COVID-19 & High Blood Pressure

How to lower your blood pressure with behavior change

It is important to take extra care if you have high blood pressure, also known as hypertension, during the COVID-19 outbreak. Early research has shown that individuals with high blood pressure are more likely to get COVID-19, have worse symptoms, as well as die from infection. You may be wondering what you can do to help lower your risk. Below are some prevention and management tips to help lower your risk for high blood pressure.

Maintain a healthy weight
- To lose weight, increase your activity level
- Decrease your calorie intake, eating light and often
- Consider weekly weigh-ins to stay on track

Eat a healthy diet
- DASH Diet, rich in fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy food and whole-grains
- Limit saturated and trans fats in your diet

Limit your salt intake
- Aim for about 2000-2400 mg of sodium a day
- Avoid pre-packaged items and choose fresh foods

Exercise
- Get active and stay committed
- Find something you enjoy
- Start slowly and work up to 30 minutes per day

Manage stress
- Practice healthy coping techniques like deep breathing and yoga
- Get plenty of sleep

Provided by Ascension Wisconsin Employer Solutions

Limit alcohol intake

- ▪ Drink in moderation (up to one drink a day for women and up to two drinks a day for men)

Avoid Tobacco

DASH diet

DASH stands for: Dietary Approach to Stop Hypertension. The DASH eating plan has been proven to **lower blood pressure in just 14 days.**

Here are 5 simple tips:

1. Be spicy instead of salty. Flavor foods with herbs, spices, lemon, lime and salt-free seasoning blends.
2. Use fresh poultry, fish and lean meat, rather than canned, smoked or processed.
3. Eat moderate portions, and when snacking, eat fruit, vegetable sticks and unbuttered and unsalted popcorn.
4. Start your day with a breakfast that is low in salt and sodium.
5. Drink water or club soda instead of soft drinks high in sugar.