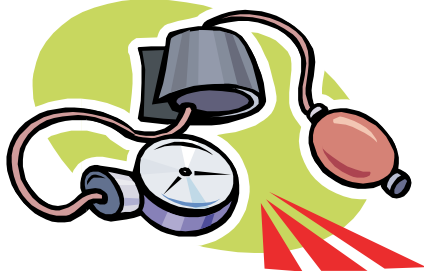


Our Quiz for a Healthier You

Making healthy lifestyle choices—such as becoming more physically active, eating a healthier diet, maintaining a healthy weight, and stopping smoking if you smoke—is usually the first “prescription” most doctors make when their patients have mild or moderate high blood pressure (hypertension). Studies show that adopting healthy lifestyle habits can lower or even prevent high blood pressure.

How much do you know about healthy lifestyle changes and high blood pressure? Take this quiz and find out. Then learn more about these healthy changes to be on your way to a healthier you.



- Which of these lifestyle changes can help lower your blood pressure?
 - Getting 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days
 - Reducing alcohol intake
 - Quitting smoking
 - Eating a low-fat diet that emphasizes fruits and vegetables and low-fat dairy foods
 - All of the above
- Blood pressure rises as body weight increases.
 - True
 - False
- Which of the following are examples of moderate physical activities that can help lower blood pressure when done for 30 minutes most days? (*You can choose more than one answer.*)
 - Making dinner
 - Brisk walking
 - Gardening
 - Doing the dishes
 - Raking leaves
 - Dancing fast (social)
- If you are overweight, what is your best weight-loss goal?
 - ½ pound to 2 pounds per week
 - 1 pound per day
 - Losing as much weight as quickly as possible at the beginning
 - You don't need to set any goals

- Drinking alcohol makes me feel relaxed, so it must lower blood pressure.
 - True
 - False
- Most people should consume no more than 2.4 grams (2,400 milligrams) of sodium per day. About how many teaspoons of table salt does that equal per day?
 - 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5
- Which of the following foods are likely to be **lowest** in sodium?
 - Processed meats (hot dogs, bologna, etc.)
 - Fresh poultry, fish, lean meat
 - Cereal mixes
 - Pizza
 - Canned soup
- There is a diet plan that can help lower or even prevent high blood pressure.
 - True
 - False
- Getting enough potassium in your diet is an important way to prevent or lower high blood pressure. Potassium is a mineral that helps the body eliminate sodium when there's too much of it, which helps lower blood pressure. Which of the following foods are rich in potassium? (*You can choose more than one answer.*)
 - Cabbage
 - Bananas
 - Raisins, prunes, apricots
 - Fresh turkey and fish
 - Chocolate
- If you make healthy lifestyle changes you won't need medication for high blood pressure.
 - True
 - False

REFERENCES

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—NIH, NHLBI website. JNC 7 Express: The Seventh Report of the Joint National Committee on Prevention, Detection, Evaluation, and Treatment of High Blood Pressure. NIH Publication No. 03-5233 December 2003. Available at: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines/hypertension/jncintro.htm>. Accessed on June 22, 2005.

ANSWERS

- (e.) All of the above.** Read on to learn more!
- (a.) True.** Blood pressure rises as body weight increases. Did you know that losing *just 10 pounds* can lower your blood pressure?
- (b.) Brisk walking, (c.) Gardening, (e.) Raking leaves, and (f.) Dancing fast.** Thirty minutes of these activities on most days can help prevent or control hypertension. You can even divide the 30 minutes into shorter periods of 10 minutes each.
- (a.) ½ pound to 2 pounds per week** is the best goal if you need to lose weight. To lose weight, eat fewer calories than you burn in daily activities. To lose 1 pound per week, eat 500 calories less in a day, or burn 500 calories more than usual. A combination of both eating less (watch portion sizes!) and being more physically active is the best bet for healthy weight loss that *stays off*.
- (b.) False.** Drinking too much alcohol can actually raise blood pressure. If you drink alcohol, limit your drinks to two a day for men and one a day for women. One drink = 12 oz of beer, 5 oz of wine, or 1½ oz of 80-proof whiskey.
- (a.) 1 teaspoon.** That includes *all* salt and sodium consumed, including what's used in cooking and at the table. Salt holds extra fluid in your body and makes your heart work harder. Some people are more salt sensitive, particularly African-Americans and the elderly. As little as 1 extra gram of salt can raise blood pressure as much as 5 points in salt-sensitive people.
- (b.) Fresh poultry, fish, lean meat.** All the other choices will contain extra sodium. Be sure to read labels on canned, processed, and packaged foods to see how much sodium is in *each serving*. Buy fresh, plain frozen, or canned vegetables with no salt added; avoid processed foods; use herbs and spices instead of salt when cooking; and rinse canned foods (like tuna) to remove some sodium.
- (a.) True.** Doctors recommend the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet to reduce blood pressure. DASH concentrates on foods that are low in fats and cholesterol such as fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy, whole grains, poultry, fish, and nuts. It has low amounts of fats, red meats, sweets, and added sugars. Ask your doctor for more details and visit www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/heart/hbp/dash/.
- (b.) Bananas, (c.) Raisins, prunes, apricots, and (d.) Fresh turkey and fish.** The DASH diet (see question 8) is high in potassium. Check with your doctor about how much potassium you need. People with kidney problems or those who take certain medications need to guard against too much potassium in their diet.
- (b.) False.** Sometimes blood pressure stays high *even when* you make the recommended lifestyle changes. If this happens, you also need to take medicines to lower blood pressure. Adding medicines does not mean that you stop eating the right foods and staying physically active—you take medicines *in addition* to healthy lifestyle changes. Together, medications and healthy lifestyle changes can achieve the best results.

For more information: Talk to your physician or visit controlhypertension.org.