

the magazine of Blood Pressure UK

ISSUE 33 > Summer 2013

POSITIVE

pressure

CELEBRITY CHEF
RAYMOND BLANC
SHARES HIS TIPS ON
HEALTHY COOKING

LET'S MAKE IT A
HEALTHY
BARBECUE
SUMMER

TIME TO GET ACTIVE
ADVICE ON EXERCISE

PLUS

Positive news about
the benefits of sunlight



**Blood Pressure
UK**

Helping you to lower your
blood pressure

pressure is the magazine of UK charity, Blood Pressure UK. We aim to significantly improve the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of high blood pressure in order to prevent death and disability from stroke and heart disease. We are an independent registered charity and rely on donations and grants to carry out our work. All views expressed within the magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Blood Pressure UK. The information in this magazine is designed to support and supplement your relationship with your doctor, not to replace it.

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Positive about your blood pressure

Welcome

**From Katharine Jenner,
Chief Executive Officer**

Welcome to the Summer edition of Positive Pressure Magazine. I am thrilled to be speaking to you as Chief Executive Officer, having worked alongside Blood Pressure UK for many years.

Thank you to our outgoing CEO Paul Newman for all his hard work in steering the charity through the difficult recession. His leadership resulted in some hard decisions, such as closing the telephone helpline and moving the team from its long term home by St George's Hospital in Tooting to the Wolfson Institute, part of Barts and The London Hospital in Barbican, to join our sister charity Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH). I would also like to thank the staff, Trustees, Chairman and all our stakeholders for their support in my new role.

Working alongside CASH I hope to continue to progress with improving the diagnosis and treatment of raised blood pressure. As a registered nutritionist and public health advocate, I am looking forward to making sure that the new and emerging science for blood pressure management only reaches you if it is sensible and evidence-based, I am fed up of reading that everything will either kill or cure us!



In this issue we ask if stress can cause high blood pressure and what kind of exercise is best for reducing blood pressure, we have new information on ambulatory blood pressure measurements (ABPM) and some advice on how to have a healthy BBQ, including a lovely recipe from our friends at LoSalt. Plus I hope you enjoy our new feature 'Ask BPUK', where you can ask our hypertension nurse for advice on managing your blood pressure.

I also hope you will put the free herbs, generously provided by Schwartz, to good use – may they inspire you to throw away the salt shaker!

I look forward to getting to know you in the coming months, but for now all you need to know about me are my blood pressure numbers – 106/61!

SIGN UP FOR YOUR COPY OF POSITIVE PRESSURE

If you've enjoyed this magazine but this isn't your own copy, then why not sign up to become a Blood Pressure UK member and have your own Positive Pressure delivered direct to your door, together with a host of other members' benefits?

Call us on **0207 882 6255** or visit
www.bloodpressureuk.org/Supportingyou

Blood pressure news

New NICE guidelines on hypertension to include ambulatory blood pressure monitoring (ABPM)

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance and standards on the promotion of good health and the prevention and treatment of ill health. NICE has developed a new quality standard on hypertension to help GPs and healthcare professionals diagnose and treat high blood pressure.

Ambulatory blood pressure monitoring (ABPM) is the recording of a patient's blood pressure at regular intervals under normal living and working conditions, usually across a 24 hour period. ABPM is the most accurate method for confirming a diagnosis of hypertension, and its use should reduce unnecessary treatment in people who do not have true hypertension. ABPM has also been shown to be superior to other methods of multiple blood pressure measurement for predicting blood pressure-related clinical events. NICE recognise that hypertension is one of the most important, but preventable, causes of premature ill health and death in the UK. It is a major risk factor for stroke, heart attack, heart failure, chronic kidney disease and cognitive decline. Raised blood pressure is one of the three main modifiable risk factors for cardiovascular disease, (along with high cholesterol and smoking) which account for 80% of all cases of premature coronary heart disease (CHD).

Bryan Williams, Trustee of Blood Pressure UK said: "This NICE quality standard for hypertension sets out a clear framework for the management of millions of people in England with the condition. It will help to improve detection and treatment and reduce the impact of one of the most

"This NICE quality standard for hypertension sets out a clear framework for the management of millions of people in England with the condition"

important preventable causes of premature heart disease, stroke, dementia and death."

Gareth Beevers, Professor of Medicine at Birmingham's City Hospital, on behalf of Blood Pressure UK commented: "We are pleased to see the NICE quality standard for hypertension recommending that 24-hour ambulatory blood pressure monitoring (ABPM), or

failing that, home blood pressure measurement, should be routine in the evaluation of recently diagnosed hypertensives. "This is also the ideal time to encourage lifestyle corrections such as; avoiding or reducing obesity, reducing salt intake, gradually increasing exercise and limiting alcohol consumption." NICE's quality standard on hypertension includes six quality statements covering the management of primary hypertension in adults, including diagnosis and investigations, treatment to reduce risk of cardiovascular disease, monitoring of treatment efficacy, and specialist referral.

