

## Dietary Habits that WILL have an Impact on Your Blood Pressure

### EAT MORE...

#### Fruits and Vegetables

Adding more of these to your diet will fill you up  
No cholesterol, low sodium, low fat, low calories  
Choose options that are high in potassium

**Tips:** Spinach, white beans, potatoes, tomatoes, bananas, prunes, peaches, apricots and oranges are all high-potassium sources.

#### Whole Grains

Whole grains will fill you up more than refined grains  
Contains beneficial vitamins and minerals

**Tips:** Include more 100% whole wheat and whole grain products into your diet like 100% whole grain bread instead of white bread.

### HAVE LESS...

#### Salt

Eat more fresh foods  
Skip adding salt to your dishes  
Check the label- choose items that are Low Sodium, Reduced Sodium or No Added Salt

**Tips:** Choose salt-less herbs and seasonings to flavor your dishes.

#### Alcohol

Heavy drinking can damage your heart.  
Having more than two drinks a day can raise your blood pressure.

### LIMIT THIS...

#### Added Sugar

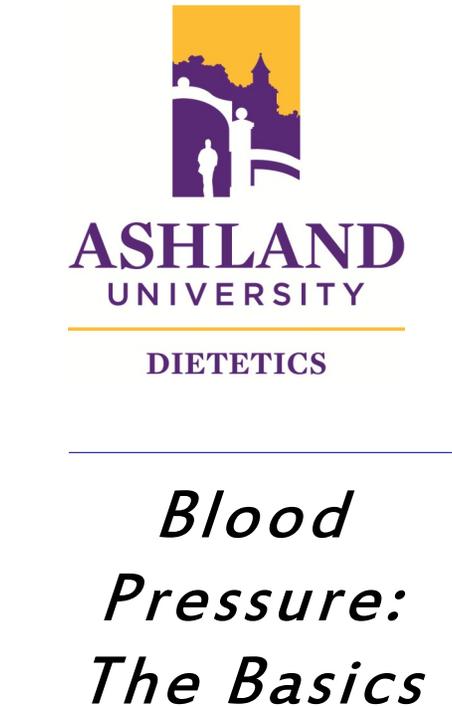
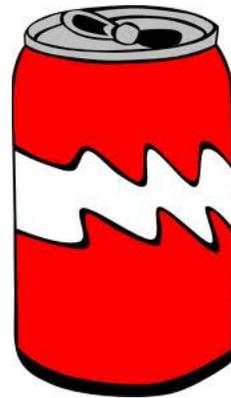
Found in processed foods  
Syrups added to products

**Tips:** Limit the consumption of soda and sugary drinks. Try tea and other low calorie and low sugar drinks.

#### Saturated Fat and Oils

Check the label- choose products that have little unsaturated fat; if there is fat, it is better to consumer mono and polyunsaturated fats

**Tips:** Limit the consumption of greasy and deep-fried foods, as well as fatty meats like salami and sausage. Try to choose non-creamy salad dressing, and low-fat cheese and meat products.



# Blood Pressure Terminology

Systolic Blood Pressure:

- The top number of a blood pressure reading
- This number should always be higher than the bottom number
- Measures pressure in artery when the heart beats

Diastolic Blood Pressure:

- Bottom number of a blood pressure reading
- This number is lower than the top number
- Measures pressure in artery when the heart is resting

$$\frac{120}{80} = \frac{\textit{systolic}}{\textit{diastolic}}$$

Effects if High Blood Pressure on the Body

**Brain:** High blood pressure is the most important risk factor for stroke. Very high pressure can cause a break in a weakened blood vessel, which then bleeds in the brain. This can cause a stroke. If a blood clot blocks one of the narrowed arteries, it can also cause a stroke.

**Eyes:** High blood pressure can eventually cause blood vessels in the eye to burst or bleed. Vision may become blurred or otherwise impaired and can result in blindness.

**Arteries:** As people get older, arteries throughout the body "harden," especially those in the heart, brain, and kidneys. High blood pressure is associated with these "stiffer" arteries. This, in turn, causes the heart and kidneys to work harder.

**Kidneys:** The kidneys act as filters to rid the body of wastes. Over time, high blood pressure can narrow and thicken the blood vessels of the kidneys. The kidneys filter less fluid, and waste builds up in the blood. The kidneys may fail altogether

**According to the Centers for Disease Control, 1 in 3 adults has high blood pressure. The good news is that high blood pressure can be treated and controlled, yet of those with high blood pressure, 1 in 3 does not get treatment while half does not have it under control.**

High blood pressure, or hypertension, is a major risk factor for heart disease, stroke, kidney failure and other conditions.

# Dietary Impact on Blood Pressure

A healthy eating plan can both reduce the risk of developing high blood pressure as well as lower a blood pressure that is already too high.

The USDA has created an overall eating plan called DASH, which stands for "Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension." Foods that have a positive influence on blood pressure include:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Low-fat dairy foods.

The DASH eating plan includes whole grains, poultry, fish, and nuts, and has low amounts of fats, red meats, sweets, and sugared beverages. It is also high in potassium, calcium, and magnesium, as well as protein and fiber.

