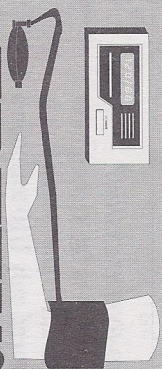


HYPERTENSION

◆ CONCERNING YOUR HEALTH ◆



WHAT IS BLOOD PRESSURE?

The force or the pressure of the blood flowing through the arteries (arteries are the "pipes" that carry blood away from the heart) is the blood pressure. The blood pressure varies as the heart beats. When the heart contracts, pushing blood out from the heart, the blood pressure increases, and the maximum pressure achieved is referred to as the systolic blood pressure. When the heart relaxes in between beats, the pressure in the artery decreases, and the lowest pressure reached is referred to as the diastolic pressure. The first number is the systolic pressure, the second number is the diastolic pressure.

WHAT IS NORMAL BLOOD PRESSURE?

As a general rule the upper limit for systolic blood pressure is 140 mmHg and the upper limit for diastolic blood pressure is 90 mmHg. Younger people have lower blood pressure than this; elderly people typically have higher pressures. A blood pressure may vary with the time of day, or whether one stands, sits or lies down. Thus, there will be variations in blood pressure from one time to the next.

WHAT IS HYPERTENSION?

When the pressure of the blood inside the arteries stays high over a long period of time, this is called high blood pressure/hypertension (the term hypertension does not in any way imply tension). Blood pressure may increase temporarily when one drinks a cup of coffee, performs physical exercise or is momentarily stressed, but in each instance the blood pressure will be found to be normal when measurements are repeated.

Hypertension usually causes no symptoms. Only by performing actual measurements of the blood pressure can one know if it is normal or high.

WHAT CONDITIONS CAN RESULT FROM HYPERTENSION?

- Strokes
- Heart Attacks
- Irreversible Damage of Kidneys, Pancreas, & Retina of the Eye

WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO HYPERTENSION?

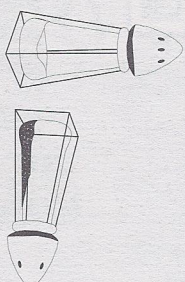
High Salt Intake—Salt is the second most used (and abused) food additive after sugar. Salt is necessary to life but we need only 1/10 teaspoon a day to stay in good health. Most people consume about 30 times this amount per day. When we eat more salt than our kidneys are designed to handle, the excess salt accumulates like toxic waste that must be diluted before the body can handle it. Water is retained to keep the salt diluted and the blood pressure goes up trying to shove all the extra salt water through the kidneys. If we can limit our salt intake to one teaspoon per day, hypertension could be prevented.

Obesity—Obese people are five times more likely to have hypertension. The extra fat requires extra blood vessels. It takes higher blood pressures to get the blood through the extra blood vessels.

Arterial Plaque—When the arteries are clogged and narrowed, it takes extra force to pump the blood through the arteries, resulting in higher blood pressure.

Estrogen—A hormone found in birth control pills and used for menopausal symptoms causes fluid to be retained, thus raising the blood pressure.

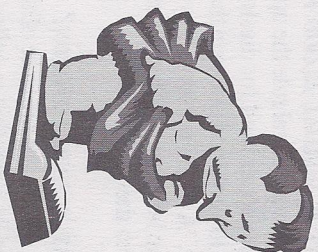
Alcohol—Alcohol consumption tends to elevate the blood pressure—at least 5-15% of the cases of hypertension are related to alcohol use.



IS THERE A WAY TO AVOID HYPERTENSION?

Several scientific studies have shown that hypertension can be reversed by lifestyle changes including:

- Reduce salt intake
- Weight reduction
- Eat a low-fat, high fiber diet
- Delete alcohol from the diet
- Regular exercise program



WHAT ABOUT MEDICATIONS FOR HYPERTENSION?

There are numerous medications on the market that will lower blood pressure. Some are lifesaving. The drugs do not cure, they only control blood pressure. They must be taken for life and can produce some very unpleasant side effects such as: fatigue, depression and lack of sexual desire. They may actually promote atherosclerosis, diabetes and gouty arthritis.

CAUTION: Anyone taking blood pressure medications should not change doses or stop medicines without consulting their physician. If a person is committed to changing their lifestyle, their physician will probably be glad to adjust their medication accordingly.

