

# DASH Diet for Better Health



## A Diet to Help Reduce Hypertension and Lower Blood Pressure

Having hypertension and high blood pressure can affect how you feel and limit the activities you normally enjoy with family and friends. By making healthier choices, like following the DASH Diet, along with adopting a healthier lifestyle, you can take charge of your health and regain more energy and vitality.

### Did you know?

The DASH Diet plan has many advantages to improve your health. By focusing on eating whole foods, increasing your fiber intake, and consuming less saturated fats and sugars, you can lower your blood pressure and reduce hypertension. It's also a healthy way of eating for the entire family. By adopting the DASH Diet, you can also reduce your risk of stroke, heart disease and kidney stones.

**Here are the benefits of the DASH Diet and other lifestyle changes that promote better health.**

### Eat Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits and vegetables are a natural source of potassium, which has been shown to lower blood pressure. Some studies show that low levels of potassium may be related to hypertension. A diet rich in plant foods can provide enough potassium and help maintain your levels to fight hypertension.

## Healthy Tips

### Balance is Key

A well-balanced diet that is low in fats can help lower blood pressure.

### Be Active

Physical activity reduces hypertension and increases your energy.

### DASH for Life

The DASH Diet can reduce your risk of diseases so that you can live a happier and healthier life.





### **Go Nuts!**

Unsalted nuts are an excellent source of monounsaturated fats. These fats help to lower your bad cholesterol (LDL), and increase your good cholesterol (HDL). Nuts are also rich in antioxidants, which can help reduce damage to blood vessels. Antioxidants also keep your blood vessels healthy for unrestricted blood flow.

### **Choose Low-Fat/Non-Dairy**

Calcium is not only important for bones, but for blood pressure regulation. While dairy foods are rich in calcium, high-fat dairy contains saturated fats, which are not good for heart health. Non-dairy sources of calcium include soybeans, collard greens and calcium-fortified beverages such as almond milk.

### **Limit Saturated Fat**

A DASH Diet is low in saturated fats, sodium and total fat. Studies have shown that a diet low in saturated fats can lower your risk of heart disease and hypertension. Plant foods are a great way to get protein and other

nutrients without adding saturated fat to your diet. Beans, lentils and tofu are excellent choices of protein without the saturated fat.

### **Be Active**

Physical activity is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. It helps to promote heart health and improves your overall fitness so that you are not out of breath when climbing a set of stairs, or performing light activity. You can reduce your blood pressure if you do aerobic exercise regularly. You should try to get 60 minutes of exercise each day, or most days, or 150 minutes per week.

### **Limit Alcohol**

You should monitor your alcohol intake. Reducing alcohol consumption may help to reduce blood pressure. One alcoholic drink is equal to either 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof liquor. Women should consume no more than one drink per day. Men should consume no more than two drinks or less, per day.

**For more information about the DASH Diet and other methods to manage hypertension and blood pressure, speak with your doctor or your healthcare team.**

Source: [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org), American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

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