Who will be affected by the new guidelines?

- People with suspected hypertension are offered ambulatory blood pressure monitoring (ABPM) to confirm a diagnosis of hypertension.
- People with newly diagnosed hypertension receive investigations for target organ damage within 1 month of diagnosis.
- People with newly diagnosed hypertension and a 10-year cardiovascular disease risk of 20% or higher are offered statin therapy.

TIPS

- Make sure you are relaxed and comfortable
- Keep still and silent
- Take two or three readings two minutes apart

<http://www.bloodpressureuk.org/BloodPressureandyou/Homemonitoring>



The importance of heart health – time to take control

Alison Freemantle, pharmacist Heart health expert pharmacist for Lloydspharmacy discusses the importance of looking after your heart health

Maintaining a healthy heart is regularly high up on the media agenda, with many stories talking about the latest wonder drug or preventative measures. In reality, individuals taking control of their heart health as early in life as possible can be the best method of prevention and could potentially save millions of lives across the UK.

Whilst this isn't 'new' news to us, a recent survey commissioned by Lloydspharmacy identified that most people (59%) admitted that they don't do anything to look after the health of their heart - with a quarter (25%) saying they would rather not think about it and one in ten (11%) saying they are just too busy to consider it.

It's not just everyday lifestyle activities such as eating more fruit and veg, reducing salt, keeping active and reducing alcohol intake where people seem to have a somewhat blasé attitude.

There are also a number of simple, free health checks that can tell a lot about the health of our hearts yet many people are failing to use these regularly. Findings from the research highlighted that 38%

have never had their blood pressure checked and 59% have never had their cholesterol levels checked.

Lloydspharmacy recently launched a free heart health assessment service which provides bespoke advice about how to maintain a healthy heart and reduce blood pressure through simple lifestyle changes.

Pharmacists will review each customer's lifestyle to ensure that goals are achievable and that they will have an on-going impact for example, eating more oily fish or carrying out moderate exercise such as walking to and from work instead of driving.

Another helpful tool found online is the Lloydspharmacy heart health calculator. Using the calculator can help people see their potential risk of developing cardiovascular disease (CVD) over the next 10 years and provides advice about how to reduce it.

59%
admitted that they don't do anything to look after the health of their heart



HOW THE SERVICE WORKS:

Visit the store for a free one-on-one private heart health consultation with a pharmacist

You will answer a series of questions about your lifestyle, such as how much you exercise, what you eat and whether you smoke

The pharmacist will provide a blood pressure test before offering advice on lifestyle changes that will help to reduce risk

The pharmacist will talk through other services available in store which may help, such as the stop smoking service or a medicine check-up

The pharmacist will support you by agreeing on timescales to make lifestyle changes – you will be invited to return at a later date to monitor these

For more information visit www.lloydspharmacy.com/heart

Pharmacists see positive impact

Pharmacist in Lloydspharmacy's Glasgow branch, Colin Dougall, has seen first-hand the positive impact the heart health service has had on local people:

"Our customers have been really positive about the heart health service since we launched earlier this year. We already had customers regularly coming to see us for blood pressure checks but this service takes the support one step further. People in the local community have been really appreciative of the time taken by our staff to talk to them about their overall health. While many people still need to know their blood pressure numbers the heart health service has allowed us to spend more time giving tailored and advice and help people make changes to their lifestyle, such as changing their diet and getting involved in more exercise – the feedback from our customers has been really encouraging and long may it continue."



As many of you will know, we unfortunately had to close our free helpline, as we were unable to raise enough funds to keep it going – we hope to have it back on line next year. We would still welcome your questions and queries through our website, email, office phone line and Facebook page, where our hypertension nurse will be here to help.

Here are some of our latest questions:

Q "I was diagnosed last year with 'Non Specific High Blood Pressure' which I thought was unusual considering my age. Now I am naturally seeking to lower it and keep it under control. Do you have any advice?" **James (31), Aberdeen**

Q "I found out I had high blood pressure two years ago after a high cholesterol reading. I was pretty upset as I always thought of myself as fit and healthy. Anyway, I have got control of diet, lost weight, running, fitness etc but my upper number still seems to be high, my lower gets down to 75 (with 55-65 BPM heart rate). However, I had been under intense stress due to money (two start-ups) etc. I'm still stressed and I wonder how much stress has on blood pressure as I think it is a lot higher than other things you are told to control. "What are your thoughts on stress?"

David (42), Kent

A Thank you for your question. The short answer is that stress can cause short term spikes in blood pressure, or be continuously high whilst you are suffering from that stress. However once the stress is removed, there are no known chronic long term effects on BP.

It sounds like you are heading in the right direction with your lifestyle, but worrying about your health will be additive to the stress you are suffering from work and money - be confident that the changes you have already made will have made a positive difference to your risk already; and that may give you one less thing to worry about.



of the measurements – normally in the morning.

Take 3 readings at a time - use the mean of last two as average - keep a record daily for a week then once or twice a week then weekly and then fortnightly, depending on the BP levels.

