

8 Ways to Improve Your Blood Pressure

1. Avoid tobacco.

Smoking increases blood pressure. If you are unable to break the habit on your own, talk with your doctor about ways to quit.



2. Be active.

Moderate physical activity can help regulate your blood pressure. If you aren't currently physically active, take baby steps when you begin and work up to at least **90 to 150 minutes** of physical activity each week.



3. Aim for a healthy weight.

If you're overweight, losing just 5 to 10 percent of your current weight can improve blood pressure.



8. Have regular checkups.

Routine checkups, including blood work, help detect health issues early on, reducing your risk of stroke, heart disease and heart attack.



7. Get good sleep.

Adults should get between **7 and 9 hours** of sleep every night. Try to stick to a sleep schedule; go to bed and wake up at the same time each day. Do something relaxing before bedtime. Turn off or dim bright light from TVs or phones.



6. Manage stress.

Long-term stress causes your heart rate to increase and blood pressure to rise. Learn how to manage your stress by practicing relaxation techniques. Make time for enjoyable activities or hobbies.



4. Eat well.

Include a variety of fruits and vegetables. Select poultry without skin and lean meats. Enjoy at least 8 ounces of fish each week such as salmon, trout, tuna and sardines. Choose whole grain bread, cereal, pasta and brown rice as well as fat-free or low-fat milk products. Limit alcohol and caffeine.



5. Cut down on salt.

Too much sodium (salt) causes extra water to be stored in your body, raising your blood pressure. Aim to consume less than **1,500 mg** of salt a day.

