

HYPERTENSION

Take the pressure off with lifestyle.

Several factors contributing to hypertension, or high blood pressure, are correctable. For example, studies show losing weight and restricting salt can sometimes allow patients to lower medication.

If you are taking medicine for high blood pressure (BP), don't stop without consulting your provider. Discuss lifestyle measures you can try to further help control blood pressure. These might include:

- Weight loss – losing just 8-10 pounds reduces demand on the heart.
- Tobacco cessation – quitting can lower high BP and risk of heart attack.
- Salt restriction – current limit is 1,500 mg per day.
- Alcohol restriction – more than 1-2 drinks a day can raise BP.
- 5-9 servings of fruits and vegetables daily – their minerals and fiber may help control BP.
- Exercise – staying active can strengthen your heart and control weight.

Self-help:

You can measure your BP at home to track your progress. Your provider may be able to recommend a BP monitor, check its accuracy, and teach you how to use it.

Move to improve blood pressure. A brisk 30 minute walk every day can strengthen the heart muscle and its pumping action, which protects the blood vessels. Exercise also helps shed excess weight, reducing demand on the heart.

**If you would like more information, please contact
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