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## Ways to Lower Your Blood Pressure Naturally

Uncontrolled high blood pressure is a very serious health concern that can cause heart disease and increase your risk of having a stroke. It is especially dangerous because high blood pressure (hypertension) often has no warning signs or symptoms, and it is extremely common.

**The risk of developing high blood pressure is over 90%** for individuals in developed countries, according to an editorial in the *Lancet*<sup>1</sup>. Some of the main causes of hypertension include lifestyle factors that you have total control over. Most of these are to do with your insulin levels (for example, eating a high-grain and high-sugar diet, and not exercising).

The sad reality is, over half of people taking multiple medications for high blood pressure are still not able to manage their condition.

The great news is that **over 85 percent of those who have hypertension can normalise their blood pressure through lifestyle changes**. If you have hypertension or hope to avoid it, there are simple steps you can take to balance your blood pressure, glucose, leptin, and insulin levels - all at the same time - without harmful and/or ineffective medications.

It's really no surprise that hypertension is on the rise. In fact, it's to be expected when the diet of choice - or sometimes prescribed diet - for so many is some variety of a high grain, low fat regimen. This is exactly the wrong nutritional combination if you have high blood pressure, or if you are hoping to prevent the condition.

### The Sugar Connection

Groundbreaking research published in 1998 in the journal *Diabetes* reported that nearly two-thirds of the test subjects who were insulin resistant (IR) also had high blood pressure.

This crucial connection between IR and hypertension is yet another example of how wide-ranging the debilitating effects of high insulin, leptin and blood glucose levels can have on

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<sup>1</sup> Lancet 2007;370;539, Hypertension: uncontrolled and conquering the world (editorial)

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your body.

Additional research revealed that if your blood pressure doesn't drop notably overnight, you run an increased risk of having cardiovascular problems. Here, the connection is also elevated blood sugar levels. Elevated blood sugars can result in diabetes and other diseases which increase cardiovascular problems.

**Chances are if you have hypertension, you also have poorly controlled blood sugar levels.** The two problems often go hand in hand. And if your hypertension is the direct result of an out-of-control blood sugar level, then getting your blood sugars normalised will also bring your blood pressure readings into the healthy range.

## **1. Eliminate Grains and Sugars from Your Diet**

If you have high blood pressure, the first thing you should do is remove all grains and sweets from your diet until both your weight and your blood pressure have normalised.

When you eliminate grains and sweets from your diet, you are on your way to achieving a healthy level of insulin in your bloodstream.

**The role insulin plays in high blood pressure cannot be overstated.**

If you are like most people with hypertension, you have insulin receptors that don't work efficiently. You have a condition known as insulin resistance. To compensate, your body generates more insulin.

Eating sugars and grains - including any type of bread, pasta, corn, potatoes, or rice - will cause your insulin levels to remain elevated. Elevated insulin levels are very toxic and can lead to devastating consequences for your health.

Insulin stores magnesium, but if your insulin receptors are blunted and your cells grow resistant to insulin, you can't store magnesium and it passes out of your body through urination. Magnesium stored in your cells relaxes muscles. If your magnesium level is too low, your blood vessels will constrict rather than relax, which will raise your blood pressure and decrease your energy level.

Insulin also affects your blood pressure by causing your body to retain sodium. Sodium retention causes fluid retention. Fluid retention in turn causes high blood pressure, and can ultimately lead to congestive heart failure.

When you consume a high-carbohydrate meal, you raise both your blood sugar and your insulin level. A high level of insulin acts as a very strong stimulant to your nervous system. The reaction of your nervous system causes spasms - constrictions - of your arteries. And if you already suffer from hypertension, this further constriction of your blood vessels can increase your risk of a heart attack.

## **2. Eat Right for Your Nutritional Type**

Eating according to your nutritional type tends to normalize elevated blood pressures in the vast majority of people.

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When you address your nutritional type - your unique biochemical needs, which are based on your specific genetics - your health problems are addressed at the foundational level, and you are far more likely to achieve a permanent solution for regaining your health.

If you have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, or are overweight, it is highly likely that you are eating too many grains - yes, even unrefined whole grains - as this is the most common culprit causing your insulin level to become abnormal. The Nutritional Typing diet, however, will help you to not only reduce your intake of sugar and grains (which is beneficial for almost everyone), but even more importantly, will help you determine your optimal ratios of carbohydrates to healthy fats and proteins.

### **3. Normalise Your Omega 6:3 Ratio**

Both omega-3 and omega-6 fats are essential for your health. Most Australians, however, are getting too much omega-6 in their diet and far too little omega-3. Consuming omega-3 fats is one of the best ways to re-sensitize your insulin receptors if you suffer from insulin resistance.

Omega-6 fats are found in safflower, sunflower, canola, soy and corn oil. If you're consuming a lot of these oils, you'll want to avoid or limit them.

Omega-3 fats are typically found in flaxseed oil, walnut oil and fish, with fish being by far the best source. Unfortunately, most fresh fish today contains dangerously high levels of mercury, and poor quality fish oils can make you much worse instead of better! Your best bet is to use a high-quality 'practitioner prescription only' fish oil, and to keep it refrigerated.

