Nutrition Information for
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HTN)

Prescription for Improving Healthy Body Status

High blood pressure, or hypertension (HTN), is a common condition that affects the body's arteries. When you have HTN, the force of the blood coming from your heart is too high. This makes the blood push too hard on your arteries. If left untreated, HTN can lead to kidney failure, heart attack and stroke. One of the easiest ways to lower your blood pressure is through your diet.

Did you know that for every 10 points you lower your blood pressure, your risk of having a heart attack or stroke is reduced by 20%*!

National Institute for Health & Care Research

Eating for a healthy heart

- Reduce your portions
- Eat less salt
- Avoid saturated fat
- Eat more fruits and veggies
- Eat less sugar

What can you do to improve your eating habits?

Know healthy portions!

Each time you eat a meal you should divide your plate into quarters. One quarter each for fruit, veggies, whole grains and lean protein. Add a side of low-fat dairy to every plate. Try to avoid getting seconds or filling your plate up more than once.
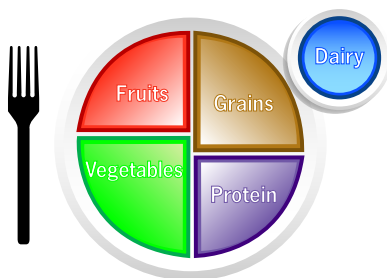
Foods you want to eat most often.

Fruit: When it comes to fruit, fresh or frozen is best. Fresh and frozen fruits don't contain extra sugar. If you prefer canned fruit, try to get fruit "packed in its own juice" rather than "with heavy or light syrup". This will help reduce the amount of added sugar in the fruit.

Veggies: Fresh or frozen are best here too. If you prefer prepackaged, get veggies that are frozen without added sauces instead of canned. Most canned veggies contain extra salt which makes your body hold on to water. If you choose canned veggies, be sure to get ones with no or low added salt.
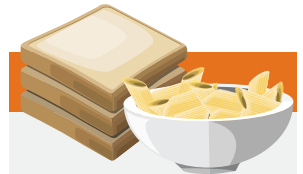
Grains: Rice, bread, and pasta. Brown grains tend to be healthier than white grains. Try to eat foods that contain "whole grains." Some examples would be whole wheat bread or pasta or brown rice.

Protein: Lean protein is best. Lean protein has less fat which is better for your weight. Try to eat skinless chicken or fish instead of higher fat cuts of meat such as ribs, t-bone steak, or regular hamburger. If you prefer these other options, once in a while is ok, but trim off the fat or choose leaner options.

Dairy: A glass of low-fat milk with each meal is great. But if you don't like milk, try a side of low-fat yogurt or cottage cheese.

Reading a Food Label for Heart Health

Serving size:
The calorie and nutrient information on the label applies to one serving. If you eat more than one serving, you get more calories and nutrients.

On the label displayed, if you eat more than 2/3 of a cup of the food, you will eat more than 230 calories.

Calories:
Choose foods that help you get the nutrients you need without going over your daily calorie goal.

Eating too many calories leads to weight gain.

Total fat, saturated fat, and trans-fat:
- Choose foods with less than **5 grams (g)** of total fat per serving. For someone who needs to eat 2,000 calories per day, **50 g to 75 g** per day is a good range.
- Try to pick foods with heart-healthy fats (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats).
- Choose foods with less than **2 g** per serving of saturated fat and **0 g** of trans fat. (These are not heart healthy.) A person who needs to eat 2,000 calories per day should eat no more than **11 g to 15 g** of saturated fat in one day.
- Read ingredients listed on the label. If a food contains partially hydrogenated oils, then it has trans-fat. (If it has less than half a gram per serving, the label may still say trans fat-free.)

Sodium:
Look for foods that are low in sodium. Each day, eat less than **2,300** milligrams sodium (or the limit set for you by your health care team).

Added sugars:
In one day, women should consume less than **25 g** of added sugars and men should consume less than **37.5 g**.

Dietary fiber:
Aim to get **25 g** to **30 g** dietary fiber each day.

To meet this goal, every day choose several foods that have at least **5 g** fiber per serving.

Special Heart Considerations

Avoid Saturated Fats:

Saturated fats are fats that raise your cholesterol and raise your risk of heart disease.

In addition to removing the skin from your chicken or fish, grill it instead of frying it in oil. If you prefer to fry your meat, choose heart healthier oils such as canola or olive oil instead of vegetable oil. When you cook ground meat, choose low fat chicken or beef and drain the grease from the pan. Saturated fats can be found in milk and cheese as well. Choosing low-fat dairy options will reduce the amount of saturated fats.

Reduce Salt:

Too much salt causes your body to hold onto water. The extra water raises your blood pressure.

An easy way to reduce salt in your diet is to not add it when cooking. Read labels on spice mixes carefully as a lot contain added salt. Try to avoid mixes and "instant" products. These usually contain more salt. If you prefer to eat canned vegetables, choose ones that have reduced salt.

Reduce Sugar:

Too much sugar in your diet can increase blood pressure, inflammation in the body, and your risk for diabetes, heart disease, and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease.

A great way to reduce sugar is to not add sugar to your foods. If you are baking, use applesauce, bananas, or other fruits to sweeten your recipes. You can also use non-calorie sweeteners in your beverages.

BWELL *Saginaw*