

# ♥ HEALTHY HEARTS ♥

Issue No. 10

## Question of the week!

### Blood Pressure: how high is too high?

Blood pressure is the force of blood against your blood vessels as it circulates throughout your body.

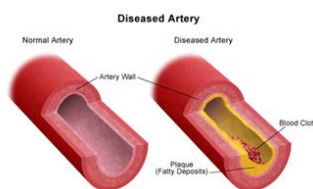
This pressure is necessary to make the blood flow around your body to delivery oxygen rich blood to your muscles and organs.

#### Healthy Blood Pressure at your Health Provider's Office

Most people	Less than 140/90
Most people with diabetes	Less than 130/80
Most people with heart disease	Less than 120/80

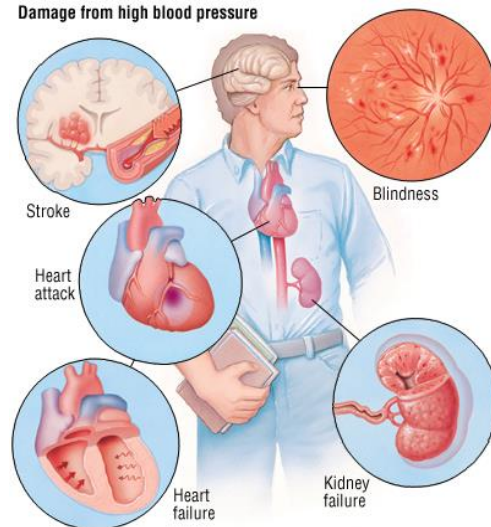
If the pressure is too high, it can damage your blood vessels and organs:

- ♥ Blood pressure increases because blood vessels narrow due to buildup of plaque.



- ♥ As a result your heart works harder to pump blood through your blood vessels.
- ♥ This causes the pressure in your blood vessels to increase.

Damage from high blood pressure



**GOOD NEWS!**  
**High Blood Pressure can be prevented or controlled!**

### How can you lower your Blood Pressure?

**Physically Active** 30-60 minutes/day

**Eat Healthy** try the DASH diet

**Smoke-Free** try QUITNOW.ca

**Less Salt** read food labels

**Less Stress** try going for a walk or meditation

**Medications** take as prescribed

**Less Alcohol** 1-2 drink/day (men)

1 drink/day (women)

**Ask your cardiac rehab team ♥**

Do you know how to measure your blood pressure?

See the handout with this newsletter



**Let your Registered Nurse know if your BP is higher than 140/90 for 2-3 days in a row**

### Useful Resources

If you want to know what are the approved blood pressure measuring devices in Canada check here at:

<https://hypertension.ca/bpdevices>

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## CARDIOLOGIST COLUMN

What Are The Usual Medications Used To Treat The “SILENT KILLER” High Blood Pressure?

1. **Diuretics.** Also called “water pills”, diuretics act on your kidneys to help your body eliminate sodium and water. A common side effect of diuretics is increased urination. Chlorthalidone and hydrochlorothiazide are two of the commonly used diuretics.
2. **Angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors and Angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs).** These medications — such as Ramipril/Perindopril and Candesartan/Losartan, for example— help relax blood vessels by blocking the formation of a natural chemical that narrows blood vessels. People with chronic kidney disease, diabetes and heart disease may benefit from having an ACE inhibitor as one of their medications.
3. **Calcium channel blockers.** These medications — including amlodipine, diltiazem — help relax the muscles of your blood vessels. Swelling of the ankles can occur as a side effect. Grapefruit juice interacts with some calcium channel blockers; speak to your pharmacist if concerned.
4. **Beta blockers.** These medications reduce the workload on your heart and open your blood vessels, causing your heart to beat slower and with less force. Beta blockers include atenolol, metoprolol and others.

Many other medications exist for treating high blood pressure, and these are often added if patients are not able to achieve their target blood pressure on one or more of the above medications.

It is important to take ALL of your medications as directed and to tell your doctor if you are concerned you are having any side effects.

Do you have questions or specific needs from your CR team?

Please email us or call your RN/Case Manager

[hahpcardiarehab@providencehealth.bc.ca](mailto:hahpcardiarehab@providencehealth.bc.ca)

604 806 6810

## Do you know your Training Heart Rate (THR)?

Check out this great YouTube video by Dr. Mike Evans:

**The Importance of Intensity in Physical Activity**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OMn8Tq5Eyao>

## Nutrition Tidbits



### Choosing Chocolate?

- ♥ Cocoa is rich in **antioxidant** compounds known as flavanols
- ♥ Dark chocolate has a high **cocoa** content
- ♥ A small amount of dark chocolate may help **lower** blood pressure and prevent the formation of blood clots

#### ENJOY!

- ♥ Enjoy dark chocolate containing **70% or more** cocoa
- ♥ Dip your favorite fruits in **melted** dark chocolate
- ♥ Make **hot chocolate** with cocoa, a small amount of sugar or sweetener and skim milk

#### REMEMBER:

- ♥ Chocolate is considered a high-fat, high-calorie food. One 50g bar can contain up to 250 calories and almost a day's supply of **saturated fat!**
- ♥ Choose **dark** chocolate as white and milk chocolate contain little to no antioxidants and tend to be higher in sugar
- ♥ Limit to **one or two** squares per day