

KEEP BLOOD PRESSURE UNDER CONTROL

Blood pressure is important because the higher your blood pressure, the higher your risk of health problems in the future.

Strain on arteries and heart

High blood pressure, readings 140/90 or higher, puts an extra strain on your arteries and on your heart. Over time, this strain can cause the arteries to become thicker and less flexible, or to become weaker.

Arteries can clog

If your arteries become thicker and less flexible, they become narrower, making them more likely to become clogged with a blood clot or a fatty plaque.

Heart attacks and strokes

Clogged arteries can lead to a heart attack, a stroke, kidney disease, or dementia. Rarely, a weakened artery can also burst.

(Source: Blood Pressure Association www.bloodpressureuk.org)

For more information about health events, go to www.HealthTent.org.



What can be done to reduce your blood pressure?

Cut down on salt.

This can be done by eating more natural foods, fewer processed foods, and not adding extra salt when cooking. Salt naturally raises your blood pressure, so eating less will help reduce this effect.

Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables each day.

Aim to eat at least five portions per day. Eat a variety of different fruits and vegetables. These foods contain potassium which can counter the effect of salt and help to lower blood pressure.

Drink no alcohol or only in moderation.

Drinking alcohol raises your blood pressure. Ideally it is better to abstain. Limit drinks to one for women or two for men per day.

Increase your level of activity.

Increase your activity to at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week. Being active not only gives your heart a good workout, but it also helps your arteries to stay flexible and better able to cope with the demands of daily life.

Lose weight if you're overweight.

Excess weight puts extra strain on your heart and arteries. Your medical professional can determine your ideal weight.

Good news!

The more changes you make, the more benefit you will gain and the greater the effect to be on lowering your blood pressure.