

Nutritional advice for patients with high blood pressure





What is High Blood Pressure?

High blood pressure (hypertension) is a common condition in which the long-term force of the blood against your artery walls is high enough that it may eventually cause health problems, such as heart disease.



High Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is determined both by the amount of blood your heart pumps and the amount of resistance to blood flow in your arteries. The more blood your heart pumps and the narrower your arteries, the higher your blood pressure. A blood pressure reading is given in millimeters of mercury (mm Hg).

Irregular blood pressure is very risky and can lead to other diseases such as cardiovascular disease and affect the safety of vital organs in the body such as the kidneys, eyes and brain. The causes of high blood pressure are not fully known, but there are some factors that may contribute to the occurrence of this disease, such as obesity, lack of physical activity, unhealthy eating habits, smoking and genetic factors.

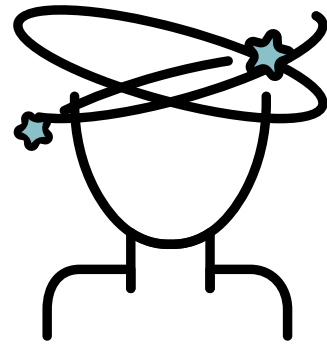




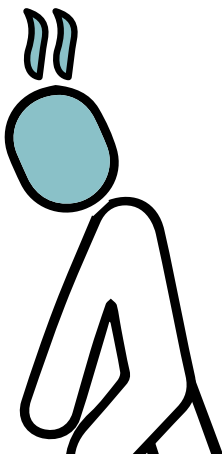
Signs/symptoms of hypertension



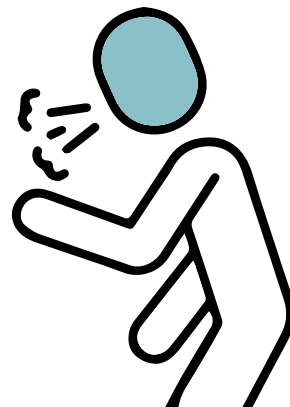
Tinnitus



Headache



**Fatigue and
laziness**



**Shortness of
breath**



Signs/symptoms of hypertension

The table below will help to see if your blood pressure is at a healthy reading or if you need to take some steps to improve your blood pressure level.

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic mmHH (Upper number)	Diastolic mmHH (Lower number)
Normal blood pressure	Less than 120	Less than 80
Elevated	120-129	Less than 80
High blood pressure, stage 1	130-139	80-89
High blood pressure stage 2	140 or higher	90 or higher
High blood pressure stage 3	Higher than 180	Higher than 120









Ways to treat high blood pressure



Following a healthy lifestyle contributes to treating high blood pressure. By reducing salt/sodium intake, losing weight if you are overweight or obese eating a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, legumes, low-fat dairy products and non-fatty foods are ways to help manage your blood sugar.









Tips to manage your blood pressure

-  1 Maintaining a healthy weight and reducing weight for overweight or obese patients.
-  2 Follow a diet low in sodium (2,300 mg/day).
-  3 Develop a healthy diet plan, rich in vegetables and fruits, as they contain a good amount of dietary fiber, vitamins and mineral.
-  4 Consume milk and its derivatives, they are rich in calcium, potassium, magnesium and these nutrients contribute to low blood pressure.
-  5 Avoid unhealthy fat intake (saturated fat, trans fat), fried foods and processed meats.
-  6 Consult a dietitian.









Tips to manage your blood pressure

- 7  Reduce caffeinated drinks such as tea and coffee.
- 8  Follow the DASH diet (a healthy eating approach designed to help treat or stop high blood pressure).
- 9  Take your regular medication prescribed by the physician.
- 10  Monitor and measure blood pressure rates regularly as directed by the doctor.
- 11  Do moderate physical activity throughout the week to prevent or control high blood pressure. Regular exercise such as brisk walking, cycling, swimming, and other physical activities helps to reduce the risk of heart diseases. Consult your doctor to find out which exercise is appropriate for your health condition.



Tips to reduce your salt/sodium intake

-  1 Reduce the amount of table salt added during cooking and replace it with spices, lemon, and natural herbs to improve food flavour.
-  2 Do not put table salt on the table during meals.
-  3 Reduce/avoid eating salted, smoked, canned foods, ready-made sauces, pickles, etc.
-  4 Wash canned foods well to reduce the amounts of added sodium.
-  5 Avoid fast food as much as possible.
-  6 Read the nutritional label on food products, avoid high sodium, and choose low or zero-sodium products (Choose foods with less than 140mg sodium per serving on the product when shopping).



