

## How can I cut down on salt and sodium?

The easiest ways to cut down on salt and sodium in your diet are:

- ◆ Don't add salt to food at the table.
- ◆ Limit dining out.
- ◆ Use very little salt in food preparation.
- ◆ Avoid highly salted foods such as:  
*bacon, ham, sausage, pork rinds, chitterlings, canned or dried meats, lunch meats (bologna, hot dogs, etc.), gravies, bouillon, broths, canned soups, salted crackers and nuts, potato chips, corn chips, BBQ sauce, ketchup, chili sauce, prepared mustard, mayonnaise, olives, pickles, relishes, sauerkraut, foods with salt or sodium in the name (onion salt, garlic salt), monosodium glutamate (MSG), meat tenderizers, frozen dinners.*

All of the above foods are high in "hidden salts" (unless specifically labeled "low sodium").

## What if I'm on medication?

If you need medication to lower your blood pressure, take your medication as directed. Follow the suggestions above and make a reminder system so that you don't forget to take your medication. Ask your family to help you remember.

## Should I check my blood pressure at home?

Monitoring your blood pressure at home between doctor visits can help in blood pressure control. The American Heart Association states that upper arm measurement is the most accurate and recommends: "Make sure the monitor has been tested, validated & approved by the Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation, the British Hypertension Society\* and the International Protocol for the Validation of Automated BP Measuring Devices.

\*These references are provided for convenience only, and are not an endorsement or assurance of the entity or any product or service. Revised July 2010

# UNDER PRESSURE?

## Control and Prevent High Blood Pressure



High blood pressure speeds up the clogging of your arteries (blood vessels) which can lead to heart disease and stroke. Pre-hypertensive blood pressure can lead to high blood pressure if changes are not made in your daily habits. Even if you feel fine, you may have high blood pressure.

## What does the top number mean?

The top number is the **systolic blood pressure**. It measures the force when your heart pumps. If the systolic blood pressure is:

- ◆ 140 or above is a high blood pressure.
- ◆ 120-139 is pre-hypertensive blood pressure.
- ◆ 119 and below is normal blood pressure.

## What does the bottom number mean?

The bottom number is the **diastolic blood pressure**. It measures the force when your heart rests--between heart beats.

- ◆ 90 or above is a high risk blood pressure.
- ◆ 80-89 is a pre-hypertensive blood pressure.
- ◆ 79 and below is a normal blood pressure.

Your Blood Pressure	Normal Blood Pressure	Pre-hypertension	High Blood Pressure
	<u>119 or less</u> 79 or less	<u>120-139</u> 80-89	<u>140</u> 90

## What can I do to help lower my blood pressure (high or pre-hypertensive) or keep it normal?

- ◆ If you smoke, stop!
- ◆ Lose weight if you're overweight.
- ◆ With doctor's approval, try 30 minutes of brisk walking, bicycling, gardening or other moderate level physical activity most days of the week.
- ◆ If you drink alcohol, drink no more than one serving per day for women, and no more than two servings per day for men. One serving is equal to 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine or 1-1/2 ounces of hard liquor.
- ◆ The following D.A.S.H. diet can help, and may result in weight loss: (1600 calories)

Food Group	Number of Servings Daily	One Serving Equals
Grains and Grain Products	6	1 slice bread 1 cup ready to eat cereal, no sugar added ½ cup cooked rice, pasta or cereal
Vegetables	3-4	1 cup raw leafy vegetables ½ cup cooked vegetable
Fruits	4	1 medium fruit ¼ cup dried fresh fruit ½ cup fresh, frozen or canned fruit 6 ounces fruit juice
Lowfat or fat free dairy products	2-3	8 ounces milk 1 cup yogurt 1 ½ ounces cheese
Lean Meats, poultry and fish	1-2	3 ounces cooked meat, skinless poultry or fish (about the size of a deck of cards)
Nuts, seeds and dry beans	3 per week	1/3 cup or 1 ½ ounces nuts 1 tablespoon or ½ ounce seeds ½ cup cooked dry beans
Fats and oils	2	1 teaspoon soft margarine 1 tablespoon low-fat mayonnaise 2 tablespoons light salad dressing 1 teaspoon vegetable oil, such as canola or olive

- ◆ Cut sodium to no more than 2,300 mg/day. If you have hypertension, middle aged or older, and African American, try to consume no more than 1,500 mg of sodium per day and meet the potassium requirement with food. Some high sodium foods don't taste salty. Check labels for the lowest sodium brands and avoid foods that contain more than 480 mg of sodium per serving.

## What about salt substitutes?

Before trying salt substitutes, check with your doctor. They contain potassium chloride and may be harmful for people with certain medical conditions.

## Seasonings to Try Instead of Salt

FOOD	HERBS AND SPICES
Beef	Bay leaf, marjoram, nutmeg, onion, pepper, sage, thyme
Lamb	Curry powder, garlic, rosemary, mint
Pork	Garlic, onion, sage, pepper, oregano
Veal	Bay leaf, curry powder, ginger, marjoram, oregano
Chicken	Ginger, marjoram, oregano, paprika, poultry seasoning, rosemary, sage, tarragon, thyme
Fish	Curry powder, dill, dry mustard, lemon juice, marjoram, paprika, pepper
Carrots	Cinnamon, cloves, marjoram, nutmeg, rosemary, sage
Corn	Cumin, curry powder, onion, paprika, parsley
Green Beans	Dill, curry powder, lemon juice, marjoram, oregano, tarragon, thyme
Greens	Onion, pepper
Peas	Ginger, marjoram, onion, parsley, sage
Potatoes	Dill, garlic, onion, paprika, parsley, sage
Summer Squash	Cloves, curry powder, marjoram, nutmeg, rosemary, sage
Winter Squash	Cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, onion
Tomatoes	Basil, bay leaf, dill, marjoram, onion, oregano, parsley, pepper

**Other seasonings to try include:** Allspice, Almond Extract, Bay Leaves, Caraway Seeds, Chives, Cilantro, Cumin, Curry Powder, Garlic, Lemon Juice, Mace, Dry Mustard, Onion, Paprika, Peppermint Extract, Pimiento, Savory and Turmeric.