Blood Pressure UK have good instructions on how to measure BP at home on our website www.bloodpressureuk.org

The height of blood pressure is important considering your young age - if your upper BP measurement is around 140 -159, and if all your basic blood tests for liver, kidney, and diabetes are all normal (if abnormal GP will give instructions), try lifestyle changes; reduce salt, fat, weight, and increase fruit and veg and take more exercise, if your alcohol intake is more than average, try to reduce it. Try to follow these changes for at least 3 - 6 months.

If BP is higher than this, or remains high then you might need tablets. As tablets may be for life you do need to push the lifestyle changes as hard as you can before having taking this route.

A Was the diagnosis following an ambulatory 24 hr Blood Pressure (BP) or a one-off clinic BP measurement? British Hypertension Society (BHS) guidelines says diagnosis has to be confirmed with ABPM.

If possible buy a machine. Blood Pressure UK has a list. It doesn't have to be an expensive one, but it needs to be a validated to BHS standard. Your GP practice might even loan you a machine.

Measure BP morning, evening and night for a few days - to check variation, then choose a suitable time for the rest

DO YOU HAVE ANY BLOOD PRESSURE QUESTIONS FOR OUR HYPERTENSION NURSE ? IT COULD BE ABOUT ABPM, PATIENT CARE, MEDICATION, NUTRITION, STRESS - ANYTHING YOU LIKE! IF YOU DO HAVE A QUESTION PLEASE E-MAIL ADAM.MYERS@BLOODPRESSUREUK.ORG IF URGENT, PLEASE CALL NHS 111

STEPHEN'S EPIC CYCLE

In 2011 Stephen Primrose-Smith (130/80) embarked on the first stage of his epic cycle ride- to visit every capital city in Europe.

Positive Pressure caught up with him to find out how it is going.

"Anyone reading this magazine two years ago might have read about my little biking adventure. I have high blood pressure. It was so high that it gave me a near fatal brain haemorrhage in 2009. But I didn't want it to hold me back and so I decided to cycle, over a period of three years, to every capital city in Europe and, at the same time, study for a couple of degrees.

"I'm writing this sat in a cheap hotel room in Bucharest. This slightly shabby Romanian city is my 36th capital and means that I'm currently just over 15,000 miles into my ride. On the degree front I completed my MA in Philosophy with Trinity Saint David (formerly Lampeter), University of Wales during 2012 and I'm a course or two away from completing my BSc in Maths with The Open University. All is going well.

"Between now and September I will visit Poland, all seven European states in the former USSR (including a maths exam in Latvia), each Scandinavia capital and finish with a quick tour of the UK taking in Cardiff, Dublin, Belfast and Edinburgh. If

all goes according to plan, I'll arrive back on the Isle of Man, 22,000 miles later, around the time that Blood Pressure UK rolls out this year's Know Your Numbers! campaign. I'm hoping that my ride can provide it a little extra exposure.

"Sometimes we want to do things but the enormity of the task can make us wary of starting. But if we take each challenge one day at a time, whether it's cycling to the next city, or studying the next chapter towards a degree, or whatever it is we want to do, then eventually we'll get there. I don't know if you have a dream – I hope you do – but, if so, just take that first step. Each subsequent step only gets easier."

We are thrilled that Stephen is raising money for Blood Pressure UK during his trip and you can sponsor him by making a simple donation through his Justgiving page at <http://www.justgiving.com/unicycle50>.

To find out more visit his website www.unicycle50.com



Marathon Woman!

Did you enjoy watching the London marathon from the comfort of your armchair this year? Well Amy Jones did just that, and was inspired to get off her seat and offer to run it for Blood Pressure UK next year.

Amy will have a pretty punishing training regime until the event takes place next April, I don't think the broken ankle from 2 years ago will help, however she is determined to complete the challenge of a lifetime. We will be helping her with every every step, approximately 35,000 of them to be exact, offering Amy nutritional advice and fundraising tips.

Running for Blood Pressure UK will be a loving tribute to her father, who lived with the debilitating side effects of a heart attack for many years.

Amy says "I am thrilled to be taking on such a big challenge in memory of my father, who suffered a heart attack in his 50s and never made a full recovery. Sadly he passed away a few years ago, but I know he would be cheering me on from the sidelines if he was still with us"

Amy Jones, Blood Pressure numbers 110/72 is running the London Marathon for us next year and hopes to raise over £2,000. Every penny counts and your support will help make a difference to the thousands of people living with high blood pressure in the UK.

Please visit <http://www.justgiving.com/Amy-Jones16> to make a donation.

Do you have an interesting blood pressure story?

We're always on the lookout for case studies about blood pressure and what steps people have taken to reduce their blood pressure.

Do you have an interesting story to tell? If so, please get in touch with our membership manager, Adam Myers adam.myers@bloodpressureuk.org or call 020 7882 6255

Calls for better hospital food

Some hospital food is so unhealthy it couldn't legally be fed to children in schools.

