



# Simple Steps to Improve Your High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)

There are lots of easy ways to help improve your high blood pressure. Even one small change can make a big difference. Below you will see a list of options grouped into categories to help you find what works best for you. Take a look and check off any actions you are already doing or ones you would like to try. Starting with just one is a great step forward.

|                       | Lifestyle Change                             | Approximate SBP Lowering Range | Recommendation                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Doing Now/<br>Try Next   |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Manage Weight</b>  | <b>Manage weight</b>                         | 6–8 mm Hg                      | Maintain healthy body weight (BMI=18.5–24.9 kg/m <sup>2</sup> ).                                                                                                                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Eat Better</b>     | <b>Follow a DASH-style eating plan</b>       | 5–8 mm Hg                      | Follow a DASH-style eating plan, rich in fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy and low in fat.                                                                                                                               | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                       | <b>Lower sodium intake</b>                   | 6–8 mm Hg                      | Lower sodium intake to <2,300 mg per day, moving toward an ideal limit of 1,500 mg per day.                                                                                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                       | <b>Consider salt substitutes</b>             | 5–7 mm Hg                      | Consider replacing cooking/table salt (100% sodium chloride) with salt substitute (25%–30% potassium chloride, 65%–75% sodium chloride, and 0%–10% flavoring agents) as an alternative to cutting out salt all-together. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                       | <b>Increase potassium intake</b>             | 6 mm Hg                        | Increase potassium intake by aiming for 3,500–5,000 mg per day with foods like yams, spinach or bananas unless you have kidney problems or take certain medications. Check with your health care professional first.     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Be More Active</b> | <b>Aerobic exercise</b>                      | 4–8 mm Hg                      | Aerobic exercise is any activity that gets your heart beating faster and makes you breathe a bit harder, like walking, running or swimming. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week.        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                       | <b>Dynamic resistance</b>                    | 2–7 mm Hg                      | Dynamic resistance means your muscles are working while you move, like squats or push-ups. Aim for 90–150 minutes of 6 exercises, 3 sets/exercise, 10 repetitions/set per week.                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                       | <b>Isometric resistance</b>                  | 5–10 mm Hg                     | Isometric resistance means your muscles are working without moving, like holding a plank or a wall sit. Aim for 3 low-intensity sessions/week with a 1-minute rest between exercises.                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Lower Alcohol</b>  | <b>Lower or avoid consumption of alcohol</b> | 4–6 mm Hg                      | No more than 2 drinks/day for men and 1 drink/day for women.                                                                                                                                                             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Manage Stress</b>  | <b>Meditation</b>                            | 5–7 mm Hg                      | Aim for two 20-minute sessions/day while seated comfortably with eyes closed.                                                                                                                                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                       | <b>Breathing control</b>                     | 5 mm Hg                        | Work on breathing control by slowing your breathing to less than 10 breaths/minute for 15 minutes/day.                                                                                                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

BMI = Body mass index • SBP = Systolic blood pressure • DASH = Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension