

# Role Play: Lola's Family Works Together To Control High Blood Pressure

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Mila and Cesar are getting ready for bed. They are discussing Mila's younger brother, Ric, who lives with them and recently visited the doctor's office.

**Cesar:** Ric finally went to Dr. Cabaya for his annual checkup and found out that he has high blood pressure! The doctor told Ric that he has to eat fewer salty foods and become more physically active. I tried to tell him to follow Dr. Cabaya's advice, but he said he feels fine. He just does not want to change.

**Mila:** Do you think it would help him to talk to your brother Jose? Since his stroke, Jose has changed his eating habits and started walking regularly. Even he had a hard time getting started ... and he is a nurse!

**Cesar:** That's a good idea. Ric may listen to him. Let's invite Jose and his family over for dinner.

**Later that week, Jose and his family have dinner with Cesar, Mila, and Ric. Jose and Ric are talking before dinner.**

**Ric:** *Kuya*\* ("elder brother"), I hate going to the doctor. They always find something wrong! Now I have to eat foods low in sodium and do physical activity to control my high blood pressure. That makes no sense! I do not understand why I should be so concerned about this now. I feel fine.

**Jose:** It doesn't matter how you feel or look. Many people do not have symptoms when they have high blood pressure. That is why it is called the "silent killer."

**Ric:** Silent killer? What do you mean? I am strong.

\*It is common to address an older gentleman for whom you have a lot of respect as "*Kuya*," whether he is blood related or not.

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**Jose:** It means that it can go undetected if you do not have it diagnosed by a health professional and try to lower it to within the normal range. Look, I am a nurse and even I did not try to lower my high blood pressure. Then I had a stroke, remember? I am lucky that my friends recognized the signs of a stroke and called 9–1–1 right away.

If I had lowered my blood pressure earlier, my chances of having the stroke would have been much lower. I wish I had not had the stroke, but it was a big wake-up call.

**Ric:** Yes, that was scary. I was surprised, because you are only 5 years older than I am. But I am not too heavy. I play basketball all the time.

**Jose:** Ric, that is good. Then you should make those changes to your lifestyle. Maybe you could lose a little weight—I have lost 20 pounds (9 kilograms) since I got serious about lowering my blood pressure. I also take blood pressure medicine as my doctor prescribes.

**Ric:** Okay, okay, okay. I see I need to make the changes now. Thanks, Kuya!

**Jose:** Let's eat. Mila made her fish *cardillo*.