But that could be about to change if the Health and Social Care (Amendment) (Food Standards Bill) presented to the House of Lords by Baroness Cumberledge is successful.

The amendment would require the Secretary of State for Health to convene a body of experts from government, industry, professional bodies and relevant sectors to draft hospital food standards, and make it mandatory for all patient meals to meet these standards.

Our CEO Katharine Jenner, Chair of the Campaign For Better Hospital Food, said: "20 years of Government initiatives to improve hospital food have failed because they rely on hospitals to voluntarily adopt food standards for patient meals. The voluntary approach is not working and it is time for the government to set mandatory standards for all

hospital food. Setting standards for hospital food would also enable the NHS to use its enormous financial muscle for the betterment of food provision, not just in the NHS but across the UK."

Both short and long term stays in hospital are the ideal time to introduce healthier eating practices. The first steps towards better standards are outlined in the Government Buying Standards (GBS), which have been introduced for government departments and prisons. Nottingham University Hospital Trust has adopted the standards and made a daily saving of £2.50 per patient and a reduction of 150,000 food miles a year, by switching to fresh local ingredients. The Trust believes that the NHS could make a national saving of £400m a year if the same standards were implemented throughout the NHS.

20
years of Government initiatives to improve hospital food have failed

Less Salt Please!

Many people now know that eating too much salt is bad for their health and are looking to cut down. However, whilst you can take control of your salt intake when preparing food at home it can be difficult to know where to start.

It is much harder to eat less salt when eating food prepared by other people, such as chefs in restaurants, cafes, canteens, takeaway and fast food venues – not to mention recipe suggestions in cook books. These foods can contain a lot of hidden salt, and without labels on these products, it is very hard to make a healthier choice.

As part of National Salt Awareness Week, Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH) carried out a survey looking at the salt content of meals in top, chain and fast food restaurants, as well as cafes. The results of the survey demonstrate the shockingly high levels of salt found in the out of home sector, and highlights the need for salt reduction.

Blood Pressure UK Chief Executive Katharine Jenner said:

"As most of the salt we eat is hidden in our food, for National Salt Awareness Week, we joined CASH in asking the public to stand up to chefs and ask for 'less salt please!'"



5 of the top saltiest main meals

[portion size stated where known]:

1. JD Wetherspoons' [10oz gammon with eggs, chips, peas, tomato & flat mushroom] = 8.9g salt per portion
2. Jamie's Italian [game meatball] = 8.1g salt per 570g portion
3. Carluccio's [spaghetti alle vongole in bianco] = 8.0g
4. Gordon Ramsay's The Savoy Grill's [steamed mussels cider cream sauce and fries] = 7.3g salt per 510g portion
5. Wagamama's Yaki Udon = 7.0g salt per 620g portion

Exercise is good for everyone

Everyone knows that exercise is good for them but not everyone has the motivation to get up and go. Here, Clare Farrand explains how we can all do a little more.

It's Thursday morning, and I'm about to send around my lunchtime 'running' group reminder. What motivational message will I include this time? It's a fine balance; trying to encourage people to join in with my enthusiasm for working up a sweat and the promise of my exceptionally good company, without putting them off with some over used cliché about the world being their treadmill (I may have already sent that one).

After all I'm not a running expert – I'm barely even good at it – but I do like to step away from my desk for an hour and just move. And lunchtime seems like the perfect opportunity to do this, especially in a world where taking lunch at your desk is fast becoming the 'norm'. I simply want to encourage more people to be more active.

We are advised to do at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise every week, such as fast walking or cycling; that's just 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week. You'll be surprised how easily you can fit this into your life.

EVERYONE SHOULD DO 150 MINUTES OF MODERATE ACTIVITY PER WEEK - THAT'S 30 MINUTES A DAY, FIVE DAYS A WEEK

Sometimes it's just a matter of getting started, making that first step, so to speak.

But you don't have to join my lunchtime running club of one to become more active. There are a number of ways that you can increase the amount you move:

Miss your stop

But on purpose! Jump off your bus or train a stop too early, or even too late – walk the rest of the way to work or home. You never know, it might even be sunny!

Have your own private party!

Getting ready for work, or off to meet friends? – turn the music up and have a dance about. You really can dance like nobody is watching!

Talk about it

You never know who else is thinking the exact same thing and wants to get more active too. Maybe they've found a fun class to join, or are one player short of a rounders match.



Increasing your activity levels has so many benefits – here's a huge long list of just some of them:

- Reduces your risk of cardiovascular disease, like heart attacks, heart failures and strokes.
- Increase energy levels so you can do more activities without becoming tired or short of breath.
- Increase endurance.
- Lowers blood pressure.
- Improve muscle tone and strength.
- Improve balance and joint flexibility.
- Strengthen bones.
- Help reduce body fat and help you reach a healthy weight.
- Help reduce stress, tension, anxiety, and depression.
- Boost self-image and self-esteem.
- Improve sleep.
- Make you feel more relaxed and rested.
- Make you look fit and feel healthy.



