



advantage you

WESTERN HEALTH ADVANTAGE

HEART HEALTH 2017

I've been diagnosed with high blood pressure. Now what?

You can beat this "silent killer"—if you take some positive steps. Knowing you have high blood pressure is a great first step! Many people often don't know they have this condition until after they have had a stroke or heart attack. Now you and your doctor can piece together a plan to lower your blood pressure to a level you can live with—pun intended.

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Follow these **heart healthy** steps to meet your goals and become a healthier you

- Understand high blood pressure
- Know your blood pressure goal
- Know your (good and bad) habits
- Be your own champion
- Be a heart-smart consumer
- Lose the salt
- Eat healthier with the D.A.S.H. diet
- Follow medication dos and don'ts

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Understanding high blood pressure

High blood pressure causes the walls of blood vessels to become less elastic, making the heart work harder to get blood flowing to your organs, such as your eyes, kidneys and brain. Your blood pressure changes throughout the day. It is lowest while you're asleep and rises when you awaken. To learn more, visit the American Heart Association's (AHA) website at heart.org.

Test your blood pressure IQ by taking the quiz on page 11

Know your blood pressure goal

Partner with your doctor to decide the blood pressure goal that's right for you. If you have other health issues, such as diabetes, your goal may differ from someone who does not have this condition. For someone living with high blood pressure (HBP), the AHA has very specific guidelines.

AGE BAND WITH HBP	WITH DIABETES OR CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE?	RECOMMENDATION
Adults 18 to 59 years old	No	Less than 140/90
Adults 60+ years old	No	Less than 150/90
Adults 60+ years old	Yes	Less than 140/90

recommended guidelines from AHA

Be your own champion

Once you have a care plan to work on for achieving your blood pressure goal, it's time to commit to being your own champion by following these steps:

- **Take your medications** as directed by your doctor.
- **Check your blood pressure** at home or at a local pharmacy and keep a written record to share with your doctor at each visit.
- **Strive to reach your ideal weight** and maintain a body mass index (BMI) between 20 and 25.
- **Exercise at least 30 minutes** a day, 5 days per week.

Be a heart-smart consumer

Being a heart-smart consumer is important when you have HBP. Read food labels and before long, you will be a heart-smart consumer! Learn more at heart.org/heartorg/gettinghealthy.

Know your (good and not so good) habits



Habits can either help or hurt your efforts. Being aware of habits that can impact your blood pressure is another step in reaching that goal. Here are some things to consider:

Good Habits

- **Exercise** helps control blood pressure, manage weight, strengthen the heart, build endurance and reduce stress levels.
- **Eating more fruits and vegetables** has favorable effects on your body mass index, waist circumference and cholesterol level in addition to reducing the risk of stroke.

Not So Good Habits:

- **Table salt** (sodium chloride) can increase blood pressure by causing fluid retention and cause the heart to work harder.
- **Smoking or chewing tobacco** can raise your blood pressure right away. Need help quitting? Talk to your doctor or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW to find the help you need in your area.
- **More than two alcoholic beverages** a day can raise your blood pressure. Limit alcohol: Women one drink per day; men two drinks per day.

WHA Can Help You Quit

Look to mywha.org/quit for more information and direct access to the following resources available:

Digital tools: MyWHA Wellness, your personal health portal, offers smoking cessation tools and gives advice on how to quit by providing helpful articles and virtual coaching.

Classes: WHA members have access to smoking cessation classes sponsored by our medical groups, even those not connected to your PCP. Visit mywha.org/classes to learn more.



The truth about trans fats

In June 2015, the FDA released its final decision that partially hydrogenated oils are generally not safe in human foods.

Trans fats may be identified on food labels as “partially hydrogenated” or “hydrogenated” oils—hydrogenated soy or hydrogenated palm oil, for example.

How are they harmful? They raise the bad cholesterol (LDL) and lower the good cholesterol (HDL), which increases your risk for developing heart disease and stroke.

Track your sodium intake

There are apps for everything—even some that can help you track your sodium intake, such as Sodium Tracker, Sodium 101 or Sodium Cravings.



Lose the salt

Too much salt in your diet can cause fluid to build up in your body causing your heart to work harder and your blood pressure to rise. The AHA recommends less than 1,500 mg of sodium a day. Many canned and processed foods contain sodium as a primary ingredient and the sodium can quickly add up. Here are some tips on how to manage sodium intake:

- Choose lower-sodium foods
- Use alternative seasonings such as Allspice, lemon juice or other herbs and spices
- Taste before you salt
- Eat fewer processed, prepared and pre-packaged foods
- Remove the salt shaker from the table
- Follow the D.A.S.H. diet

Learn more about sodium and your health at: sodiumbreakup.heart.org

Eat Healthier with D.A.S.H.

Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension or D.A.S.H. is a nutritional plan, developed specifically for those living with high blood pressure, that reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke and heart attack. The plan is rich in fruits and vegetables, low in saturated fats, trans fats and sodium and limits added sugars.

Follow Medication Dos and Don'ts

If you have been prescribed blood pressure medicine, here are some general guidelines to keep in mind:

MEDICATION DOS ♥

- ♥ **Do follow your doctor's orders.** Consult your doctor before stopping your medication or making any change in the dosage.
- ♥ **Do stay informed.** Make sure you know why a medication is being prescribed and what the side effects might be.
- ♥ **Do follow instructions on the label.** Take your medications exactly as prescribed. Unless it says to do so on the label, don't cut, crush or chew your medication.
- ♥ **Do set up reminders.** Use a pill box and fill it at the beginning of each week. Digital tools can also be helpful: Express Rx is a free app for iPhone, Android and Blackberry. You can list all your meds and set reminders to take and refill them.
- ♥ **Do ask about generic drugs.** They cost less and do the job just as well as brand name drugs.

MEDICATION DON'TS ✕

- ✕ **Don't share your medications.** Your medications are just that—your medications. Sharing with others can risk your health, as well as the health of others.
- ✕ **Don't alter the dosage.** Take the amount of your medication exactly as directed. No more, no less.
- ✕ **Don't try to save money by cutting back.** Delaying a refill or decreasing the dosage or frequency isn't a good way to save money. Instead, consult your pharmacist or doctor to learn about ways to reduce medication costs.

Get regular lab tests

While you are on high blood pressure medicine, it's important your doctor orders routine lab tests to ensure there are no side effects that can impact your overall health. The lab tests check to see if your kidney and liver functions are within normal ranges. This is especially important if you have been taking high blood pressure medicine for a long time.

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With the Express Scripts mobile app, you can skip a trip to the pharmacy. From up-to-the-minute order status to a handy “medicine cabinet” to keep track of prescriptions, the app is an on-the-go pharmacy. The app is free to download from the iTunes App Store and Android Marketplace.

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- **Start Home Delivery:** Transfer eligible maintenance medications to the Express Scripts PharmacySM
- **Set Up Reminders:** Get an alert every time you need to take your medication and track when you've taken it

Note: You must have active Express Scripts prescription-drug benefits. Some members may not have access to certain features.





Talk With Your Doctor

Establishing a strong relationship with your primary care physician (PCP) is an important step in successfully meeting your blood pressure goal. Talking one-on-one with your doctor builds trust and leads to better results, quality, safety and satisfaction. Make the most of your appointments by being prepared to:

- **Ask Questions:** Write them down before your appointment. Your questions help your doctor and health care team determine the health care concerns that are most important to you.
- **Answer Questions:** Consider any differences in your health since you last visited. Your doctor will want to know if you have had any changes in your diet or sleep, sudden aches or pains, skin changes or growths, as well as your overall sense of well-being.

After an appointment, be sure to review any instructions or materials sent home with you by your doctor. Stay on track with these instructions. If any information needs explaining, it's okay to call or email your doctor. This will help to continue developing your relationship with your doctor.

Through your medical group, you have various options for staying connected with your doctor. Learn more at mywha.org/connect.

TEST YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE IQ!


Answer these questions and see how well you do:

1. Blood pressure changes throughout the day. It...
 - a. is highest while you sleep.
 - b. rises when you awaken.
 - c. is lower when you take a bath.
2. Blood pressure is measured in an upper number and lower number. These are called...
 - a. systolic and diastolic.
 - b. numerator and denominator.
 - c. a ratio.
3. A blood pressure reading below 120/80 is considered...
 - a. pre-hypertension.
 - b. normal.
 - c. too low.
4. If not treated, high blood pressure can lead to...
 - a. stroke.
 - b. kidney failure.
 - c. heart attack and heart failure.
 - d. all of the above.
5. Anyone can develop high blood pressure, but your chances are greater if you...
 - a. are overweight or obese.
 - b. are underweight.
 - c. are under the age of 45.
6. Why does reducing your salt intake help prevent high blood pressure?
 - a. It reduces fluid buildup in the body
 - b. It allows vessels to relax
 - c. It helps lower your heart rate
7. What can you do to control high blood pressure?
 - a. Get to and stay at a healthy weight
 - b. Exercise regularly
 - c. Take the blood pressure medicine as directed by your doctor
 - d. All of the above

SEE REVERSE FOR ANSWERS

BLOOD PRESSURE QUIZ ANSWERS

How well did you do?

