

6 Tips to Lower Blood Pressure With Food

As Much as Medicine! (By 11 mm Hg points!)¹



Hypertension is high blood pressure. Too much pressure in your blood vessels can increase the risk of **heart disease**, **stroke**, and **kidney problems**. The DASH diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) and studies referenced below provide important tips on how your diet can help you lower your blood pressure.

Eat vegetables & fruits

Eat at least 5 servings of vegetables and fresh fruit per day.²

One serving = 1 cup raw



Or = 1/2 cup cooked



Limit red meat


Limit your intake of red meat (beef, pork, lamb) and processed meats to one serving a week.³

One serving = 3.5oz = a deck of cards



Lower your sodium intake

Lower your sodium intake to 2400mg per day (less than 2 teaspoons of salt) or, for even more health benefits, to 1500mg per day.⁴

1500mg of sodium =  = 1 teaspoon salt

SOY SAUCE LABEL	
Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 tbsp (15mL)	
Servings Per Container about 126	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	15
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Sodium 980mg	41%
Total Carbohydrate 1g	0%

Remember, food often already has a lot of sodium. So be sure to read nutrition labels for sodium and serving size before you add salt!

Eat unsaturated fats & plant-based protein

Eat unsaturated fats like extra virgin olive oil, avocados, and nuts.⁵ Instead of processed carbs, eat lean meats like chicken, turkey, and fish. Eat protein from legumes like beans and lentils.

Beans



Nuts



Lean Meats



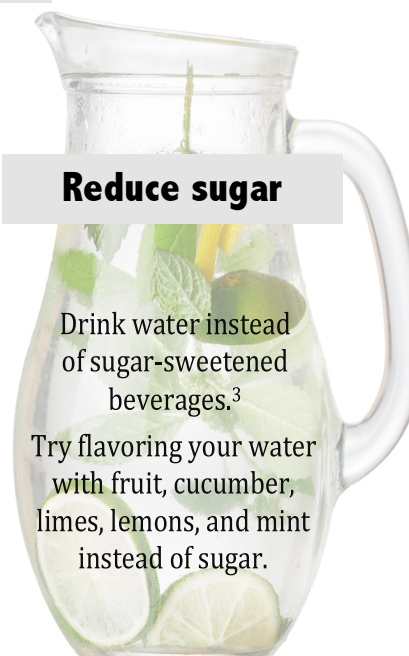
Healthy Fats



Reduce sugar

Drink water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages.³

Try flavoring your water with fruit, cucumber, limes, lemons, and mint instead of sugar.



ACTION PLAN



Which of the tips will you try? Circle them.



When will you start? _____



How confident are you that you will accomplish your goal (from 0-100%)? _____



Follow-up plan

Consider the Mediterranean diet

Though it is somewhat different from the above dietary tips, the Mediterranean diet is also a delicious and effective way to lower your blood pressure.⁶ See the *Mediterranean Diet handout*.

References:

¹ DASH diet - NEJM 1997;336:1117
² BMJ 2014;349:g4490
³ NEJM 2010; 362:2101

⁴ DASH-sodium study. NEJM 2001;344(1):3
⁵ OmniHeart trial - JAMA 2005;294(19)
⁶ Predimed Trial -- BMC Medicine 2013; 11:207

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