

## Top 10 Tips for Lowering Your Blood Pressure

### **First...HAVE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKED.**

It's important to keep updated on your numbers

According to the American Heart Association; blood pressure of less than 140 over 90 is considered a normal reading for adults.

A systolic pressure of 130 to 139 or a diastolic pressure of 85 to 89 needs to be watched carefully.

A blood pressure reading equal to or greater than 140 over 90 is considered elevated or high.

These sound tips compiled from the American Medical Association, and other resources may save your life.

#### ***1. Quit smoking.***

The deadly habit doubles your chances of heart disease. One scary study revealed that smokers have blood pressure levels up to 10 points higher than their non-smoking counterparts.

#### ***2. Reduce alcohol intake.***

It raises blood pressure. Two or more drinks per day could put you in the danger zone.

#### ***3. Cut back on sodium usage.***

Excess salt can lead to high blood pressure in some individuals. The Nutrition Board of the National Academic of Sciences suggests a range of 1,100 mg to 3,300 mg with 2,400 mg as the daily average. Perk up your food instead with spices, herbs and salt-free seasonings.

***4. If you are obese or overweight,*** take of a few—or lot-of pounds. Losing weight can help lower your blood pressure.

#### ***5. Eat foods high in starch and fiber.***

Fresh fruits and vegetables are beneficial for bringing those numbers down.

#### ***6. Make your diet low in saturated fat, total fat and cholesterol.***

Indulge in fat-free or low-fat dairy products. These diets are rich in potassium, calcium, magnesium and protein.

***7. If prescribed, take your anti-hypertension – medications*** used to treat high blood pressure.

And continue taking them until your doctor tells you otherwise.

Many sufferers need to take anti-hypertension the rest of their lives.

#### ***8. Get moderate exercise.***

Physical activity helps control weight and reduces blood pressure. But don't overdo it. Start out walking, swimming, jogging or riding a bike.

#### ***9. Learn to check your own blood pressure.***

When you buy a blood pressure cuff—the instrument used to measure blood pressure—have your doctor check it first to make sure the readings are accurate.

***10. Avoid over-the-counter medications:*** Especially decongestants.

The worst for people with high blood pressure are typically products that treat cold, cough or sinus problems.