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HOW TO REDUCE **BLOOD PRESSURE** WITH DIET

The Nutrition Unit

FOLLOW THESE 3 MAIN TIPS TO HELP LOWER YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

There is good evidence these changes can help lower blood pressure.



REDUCE SALT INTAKE

This is salt added to food, but also foods such as bread, baked beans, some breakfast cereals, and especially foods such as savory snacks, including chips and popcorn.

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size	300g	Servings Per Container	3
Amount Per Serving		Calories	250
% Daily Value*			
Total Fat	12g		12%
Saturated Fat	3g		15%
Trans Fat	3g		
Cholesterol	30mg		10%
Sodium	470mg		20%
Total Carbohydrate	31g		10%
Dietary Fiber	0g		0%
Sugars	5g		
Protein	5g		
Vitamin A	4%	Calcium	20%
Vitamin C	2%	Iron	4%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

A good idea is to check the nutrition label on a product and take a look at the sodium or salt content.

Adults should eat no more than 6g of salt a day (2.4g sodium). A can of soup might have 700mg of sodium which is nearly a third of the recommended upper limit. A single slice of pizza could also have more than 700mg of sodium.

The best method is to choose low sodium versions of products, where possible, such as soups, canned vegetables and cheeses. When you are dining out and do not have low sodium options, a good approach is to eat less of the high sodium food, and serve with a healthy salad or a plate of fruit for added potassium (refer to next page).



INCREASE POTASSIUM INTAKE

The effect of potassium on reducing blood pressure is still effective even in those with a high salt (sodium) intake.

FOODS HIGH IN POTASSIUM INCLUDE:



FRUITS

(including tomatoes)



VEGETABLES

(mushrooms, sprouts, squash, broccoli and avocado)



MILK AND YOGHURT

(there's no real difference between high-fat and low-fat varieties)



SALMON

(baked or broiled)



NUTS & SEEDS

(cashew nuts or sunflower seeds)



PULSES

(pinto beans or lentils)



WEIGHT LOSS

Losing weight will help with lowering blood pressure. Even as little as 3-4 kg can help. You can reduce body weight by avoiding snacks, reducing portion size, or following restrictive diets such as low-carbohydrate, low-fat or time restricted feeding.



See a member of our nutrition team for support to help you lose weight.

HOW QUICKLY DOES BLOOD PRESSURE CHANGE?

The good news is that if you can reduce your salt intake and increase your intake of fruits, vegetables, nuts and dairy, your blood pressure can change within one week!

OTHER METHODS THAT MIGHT BE HELPFUL

There is less evidence these are helpful, but they would not do any harm!



REDUCING ADDED SUGAR

This effect appears to be on diastolic blood pressure, not systolic. The sugar from fruits is not a concern – focus on the added sugar to processed foods (such as sucrose, corn syrup, dextrose, fructose sweetener).



BEETROOT

This vegetable (including spinach and green leafy vegetables) may help reduce blood pressure due to their content of nitrates.



REDUCING CAFFEINE INTAKE

Some people who drink caffeinated drinks regularly have high blood pressure. However, others develop a tolerance to caffeine and their blood pressure does not elevate. So if your blood pressure is high try cutting down on caffeine to see if your blood pressure reduces.

PLANT PROTEIN

Some studies suggest that eating more protein can help lower blood pressure but it's not clear whether animal protein has the same effect as plant protein.

Since eating too much animal protein can increase cholesterol, a good idea is to aim to get at least half your protein from plant sources such as:

 chickpeas

 lentils

 beans

 nuts and seeds

 Low-fat dairy is also a good source of protein.

DIETARY PATTERNS

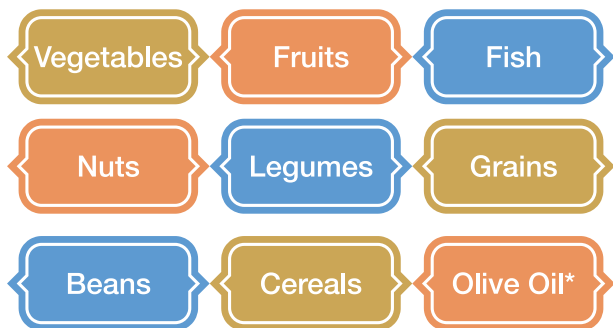
There are also dietary patterns which have been shown in high-quality trials to reduce blood pressure. These diets include the specific advice given above in addition to other dietary factors. The combination of foods may work synergistically to reduce blood pressure.

DIETARY APPROACHES TO STOP HYPERTENSION (DASH)

This is a plant-focused diet, high in fruits and vegetables, nuts, dairy (does not make a difference whether low or high fat), lean meats, fish, and poultry, mostly whole grains, and heart healthy fats.

MEDITERRANEAN-STYLE DIET

THIS DIET IS HIGH IN:



**extra virgin olive oil is most effective*

DON'T FORGET EXERCISE!

The good news about increasing your physical activity is that any extra physical activity can help. So if you are currently doing 10 minutes of walking a day, try and increase it to 20 minutes. If you can walk for 30 minutes, try to alternate jogging for 1 minute and walking for 1 minute.

SLEEP AND REST!

Making sure you get enough sleep and rest is important. So pay attention to going to sleep at the same time every night. And try to avoid bright lights in the hour before bed.

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