

# What you should know about your Blood Pressure?



## Information for You:

### What is blood pressure?

Your heart pumps blood around your body. Blood pressure is the force of blood against your body. This force is necessary to make the blood flow, delivering nutrients and oxygen throughout your body.

### What is high blood pressure?

High blood pressure, also called hypertension, means there is too much pressure in your blood vessels. This can damage your blood vessels and cause health problems. High blood pressure is one of the leading health problems in Canada. It causes strokes, heart attacks, heart failure and kidney failure. It is also related to dementia and sexual problems. Finding and treating high blood pressure early helps prevent these problems.

### How often should my blood pressure be monitored?

Whether or not you have high blood pressure, it is important to have your blood pressure checked regularly. High blood pressure has no warning signs or symptoms – which is why it is often called a 'silent killer.' Have your blood pressure checked at least once every year by a health care provider or more often if your blood pressure is high. Regular blood pressure checks help make sure that high blood pressure is diagnosed and controlled before it leads to serious health problems.

### What can you do to manage your blood pressure?

1. **Be physically active** for 30 to 60 minutes on 5 to 7 days a week. Try walking, biking, swimming, cross country skiing or any other physical activity that you enjoy. Remember that even a little bit of physical activity is better than no activity. Keep active.
2. **Choose the following more often:** vegetables, fruits, low-fat dairy products, whole grains and lean meat, fish and poultry. Limit fast foods, canned foods or foods that are bought prepared or those that are high in salt and sugar, saturated or trans-fat (such as shortening, palm or coconut oil and lard).
3. **Eat less salt.** In general the more processed a food is, the higher the salt content. Try not to add salt to your cooking and remove the salt shaker from the table. Avoid processed foods and eat less food at restaurants.
4. **Limit alcohol.** If you drink alcohol, limit yourself to one or two standard drinks a day, to a weekly maximum of 9 for women and 14 for men.
5. **Manage your weight.** If you are overweight, losing 10 pounds (5kg) will lower your blood pressure.
6. **Do not smoke.** Smoking increases the risk of developing heart problems and other diseases. Stopping smoking reduces your risk of dying. Living and working in places that are smoke-free are also important. If you smoke, a variety of treatments can help you stop.
7. **Reduce stress.** Taking steps to reduce your stress can help improve your general health, including your blood pressure.
8. **Take your blood pressure medication as prescribed.** Medications should be taken regularly and renewed as prescribed. Never stop medications without speaking to your health care provider first. Continue with lifestyle changes.

## Additional Recommendations (customized based on availability of store services):

- **Dietitian:** (ONLY SHOW FOR STORES WITH DIETITIANS) Meet with our in-store dietitian to learn about low-sodium food choices.
- **Home Blood Pressure Monitor:** Consider using a home blood pressure monitor.

## What you should know about your Blood Pressure?



- **Smoking Cessation:** (ONLY SHOW IF QUESTION ON THE LIFESTYLE TAB IS YES OR EMPTY) If you smoke, ask to set up an appointment for our smoking cessation program.
- **Optician:** (ONLY SHOW FOR STORES WITH OPTICAL DEPARTMENTS) Visit our Optical Department to set up an eye examination.