

BETTER HEALTH 4 YOU

SMART LOCAL 36 BENEFIT FUND

BP, CHOLESTEROL & HEART

Hypertension Questions

My blood pressure is always higher in the doctor's office than it is at home. Why is this?

You could have white coat hypertension. White coat hypertension occurs when the blood pressure readings at your doctor's office are higher than they are in other settings, such as your home. It's called white coat hypertension because the health care professionals who measure your blood pressure sometimes wear white coats.

It was thought that white coat hypertension was caused by the stress that doctor's appointments can create. Once you'd left the doctor's office, if your blood pressure normalized, the thought was that there wasn't a problem. However, some doctors think that white coat hypertension might signal that you're at risk of developing high blood pressure as a long-term condition. The cardiovascular risk associated with white coat hypertension may be slightly higher compared with having a normal blood pressure at all times. The same may be true for people who have masked

hypertension, meaning their blood pressure is normal at the doctor's office, but spikes periodically when measured in other settings. It's thought that even temporary increases in your blood pressure could develop into a long-term problem.

If you have white coat hypertension, talk to your doctor about home monitoring of your condition. Your doctor may ask you to wear a blood pressure monitor (ambulatory blood pressure monitor) for up to 24 hours to track your blood pressure during the daytime as well as while you sleep. This can help determine if your high blood pressure only occurs in the doctor's office or if it's a persistent condition that needs treatment.

Can weight loss reduce the need for blood pressure medication?

If you're overweight, losing even 5 pounds (2.3 kilograms) can lower your blood pressure. As you slim down, it may be possible to reduce

HEART HEALTHY

Beef Stroganoff

- ½ cup onion, chopped
- ½ lb. boneless round steak, cut ¼-inch thick, all fat removed
- 4 cups uncooked yolkless egg noodles
- ½ can fat-free cream of mushroom soup
- ½ cup water
- 1 TBS. flour
- ½ tsp. paprika
- ½ cup fat-free sour cream

Sauté onion and add beef, cook until tender. Cook noodles as directed on the package. Whisk together soup, water and flour and cook until thickens. Add soup mixture and paprika to beef. Stir in sour cream. Pour over noodles to serve.

Nutrition Information Per serving: 273 cal., 5g total fat, 2g sat fat, 37g carbs, 20g protein, 2g fiber, 193 mg sodium. SERVINGS: 4



your dose of blood pressure medication — or stop taking your blood pressure medication completely. Don't make changes to your blood pressure medication on your own, however. Do so only after getting your doctor's OK. Remember, high blood pressure isn't a problem you can treat and then ignore. Even if you're able to stop taking blood pressure medication, it's still important to maintain healthy habits. Here's how:

- Eat a healthy diet—the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet is an effective eating plan for lowering blood pressure.
- Get 30 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week.
- Limit alcohol.
- Quit smoking.
- Schedule regular checkups with your doctor to make sure you're keeping your blood pressure in check.

Can eating more whole-grain foods help lower my blood pressure?

It might. Eating more whole-grain foods on a regular basis may help reduce your chance of developing high blood pressure (hypertension).

Whole grains are grains that include the entire grain kernel —

they haven't had their bran and germ removed by refining. Whole-grain foods are a rich source of healthy nutrients, including fiber, potassium, magnesium, folate, iron and selenium. Eating more whole-grain foods offers many health benefits that can work together to help reduce your risk of high blood pressure by:

- Aiding in weight control, since whole-grain foods can make you feel full longer
- Increasing your intake of potassium, which is linked to lower blood pressure
- Decreasing your risk of insulin resistance
- Reducing damage to your blood vessels

If you already have high blood pressure, eating more whole-grain foods might help lower your blood pressure and possibly reduce your need for blood pressure medication.

The Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet and the Mediterranean diet both suggest including whole grains as part of a healthy diet.

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, as part of an overall healthy diet, adults should eat at least 85 grams of whole-grain foods a day — that's about 3 ounces, or the equivalent of three slices of whole-wheat bread.

Is multigrain the same thing as whole grain? Which is the healthier choice?

"Multigrain" and "whole grain" are not interchangeable terms. Whole grain means that all parts of the grain kernel — the bran, germ and endosperm — are used. In contrast, multigrain means that a food contains more than one type of grain, although none of them may necessarily be whole grains. The same goes for other variations, such as the term "seven grain."

Whole-grain foods are a healthy choice because they contain nutrients, fiber and other healthy plant compounds found naturally in the grain. Look for products that list the first ingredient as "whole wheat," "whole oats" or a similar whole grain. While "whole grains" may signify one of many types of healthy grains, "whole wheat" labels the specific grain used. Either term may identify a food that's a good source of fiber, several B vitamins and minerals.

Healthy adults should eat at least three 1-ounce (28-gram) equivalents of whole grains a day as part of a balanced diet.

