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How to Help Maintain a Healthy Blood Pressure at Any Age

What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the walls of arteries.

$$\frac{120}{80}$$

← **Systolic:** the pressure caused by your heart contracting and pushing out blood

← **Diastolic:** the pressure when your heart relaxes and fills with blood

This is considered a "healthy" blood pressure for the average person

* High blood pressure= $\dfrac{130+}{80+}$

Here are ways you can help keep your blood pressure at a healthy level:

Keep a Healthy Weight

Being overweight puts extra stress on your heart and can raise your blood pressure (BP). In fact, losing weight is one of the most effective lifestyle changes for lowering and managing BP.

Exercise Daily

Regular exercise helps make your heart stronger and more efficient at pumping blood, which lowers the pressure in your arteries (blood pressure).

Eat a Healthy Diet

If you have high BP, your doctor may suggest the DASH diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension). Rich in whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products, this diet can help lower your BP.

Reduce Stress

Chronic stress may contribute to high blood pressure. By identifying and avoiding your stress triggers and learning how to manage your stress, you can help lower your BP.

Cut Down on Salt

As you age, your body and blood pressure become more sensitive to sodium (salt). Even a small reduction in your sodium intake can help improve your heart health and reduce BP.

Drink Less Alcohol

Drinking alcohol in any quantity may raise your blood pressure (and it can reduce the effectiveness of BP medications). To manage your BP, drink no more than one drink a day for women or two for men.