



## Eating Well to Lower Blood Pressure

Amber Specialty Pharmacy has expertise in the management and treatment of hypertension, commonly known as high blood pressure. There are many different high blood pressure medications available, each with pros and cons. If you are beginning to develop high blood pressure or you are working to manage it, a few lifestyle changes can help you keep your numbers under control.

To live life fully and completely it is important to look at the whole picture. This material will help you understand high blood pressure and offers tips to help lower it. In most cases, a combination of lifestyle changes and medication can help to successfully control blood pressure. Our team of pharmacists, dietitians and specialists are available to help you make healthy lifestyle choices.



### What is hypertension (high blood pressure)?

With each heartbeat, blood is pumped through the body, creating pressure against the inside walls of the arteries. When blood pressure is high, the pressure inside the arteries is too strong and causes damage to arteries throughout the body.

This can greatly increase your risk for:

- Heart attack
- Dementia
- Blindness
- Heart Disease
- Stroke
- Chronic kidney disease

Your goal is to lower your blood pressure to prevent future damage. Blood pressure can be lowered with medication and/or lifestyle changes. If you already have high blood pressure and your doctor has prescribed medication, take it as directed.

# What is pre-hypertension?

Pre-hypertension is when your blood pressure is higher than normal but not high enough to be diagnosed as hypertension. It means you will likely develop high blood pressure in the future if left untreated. Lifestyle changes, like losing weight and exercising more, can help lower your blood pressure back to normal.

The chart below will help you understand your blood pressure readings.

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic mm Hg (upper number)		Diastolic mm Hg (lower number)
Normal	Less than 120	and	Less than 80
Elevated	120-129	and	Less than 80
High Blood Pressure Stage 1	130-139	or	80-89
High Blood Pressure Stage 2	140 or higher	or 90	90 or higher
Hypertensive Crisis (CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY)	Higher than 180	and/or	Higher than 120

Table Source: American Heart Association AHA [heart.org](http://heart.org)

## Top Five Ways to Lower Blood Pressure

### 1 Lose Weight

If you're overweight, losing weight is one of the most effective ways to help lower blood pressure. You can lose weight by eating less and moving more. Consider talking to a dietitian to develop a healthy eating plan.



### DASH Eating Plan

The DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) eating plan is advised by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute and the American Heart Association. The DASH eating plan may help lower your blood pressure in 14 days. The DASH eating plan focuses on foods that are rich in nutrients known to help lower blood pressure—potassium, magnesium, calcium, protein and fiber.

- Vegetables: 4 to 5 servings per day
- Fruits: 4 to 5 servings per day
- Lean meats, poultry and seafood: 6 ounces or less per day
- Fat-free and low-fat milk and milk products: 2 to 3 servings per day
- Whole grains: 6 to 8 servings per day
- Nuts, seeds and dry beans: 4 to 5 servings per week
- Sweets and added sugars: 5 or fewer servings per week
- Sodium: 1,500 mg per day (about  $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon)
- Based on 2,000 calories per day.

## 2 Exercise

You can decrease your blood pressure by getting at least 30 minutes of exercise five times a week.

## 3 Reduce Sodium/Increase Potassium

You should aim for 1,500 mg or less per day of sodium. This is less than a teaspoon of salt per day but sodium doesn't just come from a salt shaker, it's hidden in many foods. For example, breads, deli meats, pizza, soup, sandwiches and poultry can all be sources of sodium. If you're unsure how much sodium is in something, check the nutrition label. Foods rich in potassium, such as certain fruits and veggies may help lower blood pressure. Sources include:

- Almonds
- Broccoli
- Cantaloupe
- Dried beans
- Oranges and orange juice
- Raisins
- Squash
- Tomatoes / tomato products
- Bananas
- Brussels sprouts
- Dried apricots
- Edamame
- Potatoes
- Spinach
- Sweet potatoes

## 4 Moderate Alcohol Intake

You can lower your blood pressure by reducing how much alcohol you drink. Men should cut back to two or less per day. Women should have one drink or less per day.

## 5 Easy Meal and Snack Ideas

- Fruit smoothie made with fruit, fat-free yogurt and orange juice.
- Fat-free yogurt topped with granola and fresh berries.
- Bran cereal with sliced banana and skim milk.
- Oatmeal made with skim milk, topped with frozen berries and walnuts.
- Whole-grain English muffin with peanut butter and served with an orange.
- Almonds and dried apricots.
- Baby carrots dipped in hummus.
- Vegetable juice (no-salt-added) and string cheese.
- Homemade trail mix with sunflower seeds, raisins and whole grain-cereal.
- Baked potato topped with low-fat chili and 2 percent-fat shredded cheese.
- Lean pork chop with brown rice, asparagus and cantaloupe.
- Salmon served with a whole-wheat roll, broccoli and strawberries.



# Shopping List

- ▶ Beans or lentils, dried or no-salt added canned
- ▶ Brown rice
- ▶ Fruits (fresh, frozen, canned)
- ▶ Lean beef and pork, poultry and fish
- ▶ Milk, low-fat or fat-free
- ▶ Nuts and seeds, unsalted
- ▶ Orange juice
- ▶ Quinoa
- ▶ Tempeh or low-fat tofu
- ▶ Tomato/vegetable juice—no-salt-added
- ▶ Vegetables (fresh, frozen, canned)
- ▶ Whole-grain cereals and oatmeal
- ▶ Whole-wheat bread or tortillas
- ▶ Yogurt, low-fat or fat-free





## Amber Specialty Pharmacy is here to help.

We offer guidance and support through our dedicated team of healthcare experts. From the beginning, we help you with the enrollment process and review your insurance coverage. We explore financial assistance opportunities to help you lower your medication costs whenever possible. Our pharmacists review your prescriptions with you - including how to take your medication and manage any side effects. Pharmacists are available 24/7 to assist you when you have questions. Our Registered Nurse and Registered Dietitian offer personalized consultations to assist you with any medically-based questions and nutritional care. We stay in touch with you regularly to remind you when it is time to refill your prescriptions. We are always here to help.

This information is intended for educational purposes only. The material is not a substitute for professional help or medical diagnosis. It is important that you consult a medical professional if this information leads you to believe there is a concern for you or your patient(s). The diagnosis and treatment of all physical and/or psychological disorders requires a trained professional.