

7 Ways to Lower Your Blood Pressure

Hypertension or high blood pressure affects 1.28 billion adults worldwide, yet 46% remain unaware of their condition. Of those who are treated, a large number do not reach optimal blood pressure levels. **Hypertension is the leading preventable risk factor for premature death worldwide.**

Poor blood pressure control raises your risk for

1. Dementia
2. Heart disease
3. Stroke
4. Kidney disease
5. Vision loss
6. Sexual dysfunction

This guide reveals seven evidence-based strategies that can reduce blood pressure.

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Understanding Blood Pressure: The Silent Killer

Blood pressure represents the force of blood against artery walls, measured as systolic (heart contracting) over diastolic (heart resting) pressure. A healthy reading stays below 120/80 mmHg. Hypertension progresses through stages, silently damaging the heart, brain, and kidneys.

Blood Pressure Categories

- Normal: <120/80 mm Hg
- Elevated: Systolic between 120-129 and diastolic less than 80 mm Hg
- Stage 1: Systolic between 130-139 or diastolic between 80-89 mm Hg
- Stage 2: Systolic at least 140 or diastolic at least 90 mm Hg mm Hg
- Hypertensive crisis: Systolic >180 and/or diastolic >120 mm Hg

(American Heart Association , 2017)

1. Correct Home Blood Pressure Measurement: Your First Line of Defense

1.Upper arm device: Accurate home monitoring requires a clinically-validated upper arm cuff placed on bare skin at heart level. Sit with back supported, feet flat, remaining still and quiet. Take 2-3 readings spaced 1-2 minutes apart, calculating the average for most reliable results.

Measure morning, afternoon and at night for meaningful trend tracking. Proper technique eliminates measurement errors that could lead to inappropriate treatment adjustments or missed hypertension diagnosis.

2. Consider using a wearable device like [Hilo](#), a wrist-worn monitor that continuously tracks your blood pressure in the background throughout the day and night , as long as you wear it.

2. Know Your Nighttime Blood Pressure

Nighttime blood pressure typically drops about 10% below daytime levels. If your blood pressure doesn't fall at night, you are called a non-dipper. A non-dipper status raises your risk for heart disease, stroke and dementia even if daytime blood pressures are in the normal range.

How do you measure nighttime blood pressure?

1. Ask your doctor to recommend a 24 hour ambulatory blood pressure test.

2. Or use the [Hilo](#) device.



3. Medication Management: Working with Your Healthcare Provider

Blood pressure medications include ACE inhibitors, beta-blockers, diuretics, and calcium channel blockers, each targeting different mechanisms. Finding the right combination requires patience and communication with your healthcare provider.

Medication adherence and consistent timing maximize benefits. Ask your doctor about drug combinations and optimal dosing schedules that enhance prescription effectiveness.

4. Potassium Salt Substitution

Regular table salt is 100% sodium chloride. Studies have shown blood pressure- lowering effects when people substituted sodium chloride with potassium chloride.

Caveats: Salt substitution may not be appropriate for people in certain medications, with kidney disease and those who have high potassium levels. Please discuss with your healthcare provider before switching your salt.

5. Choose Lower Carbohydrate Food Over The DASH Diet

Lower-carbohydrate food help reduce insulin resistance, a major contributor to hypertension. Although the DASH diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension), emphasizing fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy, is commonly recommended, it can be too high in carbohydrates for many people.

Research shows that reducing carbohydrate intake can lead to greater blood pressure improvements compared to DASH. Eat meat, fish, eggs , tofu (if you are vegetarian), non starchy vegetables like broccoli, spinach, and cauliflower and healthy fat including avocados, nuts, and olive oil.



6. Increase Your Daily Step Count

Adding just 2,000 additional daily steps can reduce blood pressure by 2-4 mmHg. Walking at a moderate pace for 20-30 minutes can add about 2000 steps. Build a progressive walking program starting with current activity levels, gradually increasing duration and intensity. Make sure you have comfortable walking shoes.

7. Deep Sleep

Sleep duration and quality directly regulate blood pressure through several pathways. Poor sleep disrupts circadian rhythms, elevating nighttime blood pressure and increasing cardiovascular risk. Sleep apnea represents an important but often overlooked cause of difficult-to-control hypertension.

1. Create optimal sleep environments with cool temperatures, darkness, and comfortable bedding. Establish consistent bedtime and wake up times.
2. Look for professional sleep evaluation if snoring, gasping, or daytime fatigue suggest sleep disorders requiring medical intervention.
3. Consider Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Insomnia (CBTi) if you chronically have trouble falling and or staying asleep.

Putting It All Together: Your Personalized Action Plan

Complete this checklist to assess your current hypertension management strategy and identify areas for improvement.



1. Home Blood Pressure Measurement

Are you measuring your blood pressure correctly at home with a validated device? Do you take readings at the same time each day and record the results?



2. Nighttime Blood Pressure

Do you know if your blood pressure remains elevated during sleep? Have you discussed 24-hour ambulatory monitoring with your healthcare provider?



3. Medication Management

Are you taking your medications as prescribed? Have you discussed the timing of your medication with your doctor to optimize effectiveness?



4. Potassium Salt Substitution

Have you considered replacing regular salt with potassium-enriched alternatives? Have you consulted your healthcare provider about whether this is appropriate for you?



5. Lower Carbohydrate Food

Have you evaluated your carbohydrate intake? Are you incorporating more high quality proteins, non-starchy vegetables, healthy fats in your meals?



6. Daily Step Count

Are you tracking your daily steps? Have you implemented a walking program to reach at least 2,000 additional steps each day?



7. Deep Sleep

Have you optimized your sleep environment? If you experience snoring or daytime fatigue, have you considered professional sleep evaluation?

Mark each area where you've taken action, and create a plan to address the remaining items. Small, consistent changes can lead to significant blood pressure improvements.

Your Path to Better Blood Pressure Control Starts Today!

Taking these seven practical steps can significantly improve your overall cardiovascular health and quality of life. Remember that hypertension management is a journey, not a destination.

Consistent implementation of these evidence-based strategies will help you maintain healthy blood pressure levels, reducing your risk of heart disease, stroke, and vascular complications.

Most importantly, achieving better blood pressure control at any age is a major step in preventing dementia.