

# ♥ HEALTHY HEARTS ♥

Issue No. 4

## 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.

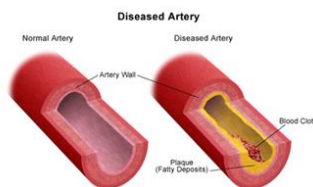
This pressure is necessary to make the blood flow around your body to delivery oxygen rich blood to your muscles and organs.

#### 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 |

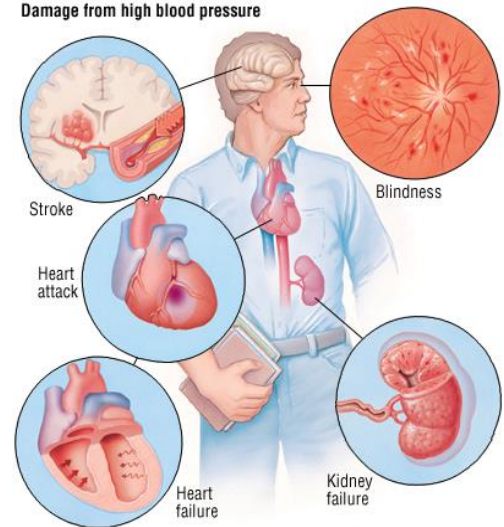
If the pressure is too high, it can damage your blood vessels and organs:

- ♥ 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** see 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 or check out one of these websites→

Let your case manager know if your BP is higher than 140/90 for 2-3 days in a row

### Useful Resources

[www.hypertension.ca](http://www.hypertension.ca)

[www.heartandstroke/bp](http://www.heartandstroke/bp)

Check out the attached BP log sheet

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## CARDIOLOGIST COLUMN

### Medications to treat high blood pressure

Common medications to treat high blood pressure include:

- 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.

### Stay Active to Reduce Blood Pressure



## Nutrition Tidbits



### DASH Diet

(“Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension”)

The **DASH Diet** is an eating pattern that **lowers blood pressure** as well as **blood cholesterol**, & risk of **heart disease & stroke**

Following the DASH diet:

- Minimizes your consumption of sodium, saturated fat and sugar
- Increases your intake of healthful nutrients

### What to Eat?

Lots of **vegetables & fruit** (8-10 serv/day)  
Choose **whole grains** (barley, whole grain bread, brown rice, oats, quinoa, & bulgur)  
**Low fat/non-fat dairy food** (2-3 serv/day)  
**Nuts, Seeds and Legumes** (such as beans and lentils) (4-5 serv/week)  
**Lean meats, fish, poultry** (6oz/day)

This is the link to the Dash diet on Heart & Stroke website:

<https://www.heartandstroke.ca/get-healthy/healthy-eating/dash-diet>

Do you have questions or specific needs from your CR team?  
Please email us or call your Case Manager  
[phccardiacrehab@providencehealth.bc.ca](mailto:phccardiacrehab@providencehealth.bc.ca)

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