### **4. Eliminate Caffeine**

The connection between caffeine consumption and high blood pressure is not well understood, but there is ample evidence to indicate that if you have hypertension, coffee and other caffeinated drinks and foods can exacerbate your condition.

Caffeine is a drug, and while it's entirely legal and widely consumed, it can have a powerful affect on your individual physiology.

If you want to eliminate caffeine from your diet, try to do it gradually over a period of days or even weeks in order to avoid withdrawal symptoms like headaches.

### **5. Normalise Your Weight**

If you are overweight, have diabetes, already have high blood pressure or are at risk for developing hypertension, it's crucial to your health and longevity that you normalize your weight.

Studies show that even a modest weight loss, when maintained, can reduce blood pressure long-term. The key is to keep the weight off, however, because your blood pressure will quite likely go back up right along with any weight you regain.

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The best way to optimise your weight and regain or improve your health is to first understand the profound influence the foods you eat have on the workings of your body.

Two very important things to keep in mind:

- Food is fuel
- You are unique in terms of the type of fuel your body needs for optimal health

The simple truth is that one-size-fits-all diets - whether intended for weight loss, or to address a particular health concern - will not work for everyone. That's why some people are helped by, for example, a high protein-low carbohydrate regimen while others become ill from it.

There is no perfect diet for everyone.

The challenge is to learn what the best foods are for you. Part of doing that is by discovering your Nutritional Type.

Once you learn your Nutritional Type and begin eating in accordance with your body's needs, you'll be making food and other nutritional choices that will address your weight issues and other health concerns.

Eating for your Nutritional Type is not like dieting.

With a typical diet, you're apt to feel deprived much of the time - maybe even ill - because the diet might be all wrong for your individual nutritional requirements. Consuming the right fuel for your body's needs, however, can have an immediate, positive impact on the way you feel, how you look, and your health overall.

It is not a 'quick fix,' mind you - no healthy lifestyle change is - but you will notice improvement as soon as you begin to eat the appropriate foods for your personal biochemistry and metabolism.

## **6. Learn to Manage Your Emotional Stress**

The link between stress and hypertension is well documented.

Doctors and health care professionals committed to treating the whole person, rather than a list of physical symptoms, are well aware of the crucial connection between diseases of the body and unresolved emotional conflict.

Studies back this up, and in fact, it has been shown that some people with heart disease can lower their risk of subsequent cardiac events by over 70 percent simply by learning to manage their stress.

Suppressed negative emotions such as fear, anger and sadness can severely limit your ability to cope with the unavoidable every day stresses of life.

It's not the stressful events themselves that are harmful, but your lack of ability to cope.

The good news is, we offer treatments to quickly and effectively transform your suppressed, negative emotions, and to relieve stress.

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## 7. Use Exercise as a Drug

It's no secret that regular physical activity is a far better drug than anything a pharmaceutical company can manufacture, as are the 'side effects' of exercise. Regardless of the primary reason you start an exercise program, your efforts will be rewarded in countless other ways.

A rigorous comprehensive exercise program seems to be very important in producing long-term benefits in people with high blood pressure. Depending on your physical condition when you embark on an exercise program, you may need to consult with a health care professional, who can help you increase to the intensity required to make a difference in lowering your insulin levels.

As a general rule, weight bearing exercises like walking, jogging and running are best. Studies indicate that aerobic activities like these are most beneficial for lowering blood pressure.

Cycling and swimming take longer to produce the same results, but if you enjoy them, by all means include them in your routine.

Swimming in the ocean is highly preferable to swimming in a chlorinated pool, as pool chemicals present their own set of health problems.

Nearly every program should incorporate a fair measure of anaerobic sprint or burst-type exercises, as these have been shown to be even more effective than aerobic exercises at reducing the risk of dying from a heart attack.

Weight training is another wonderful strategy, especially if you can extend your workout time to 90 minutes a few days a week to include both aerobic and anaerobic exercises in those longer sessions.

If you are insulin resistant, you'll definitely want to include weight training in your exercise program. When you work individual muscle groups, you increase blood flow to those muscles. Good blood flow will increase your insulin sensitivity.

If you are overweight with hypertension, you should engage in relatively intense exercise six to nine hours a week in order to decrease the sensitivity of your insulin receptors. Intense means exerting yourself sufficiently that you can't comfortably talk to someone during your workout. Of course, you will need to make sure that you don't raise your blood pressure excessively during your exercise.

## 8. Get a Daily Dose of Sunshine

Believe it or not, the farther you live from the equator, the higher your risk of developing high blood pressure. And did you know that blood pressure is typically higher in winter months than during the summer?

Sunlight actually affects blood pressure in several ways:

- Sun exposure causes your body to produce vitamin D. Lack of sunlight reduces your vitamin D stores and increases parathyroid hormone production, which increases blood pressure.