Make a commitment

If your friend is counting on you to turn up for a Sunday morning jog, it'll make you go. If you're feeling a bit more competitive, sign up to an organised race or event; be it your local park run, or the London Marathon, it'll give you just the drive that you need to keep going.

Try something new

Ever tried partner dancing to 1920s Jazz? It might be the best fun you'll ever have. There are classes for adult beginners for all sorts of things, from hot yoga to rock climbing to hula hooping, that will make you feel great. There's so much out there, have a scout about and see what you can find.

Track your progress

There's an app for that. There are plenty

of ways to track your progress, no matter what your goals; be it losing weight, running 5k, reducing your blood pressure, or simply improving your general health. If you don't see the benefits, you'll definitely feel them!

For more ideas on how to be more active check out the NHS live well page - <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/fitness/Pages/physical-activity-guidelines-for-adults.aspx>

Or simply start your own lunchtime running or walking group. Unless of course you are in the Barbican area, then you are more than welcome to come and join mine!

Clare Farrand, International programme lead at World Action on Salt and Health, hula hooper, and running club recruiter.



Anne Akers/Oleana.co.uk

AEROBIC EXERCISE REDUCES BLOOD PRESSURE

Even patients who have high blood pressure despite taking multiple antihypertensive drugs can achieve blood pressure reductions with a program of aerobic exercise according to a study carried out by scientists at Charity Medical School Berlin.

All the patients in the study had resistant hypertension and required at least four antihypertensive medications to keep their blood pressure below 140/90 mmHg, or had elevated BP despite taking three medications. Fifty subjects with resistant hypertension were randomly assigned to participate or not to participate in an 8-12 week treadmill exercise program which involved treadmill training three times a week.



The positive effects of aerobic training were evident for daytime ambulatory blood pressure, but not for blood pressure during the night which could be due to the effect of exercise on sympathetic tone, which is lower at night than during waking hours.

WHY NOT TAKE PART IN A FREE PARK RUN?

Parkrun organise free, weekly, 5km timed runs around the world. They are open to everyone and are free, safe and easy to take part in.

The park runs take place in pleasant parkland surroundings and people of every ability take part; from those taking their first steps in running to Olympians. To find out more about park runs and events taking place near you visit www.parkrun.org.uk

OR YOU COULD USE AN OUTDOOR GYM?

Outdoor gyms are a new way to look at health and fitness. They can include much of the same equipment found in an indoor gym, but the difference is they are specifically designed for outdoor use.

The outdoor gyms are suitable for people of all ages and fitness levels, and you don't need any experience to use them. Best of all, there are no membership fees to pay.

To find out more about outdoor gyms in your area contact your local council.





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Helping others with High Blood Pressure

Have you thought of Blood Pressure UK in your Will?

Finding out that you have high blood pressure is traumatic, particularly if you are young. Most people don't know anything about the condition and worry about how it will affect themselves and those around them.

But Blood Pressure UK is here to help, and with our information

packs, range of leaflets and our helpline, we provide reassurance and support to sufferers and their families. But all of this work is expensive and while membership subscriptions and general donations help enormously, leaving a gift in your Will can help us make a bigger difference.

It isn't complicated as you think, doesn't have to be a large amount and will give you the reassurance that our work helping fellow sufferers will continue once you have gone.

Obviously, providing for your family and friends comes first, but once that is done please consider a gift to Blood Pressure UK in your Will.

We have put together a simple leaflet to guide you through the process and you can get a copy by telephoning: (020) 7882 6255, visiting the website: www.bloodpressureuk.org, or by writing to: Blood Pressure UK, Wolfson Institute, Charterhouse Square, London, EC1M 6BQ.



Blood Pressure UK

Helping you to lower your blood pressure

Know your numbers!

16-22 September 2013

Know your Numbers Week

Know your Numbers! is Blood Pressure UK's flagship awareness campaign. It encourages adults across the UK to know their blood pressure numbers and take the necessary action to reach and maintain a healthy blood pressure.

The highlight is Know your Numbers! Week, the nation's largest annual blood pressure testing and awareness event. This takes place in the second week of September each year and provides free checks for around 250,000 adults across the UK.

Since its launch in 2001, Know your Numbers! Week has ensured more than 1.5million people have had their blood pressure checked so that they know their blood pressure numbers in the same way as their height and weight.

Know your Numbers! Week involves hundreds of nationwide organisations signing up to provide free blood pressure tests and information at venues known as Pressure Stations.

Pressure Stations are located throughout the community including pharmacies, workplaces, GP surgeries, hospitals, health clubs, leisure centres, shopping centres and supermarkets. This year we aim to have more than 1,500 Pressure Stations across the UK.

Blood Pressure UK is very proud of Know your Numbers! Week and welcomes participation from a wide range of organisations to support the campaign.

What the numbers mean

Your blood pressure numbers show how hard your blood is pushing against the sides of your blood vessels (arteries) as it travels round your body.

