



High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) & Stroke

What is high blood pressure?

- Blood pressure that is always higher than 140/90mmHg or higher than 130/80mmHg for people with diabetes.
- The top number (systolic) is the pressure in your blood vessels when your heart is pumping. The bottom number (diastolic) is the pressure in your blood vessels when your heart is at rest.

Why is Hypertension a Risk for Stroke?

- The increased pressure causes damage to the inside walls of the blood vessels.
- This makes them less flexible and weaker. The artery can then rupture or get blocked by a blood clot.

What can I do to help lower my blood pressure?

1. Medications
 - Take medications prescribed by your doctor. Do not stop them without first speaking to your doctor.
 - Take your medication at the same time everyday.
 - Use reminders so you do not miss a dose (e.g calendar, phone).
2. Life Style
 - Get active – for 20 minutes a day. Find something you enjoy such as walking, dancing or yoga.
 - Eat a healthy diet that is **low** in fat, salt and sugar. Eat **more** fresh fruit, vegetables and whole grains. Try to increase intake of fish, poultry and lean meats.
 - Drink more water.
 - Quit smoking (it doubles your risk of stroke).
 - Avoid heavy alcohol use. This increases the risk of high blood pressure and stroke.