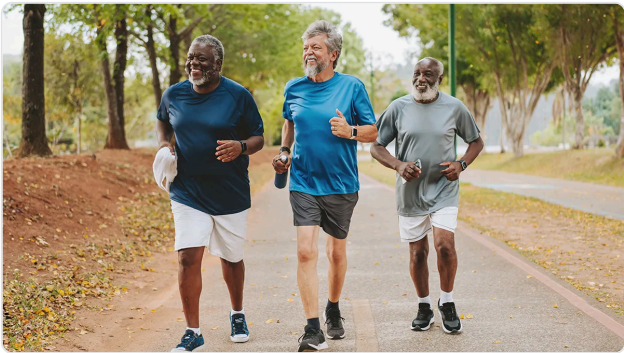**CDC** High Blood Pressure

# Preventing High Blood Pressure

For Everyone
DECEMBER 13, 2024

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**KEY POINTS**

- Talk with your health care team about eating a variety of foods that are rich in potassium, fiber, and protein and lower in salt (sodium) and saturated fat.

- Talk with your health care team about ways to reach a healthy weight, including choosing healthy foods and getting regular physical activity.

- Talk with your health care team about ways to stop smoking or reducing how much alcohol you consume.



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## Practice healthy living habits to help prevent high blood pressure

### Eat a healthy diet

Choose healthy meal and snack options to help you avoid high blood pressure and its complications. Be sure to eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Talk with your health care team about eating a variety of foods rich in potassium, fiber, and protein and lower in salt (sodium) and saturated fat. For many people, making these healthy changes can help keep blood pressure low and protect against heart disease and stroke.

The DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) eating plan is a healthy diet plan with a proven record of helping people lower their blood pressure. [1]

Visit CDC's Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity websites to learn more about healthy eating and nutrition.

### Keep yourself at a healthy weight

Having overweight or obesity increases your risk for high blood pressure.

Talk with your health care team about ways to reach a healthy weight, including choosing healthy foods and getting regular physical activity.

### Be physically active

Physical activity can help keep you at a healthy weight and lower your blood pressure. The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommends that adults get at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise, such as brisk walking or bicycling, every week. That's about 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week. Children and adolescents should get 1 hour of physical activity every day.

### Do not smoke

Smoking raises your blood pressure and puts you at higher risk for heart attack and stroke. If you do not smoke, do not start. If you do smoke, quitting will lower your risk for heart disease. Your doctor can suggest ways to help you quit.

For more information about tobacco use and quitting, see CDC's Smoking and Tobacco Use website.

### Limit how much alcohol you drink

Do not drink too much alcohol, which can raise your blood pressure. Men should have no more than 2 alcoholic drinks per day, and women should have no more than 1 alcoholic drink per day. Visit CDC's Alcohol and Public Health website for more information.

### Get enough sleep

Getting enough sleep is important to your overall health. It also helps keep your heart and blood vessels healthy. Not getting enough sleep on a regular basis is linked to an increased risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, and stroke. [2] Visit CDC's Sleep and Sleep Disorders for resources on how to get better sleep.

## Manage stress

People who have depression, anxiety, stress, or post-traumatic stress disorder over a long period of time may develop other health problems, including an increased heart rate and high blood pressure.

Recognize the signs and symptoms of mental health disorders and heart disease. Talk with your health care team about potential heart conditions in relation to your mental health.

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SOURCES

**CONTENT SOURCE:**
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion; About the Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention

REFERENCES

1. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. *Your Guide to Lowering Your Blood Pressure With DASH* [PDF – 792K] PDF . National Institutes of Health; 2006.

2. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. Sleep deprivation and deficiency. Accessed January 12, 2024. https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/sleep-deprivation-and-deficiency