



Healthy Habits To Control Your Blood Pressure

To control your blood pressure:

- 1. Aim for a healthy weight.** Try not to gain extra weight. If you're overweight, try losing weight slowly, about 1 to 2 pounds each week.
- 2. Be active every day for at least 30 minutes.** You can walk, dance, play sports, or do any activity you enjoy. Being active for at least 10 minutes, 3 times a day, works when you're pressed for time.
- 3. Eat less salt and sodium.** Buy foods marked "sodium free," "low sodium," or "reduced sodium." Take the salt shaker off the table.
- 4. Eat heart healthy.** Eat more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Consider following the DASH eating plan.
- 5. Quit smoking.** Talk with your doctor about programs and products that can help you quit smoking. Also, try to avoid secondhand smoke (the smoke you inhale when others are smoking).
- 6. Manage stress.** To help manage stress, be more physically active; meditate; or talk with your friends, family, a mental health counselor, or your religious leader about how you're feeling.
- 7. Cut back on alcohol.** If you drink, have no more than two drinks a day if you're a man and one if you're a woman. Pregnant women shouldn't drink alcohol.
- 8. Take your medication.** If your health care provider has prescribed medicine for high blood pressure, be sure to take it as directed.
- 9. Get checked.** Get your blood pressure checked regularly. Write down and keep track of your blood pressure numbers.

