

Treating hypertension

Hypertension is treated with a combination of lifestyle changes and medications. Taking medications alone without a healthy lifestyle can make it difficult to control BP.

Lifestyle changes

Lifestyle interventions that improve BP control are as follows:

- Low-sodium and high-potassium diet
- Adequate sleep of at least 7 hours daily
- Daily consumption of vegetables and fruits
- Stop smoking
- Reduce or stop alcohol consumption
- Avoid the use of illicit drugs
- Exercise at least five times weekly for 30 mins
- Weight loss

Medications

The WHO [strongly recommends](#) that you should start taking antihypertensive medications when your systolic BP is persistently at 140 mmHg or more. However, you need to start the drugs if SBP is between 130 mmHg and 135 mmHg persistently and you have other diseases, such as chronic kidney disease and diabetes mellitus, that increase your risk of complications. Initial treatment is with one drug, but a combination of 2 or more antihypertensive medications. A single-pill combination drug is preferable to improve medication adherence

Can hypertension be cured/ reversed?

Hypertension cannot be cured or reversed. However, it can be treated or managed.

It is extremely difficult to manage hypertension with strict continuous lifestyle changes alone. Stopping unhealthy habits such as eating diets high in sodium and processed foods, low consumption of vegetables, inadequate sleep, and stressful environmental conditions can reduce blood pressure. But it is advised to adhere to medications to sustain reduced blood pressure over time.