



Wellness Minute

Health Information You Can Use On Your Path To Wellness



A Wellness Approach To Hypertension

“Wellness clinicians look to find the underlying cause of high blood pressure.”

Every time your heart beats, it pumps blood to your whole body through miles of arteries. High blood pressure, also called “hypertension,” refers to blood pushing against the walls of the arteries with too much force or pressure. Blood pressure that rises above normal levels and remains high can lead to serious health problems, including heart attack, heart failure, stroke, and kidney failure to name a few. 25% of all adults in the US are being treated for high blood pressure, and about 33% of people have high blood pressure and don't even know it.

Let's look at the facts about blood pressure so you can better understand how your body works and why it is smart to start protecting yourself now.

With blood pressure measurement, the top number known as the systolic pressure represents the pressure within the arteries when the heart contracts or “beats” while pumping blood. The second number, diastolic pressure, represents the pressure in the arteries when the heart relaxes between beats and fills with blood. An ideal blood pressure according to some experts is 115 / 75. Some doctors consider 120 / 80 good.

The most important thing is to find out what your blood pressure numbers are and be informed, so you know what you should do based on your family history and risk factors. The risk of high blood pressure increases with age as arterial walls lose their elasticity.

There can be many contributing factors, yet 90-95% of high blood pressure is considered idiopathic by conventional medicine, which by definition means “of no known cause.” Hereby, prescription drugs are given, and patients are told they will be on the medication for the rest of their lives. And because reductions in high blood pressure are so slight for various factors, drugs have to be used in combination. So, it is very common for a patient to be on several expensive blood pressure medications for life, medications that can cause serious side effects long term and do not address the underlying physiologic causes.

Wellness professionals take a different approach and look to find the underlying cause. Some

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of the common causes for high blood pressure are stress, excessive consumption of sodium found in refined salt, a diet low in calcium, magnesium, and potassium, insulin resistance, excessive alcohol intake, being overweight, accumulation of heavy metals such as lead, mercury, or cadmium, prescription drugs including steroids, birth control pills, decongestants, NSAIDs, and diet pills, and health problems including chronic kidney disease, thyroid disease, and sleep apnea.

In 2010, about 58.6 million adults in the US were treated for high blood pressure. Direct health care spending to treat hypertension totaled \$42.9 billion with over half of that being spent on prescription drugs. When we consider the huge profits for drug companies, wouldn't you be suspicious if someone recommends you stay on their medication for life? I would. People turn to medications because they are convinced it's their only course of action. If you have high blood pressure, you have reason to be concerned. High blood pressure means you are walking toward the edge of the cliff of cardiovascular disease, stroke, kidney failure, and other complications. But there are natural therapies that can help. You can stop and turn around.

A 12-week, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial of 83 people with systolic hypertension examined the effect of CoQ10 supplements. After the 12 weeks, there was a reduction in systolic blood pressure of 17.8 mm Hg in the CoQ10-treated group. In another double-blind, placebo-controlled study of 935 patients with high blood pressure, researchers found omega-3 oil supplementation resulted in significant

reductions in total cholesterol and blood pressure and significant increase in HDL. In addition, omega-3 oils were shown to prevent primary or secondary coronary heart disease.

Other supplements like vitamin D, vitamin C, magnesium, and potassium have been shown to reduce blood pressure in some individuals. That's why it's best to let your wellness clinician determine which nutrients are best for you. Finding the source of high blood pressure is detective work. It may take regular visits and several tiers of lab testing, but your wellness clinician can help you bring your blood pressure down naturally and safely without the side effects of drugs.

High blood pressure is a warning light on your "health dashboard," signaling there's a problem. Blood pressure medications can cost \$150 or more each month. Are you willing to be put on a medication for the rest of your life with a list of side effects that go on and on? Wouldn't you rather discover what's causing the problem, get healthy again, and feel great? More and more people are keeping their blood pressure in normal ranges, and they are doing it naturally. Get started with an effective plan that is right for you. It's not too late. Get your blood pressure tested and talk to your wellness practitioner who can coach you, find the underlying causes of high blood pressure, and help you make positive changes. The quality of your life matters, and it affects how you enjoy life and your relationships. Don't wait for a crisis. Living with your blood pressure in a safe, normal range can have enormous benefits for your overall optimal health.