Food labels

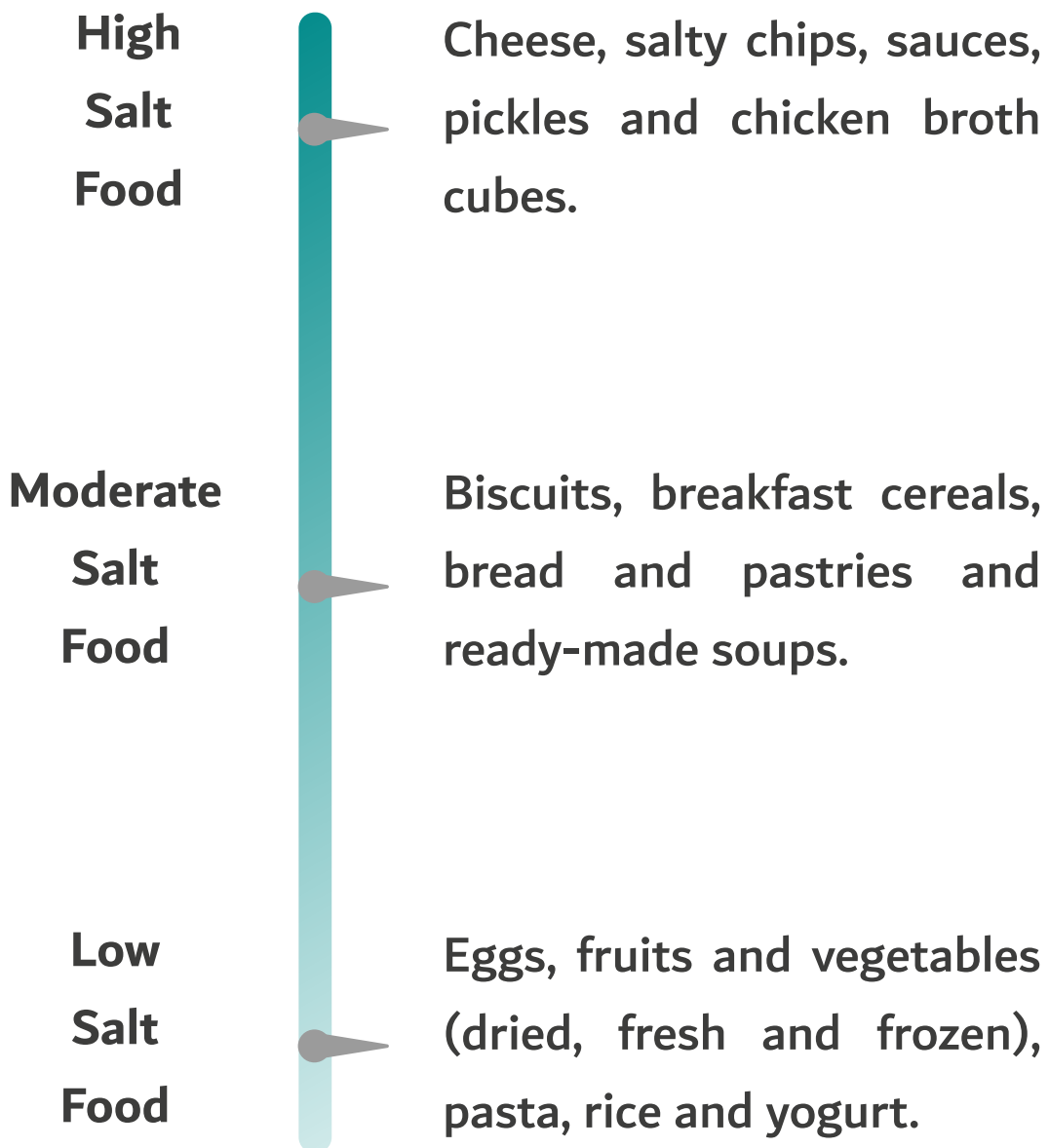
Food labels help you choose foods low in sodium; the below table shows, some concepts (nutritional information) printed on food products:

Terms	Means
Sodium Free	Sodium not exceeding 5 mg per serving
Very Low Sodium	35 mg of sodium or less per serving
Low Sodium	140 mg of sodium or less per serving
Reduced Sodium	At least 25% less sodium than the regular product
Light in Sodium or Lightly Salted	At least 50% less sodium than the regular product
No-Salt-Added or Unsalted	No salt is added during processing – but these products may not be salt/sodium-free unless stated



Dietary guide for patients with high blood pressure:

Salt in food products:





DASH Diet

The DASH diet focuses on vegetables, fruits, and low-fat dairy products — and moderate amounts of whole grains, fish, poultry and nuts.

The DASH diet aims to reduce the amount of sodium in your diet compared to what you would get in another diet.

What are the benefits of the DASH diet?

- Helps lower blood pressure.
- The DASH diet provides you with potassium, calcium, and magnesium, essential for your health.
- It can reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke.
- It improves insulin sensitivity.
- Maintain a healthy weight.



DASH Diet

What foods are included in the Dash diet?



Vegetables.



Milk and low-fat dairy products.



Fruits.



Lean meat (chicken, fish, and red meat).



All grains.



Nuts, seeds, and dried beans.



DASH Diet

Below is an example of a daily chart and the recommended servings of a DASH diet of 2,000 calories per day, and sodium not more than 2300mg/day.

Food groups	Daily servings	Amount of one serving
Grains (Include bread, cereal, rice, and pasta.)	6-8	1 slice of whole wheat bread. 1/2 cup of cooked cereal, rice or pasta. 30 grams of dry cereal, such as corn flakes.
Vegetables	4-5	1-cup fresh vegetables. 1/2 cup cooked vegetables. 1/2 cup vegetable juice.
Fruits	4-5	1 medium-sized fruit 1/2 cup of fresh, frozen, or canned fruit. 1/2 cup fruit juice.
Low-fat or fat free dairy products	2-3	1 cup milk, yogurt, or laban drinks. 3 tablespoons cheese.



DASH Diet

Food groups	Daily servings	Amount of one serving
Lean meat, poultry and fish	4-6	30g cooked meat, poultry, or fish. 1 egg.
Nuts, seeds and legumes	4-5 a week	30 grams of nuts. 2 tablespoons peanut butter. 2 tablespoons of seeds. ½ cup cooked legumes.
Fats and oils	2-3	1 teaspoon vegetable oil
Sweets and added sugar	5 or less	1 tablespoon sugar 1 tablespoon jam

DASH diet and weight loss

Dash diet is not a weight loss program, dash diet can guide you towards healthy food choices, but if you are trying to lose weight, you may need to eat fewer calories.



References

- | Nutrition Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.
- | US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)