

# Managing Your High Blood Pressure



## EAT A HEALTHY DIET

- Consider the D.A.S.H (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) eating plan from National Institutes of Health, which has been shown to reduce elevated blood pressure.
- Read food labels. Consume less than 2,300 mg of sodium a day.
- Limit sodium in the foods you eat, especially added salt, processed foods, and canned soups.
- Potassium helps to prevent and control high blood pressure. Choose fruits and vegetables such as potatoes, tomatoes, lima beans, and bananas.
- Learn more about healthy eating and the D.A.S.H. eating plan from the Optima Health “Eating for Life” program.

## MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT

- Being overweight increases your risk of developing high blood pressure.
- Losing even 10 pounds can lower blood pressure and has the greatest effect for those who are overweight and already have hypertension.

## STAY PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

- Being physically active can prevent or control high blood pressure, and reduce your risk of heart disease.
- Your goal should be at least 30 minutes of moderate-level physical activity on most days of the week, like brisk walking, bicycling, raking leaves, and gardening.

## LIMIT ALCOHOL INTAKE

- Drinking too much alcohol can raise blood pressure.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, have only a moderate amount; one drink a day for women, two drinks a day for men. Check with your physician about how your health may be affected by drinking alcohol.

*Adapted from NHLBI Your Guide to Lowering High Blood Pressure 2011, <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp>; Your Guide to Lowering High Blood Pressure with DASH Eating Plan, 2010, [http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/dash/new\\_dash.pdf](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/dash/new_dash.pdf); and U.S Department of Health and Human Services and U.S Department of Agriculture 2015 - 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. 8th Edition. December 2015. Available at <http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/>.*

For more information, visit  
[optimahealth.com/mylifemyplan](http://optimahealth.com/mylifemyplan)

**OptimaHealth**   
A Service of Sentara

### DON'T USE TOBACCO

- Tobacco use injures blood vessel walls and speeds up artery damage.
- If you use tobacco, quit. Once you quit, your risk of having a heart attack is reduced after the first year.

### TAKE YOUR MEDICATION

- If your doctor has prescribed medication for your high blood pressure, make sure you take it every day.

### GET REGULAR CHECKUPS WITH YOUR PHYSICIAN

- Visit your doctor regularly to have your weight and blood pressure checked, and to schedule preventive health screenings.

## Staying Healthy Programs

To order programs, visit [wellnessforme.com](https://wellnessforme.com).

### Eating for Life

Develop healthy eating and exercise habits

### Get Off Your Butt: Stay Smokeless for Life

Stop using tobacco to benefit your health

### Guided Meditation

Experience a retreat from everyday stressors

### Healthy Habits Healthy You

Develop habits to prevent diabetes and heart disease

### Tai Chi

Learn to mentally and physically relax

### WalkAbout With Healthy Edge

Walk your way to better health

### Yoga

Stretching and strengthening exercises

For more information, visit  
[optimahealth.com/mylifemyplan](https://optimahealth.com/mylifemyplan)

OptimaHealth   
A Service of Sentara