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- Vitamin D deficiency has been linked to insulin resistance (IR) and Syndrome X (also known as Metabolic Syndrome), a group of health problems that can include IR, elevated cholesterol and triglyceride levels, obesity, and high blood pressure.
- Vitamin D is also a negative inhibitor of your body's renin-angiotensin system (RAS), which regulates blood pressure. If you're vitamin D deficient, it can cause inappropriate activation of your RAS, which may lead to hypertension.
- Additionally, exposure to UV rays is thought to cause the release of endorphins, chemicals in your brain that produce feelings of euphoria and relief from pain. Endorphins naturally relieve stress, and stress management is an important factor in resolving hypertension.

Exposure to sunlight is a basic requirement for your health, and not only to normalize your blood pressure. Vitamin D helps systems and organs throughout your body function properly.

Vitamin D receptors can be found in almost every type of cell in your body.

### **A Word About Vitamin D and Other Supplements...**

Many over-the-counter vitamin D supplements are actually vitamin D2, which is synthetic, and not nearly as beneficial as the real vitamin D, which is D3 (cholecalciferol). **If you want quality results you need quality products.** The vast majority of supplements sold at our clinic are 'practitioner prescription only', and are far superior (and safer) than those available from supermarkets and health food stores. Because of their greater effectiveness, they are also better value for money. Supermarkets will carry whatever products sell best, and in our experience, the more a product is advertised on TV the worse it is. At our clinic we are more interested in **what works best** rather than **what sells best.**

### **For Mums of Newborns**

Studies have shown that babies who are breastfed for more than 12 months have a dramatically reduced risk of developing hypertension. Researchers believe long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids (the same found in fatty fish) in breast milk provide a protective effect for newborns.

### **Quick tricks**

Increasing nitric oxide in your blood can open constricted blood vessels and lower your blood pressure. Methods for increasing the compound include taking a warm bath, and breathing in and out through one nostril (close off the other nostril and your mouth).

### **A Food to Avoid**

Herbalists avoid giving **liquorice** to clients with hypertension as it can increase blood pressure.

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## Medications

According to a survey reported by the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA) in July 2003, despite the number of drugs available and number of prescriptions written, **no real progress has been made** in controlling high blood pressure among the U.S. adult population.

The survey found that:

- One in three U.S. adults has high blood pressure
- Nearly a third of people with hypertension don't know they have the condition
- Over 40 percent were not being treated
- Nearly three out of four people did not have their hypertension under control

Another study reported by the *Archives of Internal Medicine* in 2000 revealed that 30 percent of patients with mild to moderate hypertension responded well to a *placebo* - proof that they were able to control their blood pressure without medication.

Yet another study reported by the British Medical Association in June 2003, revealed that **97 percent** of people taking drugs for high blood pressure had **suffered significant side effects** at some point during treatment.

That means you only have three chances out of 100 that you will be side-effect-free if you choose to rely on drugs to treat your high blood pressure. Study after study shows that using pharmaceuticals is a short-term, unreliable, and often quite dangerous approach to treating symptoms, rather than the underlying causes of disease.

## Natural Approaches

We believe that if you can treat or prevent a health problem naturally without the use of drugs or surgery, then that is a better way to go, especially in the long term. **Both naturopathy and acupuncture can successfully be used to lower your blood pressure and improve the health of your heart.**

## What Now?

Please ring **3376 6911** to make an appointment to have a thorough Assessment, and to find out the most effective ways to reduce your blood pressure naturally.

**Please note-** High blood pressure is a dangerous condition, and so lowering your medication should only be done once your pressure has come down far enough, and with the approval of your doctor.

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## Important Product for Heart Problems

It is surprising how often top athletes, or those that train heavily, die at a relatively early age from heart failure, even though they should have great hearts from all the exercise they do. The big reason for this is a **severe mineral deficiency**, caused by them constantly losing minerals through their sweat. **Eventually the heart becomes so depleted that it gives out or starts to play up.**

Minerals are extremely important for almost any aspect of our health, yet we take it for granted that we get enough in our diets. For example, vitamins will not work if there are not enough minerals in our body. According to a study by the CSIRO, **the nutrient levels in our foods are around half of what they were 43 years ago.** A store-bought multivitamin and mineral product usually won't provide the right level of minerals in an easily absorbable form, so that **you may only be absorbing 20%** (sometimes even less) of the minerals in the tablet.



The ideal way to get minerals is in a colloidal form. A colloid is a particle of a substance that retains its identity and stays suspended in a liquid. Colloids are microscopic in size and easily absorbed by the cells of the body. Plants convert minerals into this form. Plant-derived colloidal minerals have a natural negative electrical charge that attracts to the positively charged walls of your intestines (like a magnet attracts iron). Because of this charge and their size, **your body can absorb over 90% of plant-derived colloidal minerals!**

Almost every person in Australia would benefit from taking these minerals. They are **great to help prevent many degenerative and aging problems.** Plant-derived minerals are especially important for

- **those with heart problems of any type**
- those who train heavily or sweat a lot
- those wanting to conceive
- pregnant women
- anyone who feels run down, tired, or depleted
- anyone with skin problems (take the minerals internally and apply the liquid externally also)

There is currently only one supplier of plant-derived colloidal minerals in the world- Majestic Earth. We carry two versions of their products- the plain version, which has a metallic taste, and a natural cherry-flavoured version. Plant-derived colloidal minerals could help you enjoy a long and healthy life.

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