When you have your blood pressure measured it is written like this: 120/80mmHg, which is said '120 over 80'. The first number is the systolic pressure, when your heart contracts and pushes blood around your body. The second is the diastolic pressure, when your heart relaxes.

Blood pressure usually ranges between 90 to 250 for the top or maximum number (systolic) and 60 to 140 for the bottom or minimum number (diastolic).

A healthy blood pressure is 120/80 or less, but the lower you can get it, the better.

140/90mmHg is the level used to diagnose high blood pressure for everyone, whatever your age. It is important to remember that high blood pressure is never diagnosed after just one reading, but only when blood pressure levels are consistently at or greater than 140/90mmHg.

Please note that Know your Numbers!® is a registered trademark and all activities must be done in partnership with Blood Pressure UK.

MANOR PHARMACY'S INVOLVEMENT

All seven of the Manor Pharmacy Group branches became Pressure Stations as part of the 2012 Know Your Numbers! Week.

The aims were

- to raise awareness of high blood pressure and its associated risks
- provide beneficial lifestyle advice to all who accessed the blood pressure checking service
- refer patients to their GPs if they presented with high readings.

Across all the seven of Manor Pharmacy

Group branches, 171 patients accessed the hypertension service and had their blood pressure checked. The youngest patient was 18 and the oldest was 94.

The blood pressure checking service was effective at raising awareness of hypertension and motivating patients to think more about their risk of hypertension and how to manage it.



A HEALTHY BLOOD PRESSURE IS 120/80 OR LESS
140/90 IS HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

NEW MACHINE IMPROVES HEALTH

A portable machine which lets people measure their own blood pressure and send results directly to doctors is said to have improved patient health.

Researchers at Edinburgh University found that the blood pressure of people who used a self-monitoring system dropped further than those who did not.

Professor Graham MacGregor, chairman of Blood Pressure UK, said: "We are very much in favour of people taking their own blood pressure at home and taking charge of it. A new way of doing things is a major advance and this shows a potential way forward.

"Blood pressure is the single biggest cause of death in the world because it is a major cause of heart attack, heart failure and stroke, and if you reduce it there is very good evidence that you prevent them from occurring."

WORLD HYPERTENSION DAY

Thousands of people across the world had their blood pressure tested in May in mark to World Hypertension Day. World leaders have come together and unanimously agreed to a goal of reducing the prevalence of raised blood pressure by 25%. One of the ways of achieving this will be to reduce daily salt intake around the world by 30% by 2025.

Katharine Jenner, Chief Executive of Blood Pressure UK says: "The only way that you can know your blood pressure is to have it tested. Once you know your numbers you can take action by speaking to your GP and practice nurse to make sure it is properly controlled. Getting tested could save your life"

Preventive measures have to be taken seriously to address the growing problem. Salt reduction has been shown to be one of the most cost-effective ways of lowering blood pressure and therefore reducing deaths from strokes and heart disease.



When Raymond Blanc OBE cooked his first dishes for two businessmen in a tiny little restaurant between a ladies' underwear shop and Oxfam he was in for a nasty shock. For, although they stopped talking to look at the food placed in front of them, they proceeded to 'murder his food' by smothering it in salt and pepper.



Raymond Blanc

says don't murder your food with salt!

Salt has always been an issue to Raymond Blanc. When he first arrived in Britain, the self-taught chef immediately noticed our sugar, fat and salt levels were very high. To compensate he trains his chefs by subjecting them to a salt test.

Raymond says "I give ten dishes to my new chefs, with different amounts of salt in them. Some will have no salt, some will be very under-salted, some perfectly salted for my palate – I'm the judge remember – and then some completely over-salted. And I ask the chefs to tell me which ones have got no salt, which one's are completely over-salted, and which ones are right.

"It seems a very easy thing to do, but it isn't. It allows me to see the criminal who is going to completely kill my food by having a high salt palate. And it will allow me to see the one who has a slightly under salted palate. I also repeat this test with spices and with acid and sugar, to ensure they don't murder my food, like my first customers did."

Raymond has ten salt commandments for his chefs, which people can easily do at home:

Season your food only lightly. You should have very fresh, local ingredients. Let the food talk for itself!

If you are using salt, use the best salt, don't use horrible salt, full of anti-caking agents and chemicals.

When you start seasoning, always add a tiny little bit at the beginning, to let the salt penetrate the food, because if you add it at the end the salt sits outside and is very aggressive in taste.

Taste, taste, taste your food, all of the time! See how the flavour grows and how you can maximise the flavours

Remember a good little trick, I teach my chefs and they have to do it perfectly. Measure 1g of salt as a pinch. We all know that we only need 6g of salt a day, so why do some people put 25g of salt? One gram of table salt is a tiny little pinch, but if you use the big flaky salts; 1g is a larger pinch.

Please don't jump on the salt box! If you have a salt box, just leave it alone, just add a tiny little amount.

