Controlling High Blood Pressure



Blood Pressure Medicine - FAQs

Even though you may be feeling well, it's important to take your medicine every day or as instructed.

Q: How can I remember to take my blood pressure medicine every day?

A: It is easier to remember taking your medicine if you think of it during a routine task like brushing your teeth, eating breakfast or before bed. Taking your medicine around the same time every day will also help you remember to take it and will help the medicine work better.

Q: Do all blood pressure medicines have side effects?

A: Any medicine can cause side effects. Most side effects from blood pressure medicines are mild and go away after your body adjusts to the medicine. If side effects do not go away and continue to bother you, talk to your health care provider. There are many different medicines that can lower blood pressure so if one does not work for you another may.

Q: Are there any medicines I can't take with blood pressure medicines?

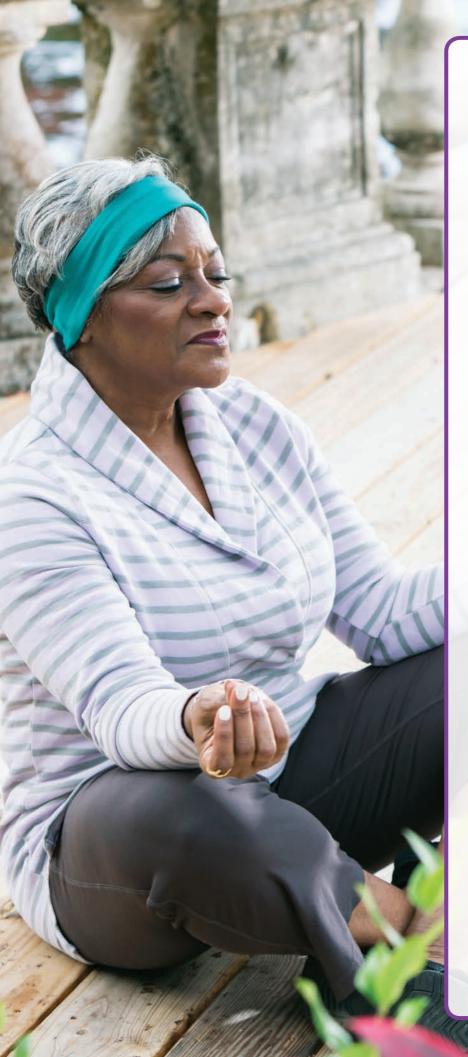
A: Some over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, and dietary or herbal supplements may affect your blood pressure medicine, cause side effects and can change how well your blood pressure medicine works. Talk to your health care provider or pharmacist about all of the medicines you are taking.

Q: How can I track all my medicines?

A: It is important to keep an up-to-date list of all your medicines. Use the chart below to track your medicines and bring it with you to all your health care appointments. Update it as needed and have your health care provider review it at your annual wellness visit.

My Medicine List

Medicine name & dose (mg)	How I take it	When I take it	Why I take it	Who told me to take it
Ex: med A 25mg	1 pill daily	morning	blood pressure	Dr. Jones



Do You Have High Blood Pressure?

Did you know that you can have high blood pressure (hypertension) and feel fine? That's because high blood pressure often does not cause signs of illness that you can see or feel. But if high blood pressure isn't controlled with lifestyle changes or medicine, it can lead to other serious health problems.

One reason to have regular visits with your health care provider is to have your blood pressure checked.

Based on your age and risk factors, your health care provider may suggest lifestyle changes that can lower your blood pressure such as:

- · Being active
- · Eating healthy
- Limiting the amount of sodium (salt) in your diet

If your blood pressure remains high you may be prescribed blood pressure lowering medicine(s) to get your blood pressure to a healthy level.

Controlling your blood pressure can help you to continue to feel well, take part in activities you enjoy and live a longer and healthier life.

Are You Doing All You Can to Control Your Blood Pressure?

Take this quiz to find out!

If your doctor prescribed medicine, are you taking it as instructed? Yes = 1 No = 0 No medicine prescribed = 1				
Yes = 1	NO = U	No medicine prescribed = 1		
Do you check food labels to limit your sodium intake to less than 2,300 mg per day?				
Yes = 1	No = 0			
•	ast 2 cups (4 ser No = 0	rvings) each of vegetables and fruits a day?		
Do you try to get at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week?				
Yes = 1	No = 0			
Are you a non-sr Yes = 1		ely trying to stop smoking?		
163 – 1	140 = 0			
Do you have a follow-up appointment with your doctor to recheck your blood pressure?				
Yes = 1	No = 0			
Add your points	s to get your t	otal score		

How Do You Measure Up?

Score 0 to 3

There may be more you can do to control your blood pressure.

Keep reading to learn more.

Score 4 to 6

Congratulations!

For most people, high blood pressure is a lifelong condition, but very treatable, so keep up the great work!

What Can You Do to Control Your Blood Pressure?

Know your numbers

Have your blood pressure checked at every office visit. Talk to your health care provider about your blood pressure goal.

Take your medicine as prescribed

Depending on your blood pressure readings your health care provider may prescribe medicine in addition to lifestyle changes. Taking your medicine as prescribed can lower your risk of heart disease, heart attack, stroke, eye and kidney disease.

Limit sodium (salt)

Pay attention to food labels. Food labels tell you how much sodium is in a product. Foods with 140 mg or less of sodium per serving are considered low in sodium. Limit sodium intake to no more than 2,300 mg a day. Limiting your intake to less than 1,500 mg a day can lower your blood pressure even further.

Maintain a healthy weight and get active

30 minutes of physical activity (such as walking or swimming) for at least 5 days a week is all you need. You can even break up that activity into 10-minute sessions throughout the day.

Eat a healthy diet

A diet rich in whole grains, fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy products may help lower your blood pressure.

Quit smoking

Smoking not only can raise your blood pressure but it can also increase the risk of developing cancer, COPD and heart disease. If you're trying to quit, you can get free telephone counseling by calling 800-QUIT NOW (800-784-8669) or visit smokefree.gov for online and texting programs.



For More Information or Questions

- Call a nurse care manager at 866-750-2068 Monday Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (TTY service: 711).
- Check out **DASH for Health**, a heart healthy eating plan, on harvardpilgrim.org/stridewellness under Discounts and Savings.
- Search **Health Topics A-Z** at harvardpilgrim.org/stridewellness.
- **Download an app*** to track your medicines or to set medicine reminders. Here are just a few:
 - Mango Health makes managing your medicines fun, easy and rewarding.
 - Medisafe Pill Reminder & Medication Tracker to help you remember when to take your pills.

