

Patient Advisory

Hypertension

About Hypertension

Hypertension, commonly known as high blood pressure, is a condition characterized by chronic increase in blood pressure, of at least 140/90 mm of Hg, over the normal level of 120/80 mm of Hg. Persistently high blood pressure increases patient's risk of developing heart disease, kidney disease, eye damage and brain damage.

Common Causes

- Hereditary factors- In individuals who have one or two parents with hypertension, high blood pressure is twice as common as in the general population
- Certain medications, such as birth control pills, cold remedies, decongestants, over-the-counter pain relievers and some prescription drugs
- Illegal drugs, such as cocaine and amphetamines
- Some people have high blood pressure caused by an underlying condition such as kidney problem or adrenal gland tumor. This type of high blood pressure, called secondary hypertension, tends to appear suddenly and cause higher blood pressure than does primary hypertension.

Diagnosis of the causes of

A medical history, blood pressure measurement and a physical examination are usually sufficient to diagnose the condition.

Call your doctor immediately if the following warning signs appear:

- Persistent systolic blood pressure recoding of more than 200 mmHG even after medication
- Sudden and severe headaches
- Symptoms of blurred vision or dizziness or nausea and vomiting
- Complaints of weakness of the limbs, slurred speech or tongue protruding to one side
- Sudden blackouts
- Confusion
- Loss of unconsciousness

Treatment

Treatment for hypertension includes lifestyle modification and dietary restrictions. Your doctor will start antihypertensive medicines if your BP is not lowered on lifestyle and dietary changes alone.

Your doctor would warn you against the side effects of some of the antihypertensive medicines. Side effects of some of the drugs are listed below:

- Beta blockers: Cold hands and feet, breathing difficulty and wheezing, aggravation of asthma, nausea, vomiting, constipation, tiredness.
- ACE-inhibitors: Low blood pressure when therapy begins, dry persistent cough, headache dizziness, nausea and bowel upset.
- Calcium channel blockers (calcium antagonists): Headache, dizziness, nausea, drowsiness palpitations and muscle cramps.

- Alpha-Blockers: Headache, drowsiness, nasal stuffiness
- Angiotensin receptor blockers: Headache, dizziness, muscle cramps, renal failure can occur in patients with compromised renal function.
- Adrenergic blockers: Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, loose stools, painful urination, weight gain.

Care and Prevention

You may follow some simple measures to prevent and reduce the impact of hypertension.

- Dietary changes:
 1. Follow a low salt diet.
 2. Include high fiber foods such as whole grains, fresh fruits and raw vegetables In your diet
 3. Avoid oily and fatty food

The table below summarizes recommended food and foods to be avoided.

Dietary recommendations		
Recommended food (low in salt content)		Foods to be avoided
Amla	Tomato ripe	Table Salt
Bitter gourd	Horse gram	Baking powder
Bottle gourd	Ragi	Sodium bicarbonate
Brinjal	Vermicelli	Fried foods
Cabbage	Wheat	Alcohol
Lady finger	Maida	Meat, egg yolk, full fat dairy products
Cucumber	Milk	Salt preserved foods such as pickles, ketchup and
French beans	Grapes	saucers, Highly salted foods such as potato chips,
Peas	Sweetlime	pappads, salted butter
Onion	Papaya	Bakery products such as biscuits, cakes, bread,
Potato	Orange	pastries
Yam	Fish	

- Lifestyle changes:
 1. Avoid smoking. Tobacco causes blood vessels to harden, which may lead to high blood pressure.
 2. Limit alcohol, as recommended by your Doctor
 3. Maintain a healthy weight. Weight loss is important for men who measure more than 40 inches and women who measure more than 35 inches around the waist. Your health care practitioner can help you calculate a healthy target weight.
 4. Reduce stress by relaxation techniques such as deep breathing
 5. Get your blood pressure checked periodically and take your blood pressure medication as prescribed, even if you feel healthy
 6. If you have diabetes or high cholesterol, consult with your Doctor and take appropriate measures to control them
- Physical activity and exercise:
 1. Exercise regularly; a minimum of 30 minutes of exercise 4-5 days per week or as recommended by your Doctor
 2. Physical activity includes many daily activities such as cleaning the house, playing with your children and walking briskly. Other possible sources of activity can include yoga and meditation.

Caution Notice

This information is not a substitute for a Doctor's advice. Only your Doctor can weigh all the diverse aspects of your condition and choose the treatment most likely to meet your needs.