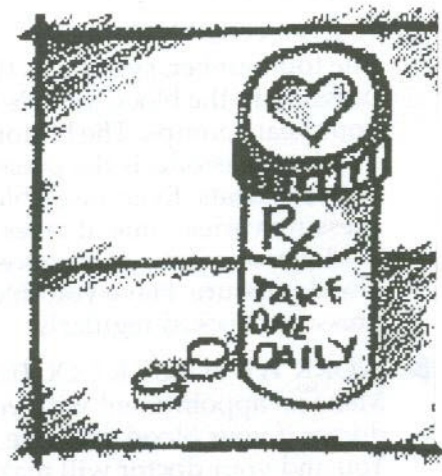


# BLOOD PRESSURE TIP SHEET

## Do You Know?

- High blood pressure usually has no symptoms. A heart attack or stroke may be the first sign.
- There is no cure for most cases of high blood pressure. But 90–95 percent of it is treatable through lifestyle and medication.
- It is very unusual for a person's blood pressure to be too low. Usually, the lower the better.

**"Your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other thing."  
— Abraham Lincoln**



## LIFESTYLE

- ▶ **TRIM EXCESS BODY FAT.**  
Often blood pressure can be lowered by losing a few pounds. Lose fat and keep it off by becoming more active. Adopt a healthy way of eating that you can live with.



- ▶ **LIMIT ALCOHOL.**  
If you drink at all, limit yourself to no more than two drinks per day. That's the same as two 12-oz. beers OR two 4-oz. glasses of wine OR two ounces of 100-proof liquor.
- ▶ **LIMIT SODIUM.**  
Limit the amount of salt you eat. Processed foods, like canned, boxed and frozen foods, are often high in salt. Look for low-sodium or unsalted varieties. Cut down on sodium gradually. Your taste buds will adjust over time.
- ▶ **BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE.**  
Physical activity is good for your heart, your muscles and your blood vessels. Becoming more physically active has a great payoff for stress and weight control too.



# BLOOD PRESSURE TIP SHEET

## MEDICAL CARE

- ▶ **KNOW YOUR NUMBERS.**  
The top number, systolic, is the pressure in the blood vessels when your heart pumps. The bottom number, diastolic, is the pressure between beats. Everyone's blood pressure varies some; it takes several readings over time to diagnose high blood pressure. Have your blood pressure checked regularly.
- ▶ **WORK WITH YOUR DOCTOR.**  
Make an appointment with your doctor if your blood pressure is high. You and your doctor will make a choice about how to treat it. You may be able to control it with lifestyle changes. Or you may need to take medicine along with making lifestyle changes.
- ▶ **TAKE PRESCRIBED MEDICINE.**  
Blood pressure medicine works only when you take it as prescribed—every single day. Even if your pressure drops or you feel side effects, check with your doctor before making a change.
- ▶ **LIVE A HEALTHY LIFE.**  
High blood pressure does not mean you are sick. Keep your appointments with your doctor and keep up your usual routines.

## FOR MORE HELP AND INFORMATION

American Heart Association  
Call your local office or 1-800-AHA-USA1  
(1-800-242-8721).

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute  
National High Blood Pressure Education  
Program Information Center  
P.O. Box 30105  
Bethesda MD, 20824-0105  
(301) 951-3260

Also, ask your doctor, local hospital, insurance company, employer, public health department or library.