You've got to remember that food processors use a lot of salt, because salt is able to correct, or improve food, which otherwise doesn't taste very nice. So salt is a catalyst of flavour. But remember, you've got loads of different catalysts to choose from including lemon, citric acid and acetic acid.

Include herbs to your dishes, delicious flavours from your garden. It

will enhance your food no end, and you will create new recipes.

Use something sour or bitter. Put a bit of chocolate in your sauce or grapefruit or lemon zest. You'll be amazed what these things can do to help your seasoning.

Spice, any spice, a bit of black pepper, cayenne pepper can lift your food no end.

According to Raymond Blanc we are a bi-product of our own education, and with a lack of food education in our schools and homes, we have lost our connection with food, and therefore eat a lot of salt, sugar and fat.

"Let's reconnect with our food and the simple art of cooking. Seventy five per cent of our salt intake comes from processed foods. It doesn't come from homes. Learn how to cook, it's the most rewarding thing you can do, and it's so simple. Believe me! When you know how to pan fry a steak, or do an omelette, and when you know how to steam something, it can be reiterated a thousand times. When you learn one technique you know how to cook, it's as simple as that."

WHY NOT TRY PUTTING CHOCOLATE, GRAPEFRUIT OR LEMON JUICE IN A SAUCE FOR FLAVOUR



Sweet, Spicy and Smoky Dry Rub

As summer approaches, so does the barbecue season. So whip up this sweet, spicy and smoky dry rub in honour of the occasion to add flavour to your beef, chicken and pork. It is tangy, sweet with smoky heat!

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup of light brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons of LoSalt, or no salt
- 1 tablespoon of chipotle chili powder
- 1 tablespoon of smoked paprika
- 1 tablespoon of garlic powder
- 2 teaspoons of ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon of cayenne pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon of ground cinnamon

Place everything into a mini food processor, or you can mix by hand or by adding everything to a tupperware container with a lid. Process until well-combined.

Store in a container with a lid for up to 6-9 months.

This can be used on chicken, pork or beef. Rub a generous amount on the meat and refrigerate for best results up to 24 hours or a minimum of 1 hour.

Place the meat on a hot grill and cook until done to your liking. Enjoy!

ADVERTISING FEATURE

LOSALT WANTS US TO WATCH OUR SODIUM THIS BBQ SEASON

As the weather heats up and nights get longer, it's time to get outside and fire up the barbecue!

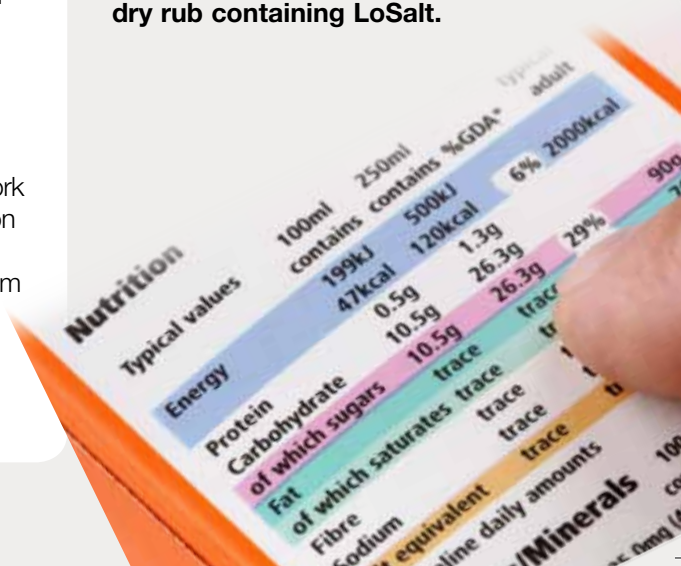
But those of us with high blood pressure still have to take care about what we throw on the barbie, warns LoSalt, as some BBQ meals can be packed with salt. In fact, study from Consensus Action on Salt & Health (CASH) showed that some barbecue meals could contain twice our daily recommended allowance of salt!

LoSalt is the UK's leading reduced sodium salt alternative, and healthy lifestyle partner of Blood Pressure UK. It contains 66% less sodium than regular salts but still delivers the same salty flavour to food. It is also a good source of potassium, which can help maintain a healthy blood pressure.

They shared some tips on how to watch your salt intake but still enjoy great barbecue food:

- Check food labels and look out for the low salt versions of burgers, sausages, cheeses and crisps
- Try making your own dips, coleslaws and marinades so that you can keep an eye on how much salt you are taking
- Limit how much ketchup and mustard you add, as these are typically packed with salt
- Use alternative seasonings to add flavour to your meats, like our sweet, spicy and smoky dry rub containing LoSalt.

Recipe



Summer sunshine is even better for us

Summer is just around the corner and as we reach for sun cream, news has reached Positive Pressure of research which suggests sunlight could help lower blood pressure.

According to scientists at Edinburgh University the health benefits of exposing skin to sunlight may far outweigh the risk of developing skin cancer. The research also suggests sunlight helps reduce blood pressure; cutting heart attack and stroke risks and even prolonging life.

