


# Controlling High Blood Pressure



Harvard Pilgrim  
HealthCare

Stride<sup>SM</sup> (HMO) Medicare Advantage Plan





## 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

**Do you check food labels to limit your sodium intake to less than 2,300 mg per day?**

Yes = 1

No = 0

**Do you eat at least 2 cups (4 servings) each of vegetables and fruits a day?**

Yes = 1

No = 0

**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-smoker or actively trying to stop smoking?**

Yes = 1

No = 0

**Do you have a follow-up appointment with your doctor to recheck your blood pressure?**

Yes = 1

No = 0

**Add your points to get your total 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](http://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](http://harvardpilgrim.org/stridewellness) under Discounts and Savings.
- Search **Health Topics A-Z** at [harvardpilgrim.org/stridewellness](http://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.

\* Harvard Pilgrim does not assume any responsibility for the accuracy, completeness or clinical efficacy of information contained in the apps provided.

Harvard Pilgrim is an HMO plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in Stride<sup>SM</sup> (HMO) depends on contract renewal.



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