

WHAT YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE AND HIGH CHOLESTEROL, AND HOW TO PREVENT AND CONTROL THEM

THE BEST NUMBERS FOR CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH

Blood pressure less than 120 over less than 80.* Total cholesterol less than 200 (mg/dL).*

- Check your numbers by getting simple tests at your doctor's office.
- If you have one or both of these conditions, you can improve your numbers. Remember that changing your lifestyle can be as effective as taking medication.
- If you don't have these conditions, prevention is still important so you don't develop them later on.

WAYS TO PREVENT OR LOWER HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE AND HIGH CHOLESTEROL

Follow the ABCS of Heart Health

The Million Hearts® Initiative offers these "ABCS" for reducing your heart health risks and improving your heart health:

- **A** - Take **aspirin** as directed by your health care provider.
- **C** - Manage your **cholesterol**.
- **B** - Control your **blood pressure**.
- **S** - Don't **smoke**.

Eat Healthy Food

You may feel that eating for heart health changes everything you've learned about eating and cooking. But it's easy to cook a healthy meal, whether it's for one person or a large family. Below are tips to help you get started.

- Fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetables.
- Limit salt and salty seasonings.
- Make at least half of your grains whole grains.
- Eat a plant-based meal several times a week.
- Vary your protein choices.
- Keep your kitchen stocked with healthy foods.
- Steer clear of high-fat and fried food.

The tip sheet on Eating Well for Good Health has more information about each of these tips, shows you how to read a food label and provides links to resources.

Be Active

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises that getting at least 30 minutes of moderate aerobic activity five days a week (150 minutes total) is a good benchmark for almost everyone. This could include:

- Brisk walking
- Actively playing with children
- Dancing at a moderate to fast pace
- Light yard work
- Biking at a casual pace
- Light snow shoveling
- Light workout with weights

The tip sheet on Physical Activity for Heart Health offers suggestions for easy ways to add enjoyable physical activities to your daily routine.

Check with your doctor before you start being physically active if you have heart disease, if you're over age 50 and are not used to moderate-level physical activity, if you have a family history of heart disease at an early age, or if you have diabetes or other serious health problems.

*These numbers offer general guidelines, but may vary based on overall health and other factors. Ask your doctor about the results of your high blood pressure and/or cholesterol test and what your goal levels should be.



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