

If diuretic therapy is not effective in bringing your blood pressure down, your doctor will add other medications to the treatment program.

Several different types of antihypertensive drugs are available: nerve blockers, beta blockers, blood vessel dilators, hormone inhibitors, and calcium channel blockers. Each type of drug works differently, but basically they control blood pressure by relaxing and opening up narrowed blood vessels. Since everyone is different, your doctor may have to try more than one drug to find the most effective medication with the fewest side effects. When your doctor prescribes an antihypertensive drug, ask about the type and possible side effects.

Be sure to keep appointments with your doctor. Several visits may be necessary to determine exactly the right drug and dosage. Once your blood pressure is under control, you will need to see your doctor only about three or four times a year.

Remember...diuretics and antihypertensive medications lower your blood pressure only while you are taking them. You cannot stop taking the drug, even after your blood pressure is lowered.

Controlling High Blood Pressure



**JANE PHILLIPS
MEDICAL CENTER**

"...responsive to the needs of those we serve"

3500 E. Frank Phillips Blvd. Bartlesville OK 74006 918/333-7200

It's your life
Live it well



**JANE PHILLIPS
MEDICAL CENTER**



At present there is no cure for high blood pressure, but it can be controlled to reduce the chances of developing problems. This takes a team effort, and you are the most important member of the team. Mild or moderate high blood pressure can often be controlled successfully by a low-salt diet, exercise, and weight loss.

Low Sodium Diet

Sodium (salt) causes your body to retain fluids, which can put extra strain on the heart and make the blood vessels narrow. For this reason, low-sodium diets are recommended to reduce the amount of retained water, which then helps to lower the blood pressure. Foods that are high in potassium and calcium also help lower blood pressure.

Regular Exercise

A moderate amount of regular exercise has several benefits. It improves your overall physical conditioning, helps with weight loss by burning extra calories, reduces blood cholesterol, and may have a more direct effect on lowering your blood pressure.



Proper Body Weight

Maintaining yourself at the right weight for your height and bone structure is important. Extra fat makes your heart work harder. A low-fat, low-calorie diet has the further advantage of reducing your blood cholesterol levels and delaying the beginning of arteriosclerosis. People with high blood pressure can consume moderate amounts of alcohol (about two drinks per day), but a heavy intake of alcohol raises blood pressure. If you are on a weight reduction diet, keep in mind that alcohol is high in calories.



Reduce Stress

Although high blood pressure is not caused by “bad nerves,” prolonged stress does increase blood pressure. Learning to relax and taking time out to do things you enjoy should be part of your blood pressure control program.

Medication

Medication is necessary if you have severe high blood pressure or high blood pressure that is not controlled by diet, exercise, and weight reduction. Diuretics (water pills) are often prescribed to eliminate the excess sodium from your body.

