the better
  - \* Choose whole grain cereals, breads, pasta, rice
  - \* Choose low fat and nonfat dairy products
  - \* Eat lean meats (turkey and chicken breast, lean beef, fish)
  - \* Limit Red meat
  - \* Limit animal fats (butter, cream, fatty cuts of meat, sausage, bacon, whole milk products, ice cream)
  - \* Limit hydrogenated fats and partially hydrogenated fats (hydrogenated peanut butter, stick margarine, shortening)
  - \* Limit concentrated sweets (Sugar, candy, sweetened soda, Jam/ Jelly, syrup, and foods sweetened with significant quantities of sugar)
- **Salt limitation** – avoid adding salt to your foods at the table and limit highly salty foods such as salted snacks, cured meats, pickles, canned soup, canned vegetables, many processed foods and mixes. (Average reduction of 2-8 mmHG)
- **Exercise** – Work with your doctor to develop a plan to increase your physical activity. For many people with mildly elevated blood pressure, an increase in physical activity alone will return blood pressure to normal or optimal levels. Work up to walking 10,000 steps a day (5 miles); join a fitness center; or find some other way to follow the surgeon general's recommendation of 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity on all or most days of the week. (Average reduction of 5-9 mmHG)
- **Moderation of Alcohol Consumption** – Limit Alcohol intake to 2 or less drinks per day for men and 1 or less drinks per day for women. (Average reduction of 2-4 mmHG)
- **Do Not Smoke or use Tobacco products** – Smoking and other tobacco use significantly raises your blood pressure and damages blood vessels.

**Medications** – If you are diabetic or have target organ damage or your blood pressure is not adequately lowered with life style modifications alone, your doctor will probably prescribe blood pressure lowering medications.

- **Take your medications every day** as prescribed.
- **Let your doctor know if you are having trouble** taking your medication every day
- Understand that **medications are prescribed in addition to lifestyle modifications**