1. **B is the correct answer.** Your blood pressure is lowest when you are sleeping and rises when you awaken.
 2. **A is the correct answer.** Blood pressure is always given as two numbers, the systolic and diastolic pressures. Both are important. Usually they are written one above or before the other—for example, 120/80 mmHg. The top, or first number is the systolic and the bottom, or second number, is the diastolic. If your blood pressure is 120/80, you say that it is "120 over 80."
- 
$$\frac{117}{76} \text{ mmHg}$$
3. **B is the correct answer.** A blood pressure reading below 120/80 is considered normal. In general, lower is better. However, very low blood pressure can sometimes be a cause for concern and should be checked out by a doctor.
 4. **D is the correct answer.** If left untreated, high blood pressure can lead to stroke, kidney failure, heart attack and heart failure.
 5. **A is the correct answer.** Anyone can develop high blood pressure. But your chances of getting high blood pressure are higher if you are overweight or obese.
 6. **A is the correct answer.** Sodium in table salt causes fluid retention, which can increase your blood pressure.
 7. **D is the correct answer.** Making lifestyle changes that include these actions can prevent and improve high blood pressure.

Delicious heart healthy recipes are just a click away!

You don't have to give up taste or cook separate meals for you and your family to enjoy healthy meals. We've included a sample recipe from the AHA that your whole family can rave about!

For more recipes, visit [Heart Healthy Recipes at heart.org](http://HeartHealthyRecipes.atheart.org).



Balsamic Glazed Fish

SERVES FOUR

- 4 4-oz fillet fish
 - black pepper
 - 3/4 cup balsamic vinegar
 - 1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
 - 1 Tbsp lemon juice
1. Heat oven to 450 degrees.
 2. Season fish to taste with pepper. Place on a cookie sheet or in a 9 x 13 inch casserole dish and bake 10-12 minutes.
 3. While the fish cooks, combine remaining ingredients and whisk well. Microwave covered on 50% heat for 2 minutes, stirring half-way.
 4. Drizzle glaze over fish and serve.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS per serving	
Calories.	165
Total Fat	4.0 g
Saturated Fat	0.5 g
Trans Fat.	0.0 g
Polyunsaturated Fat	0.5 g
Monounsaturated Fat. . .	2.5 g
Cholesterol.	49 mg
Sodium	73 mg
Carbohydrates	10 g
Fiber.	0 g
Sugars.	10 g
Protein	20 g
DIETARY EXCHANGES	
1/2 other carbohydrate,	
3 lean meat	

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Health & Wellness

WHA believes that you deserve every opportunity to reach your health and wellness goals. In addition to an online portal (see below), WHA members have access to a suite of health and wellness programs and resources.



WHA's online wellness program keeps your health status right at your fingertips. **MyWHA Wellness helps you set realistic wellness goals while providing the tools you need to achieve those goals.**

Your health and wellness portal at mywha.org/wellness is the central hub for all wellness program components. Once you create your new online account, you can get started by taking the wellness assessment. It will give you a wellness score along with a personalized report about your medical and behavioral health risks.

Within the portal you can set individual health goals, get personalized action plans, track your progress, access helpful health content and be part of a vibrant online community. With healthy recipes, videos, podcasts and informative articles, you'll find endless inspiration to help you reach your health improvement goals.

Discover the advantage of MyWHA Wellness at mywha.org/wellness



Gym and fitness center discounts

> **mywha.org/gyms** WHA makes the decision to be active a little easier through gym and fitness center discounts. Learn more by visiting a gym or fitness center from the preferred list on our website. When asking about special pricing, corporate discounts or benefits, let them know that you are a WHA member.



Preventive care resources

> **mywha.org/guidelines** Preventive guidelines are designed to help you make more informed decisions about your health. WHA wants you to know that by following these guidelines and working with your doctor you are taking important steps to safeguard your health. Guidelines include health screenings, tests and other services that are available to you at no additional cost. Coverage for WHA services depends on eligibility at the time of service.



Instructor-led classes and support groups

> **mywha.org/classes** You have access to most health education programs and classes sponsored by our network's medical groups, even those not connected to your primary care physician's medical group. You will find many classes, programs and/or support groups in these areas: fitness, heart and vascular, lung health, as well as smoking cessation. Unless otherwise noted, most health programs or classes are free, and you can join online. If you need additional assistance in finding a health education program or class, you can contact the phone number noted with each program description.



Healthy and delicious recipes

> **mywha.org/recipes** The benefits of a nutritionally sound lifestyle are countless and include decreased risk for and treatment of infections and disease, improved emotional well-being, healthy weight management and lengthened longevity.

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