UV rays were found to release a compound that lowers blood pressure and more studies would now be carried out to determine if it is time to reconsider advice on skin exposure.

Researchers said that until now vitamin D production had been considered the sole benefit of the sun to human health but during the research, dermatologists studied the blood pressure of 24 volunteers under UV and heat lamps.

The results showed that blood pressure dropped significantly for an hour after exposure to UV rays, but not after the heat-only sessions. Scientists said this suggested it was the sun's UV rays that brought health benefits.

The volunteers' vitamin D levels remained unaffected in both sessions.

Dr Richard Weller, a senior lecturer in dermatology at Edinburgh University, said: "We suspect that the benefits to

heart health of sunlight will outweigh the risk of skin cancer. The work we have done provides a mechanism that might account for this, and also explains why dietary vitamin D supplements alone will not be able to compensate for lack of sunlight. We now plan to look at the relative risks of heart disease and skin cancer in people who have received different amounts of sun exposure. If this confirms that sunlight reduces the death rate from all causes, we will need to reconsider our advice on sun exposure."

Although this looks like good news remember to take care of yourself in the sun.

Enjoy the sun safely. Protect yourself by using shade, clothing (including a hat, t-shirt and UV protective sunglasses) and a high SPF (sun protection factor) sunscreen, and by avoiding the sun during the middle of the day.

Avoid artificial ultraviolet radiation too – don't use sunbeds or sunlamps.

VITAMIN D SHORTAGE LINK TO HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

Low levels of vitamin D could cause high blood pressure according to research from University College London,

Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium from the diet and is essential for strong bones. Traditionally, vitamin D deficiency has been associated with rickets, a disease in which the bone tissue doesn't properly mineralise, leading to soft bones and skeletal deformities. However, this research shows vitamin D has a role to play in protecting against other health problems.

Vitamin D deficiency can occur for a number of reasons, particularly for those who follow a strict vegan or vegetarian diet, because many of the food sources of vitamin D are in animal-products such as fish oils, eggs, cheese and beef liver. As the body makes vitamin D when exposed to sunlight, living in northern latitudes, spending long periods indoors, having dark skin or wearing long robes or head coverings, can inhibit vitamin D production.

The researchers found that people with higher levels of a prehormone (25-hydroxyvitamin D) had lower blood pressure and were therefore less likely to develop heart disease, stroke and other health problems.

ALTHOUGH THE SUN IS GOOD FOR US IN MANY WAYS MAKE SURE YOU ENJOY IT SAFELY



WHAT TO DO IF WE HAVE A HEATWAVE

Most of us welcome hot weather, but when it's too hot for too long there are health risks. If a heatwave hits this summer, make sure the hot weather doesn't harm you or anyone you know.

The following advice applies to everybody when it comes to keeping cool and comfortable and reducing health risks:

- Shut windows and pull down the shades when it is hotter outside. If it's safe, open them for ventilation when it is cooler.
- Avoid the heat: stay out of the sun and don't go out between 11am and 3pm.
- Keep rooms cool by using shades or reflective material outside the windows.
- Have cool baths or showers, and splash yourself with cool water.
- Drink cold drinks regularly, such as water and fruit juice. Avoid tea, coffee and alcohol.



Time for a barbecue

Last year we were promised it would be a barbecue summer, but with the weather being so miserable some of us only managed one barbecue all summer!

However, we're confident this summer will be different. And, the good news is that barbecuing can be good for our health.

Grilling is one of the healthiest ways of cooking. For a start you don't add any fat and if any other fat, especially the harmful saturated fats, is released during cooking it falls down onto the coals.

But don't overcook your meat because research has shown that grilling meats at high heat can cause the carcinogens heterocyclic amine (HCA) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) to form. These have links to causing cancer.

Don't just grill meat either. You can grill fish, especially meaty fish like tuna steaks. If you're worried wrap them in kitchen foil before you start to protect them. Many vegetables, specially peppers, courgettes and sweetcorn are also delicious grilled.

Always have plenty of salads at a BBQ and if you want to keep them healthy don't dress them. Keeping the dressings separate means you are in charge of how much you add.

Don't add salt when you are cooking. Instead think about adding herbs and spices to give an aromatic flavour.

HAVING A BARBECUE IS GREAT FUN, BUT THERE IS NO NEED TO BE EATING DANGEROUS LEVELS OF SALT AT THE SAME TIME



IS THERE SALT HIDING IN YOUR BBQ?

Many of us are unwittingly eating salt in our barbecues.

With over 100 million barbecues expected to be consumed in the UK this summer it is time for consumers to be aware of how much salt they might contain.

A 'typical barbecue meal' - such as a hotdog with mustard, a burger with cheese and BBQ sauce, a piece of marinated meat, a helping of coleslaw and potato salad and plain crisps with dips - could add up to as much as 12g of salt - more than double your daily recommended maximum of 6g a day

In fact, you could have two thirds of your maximum daily salt intake with just

one burger with a cheese slice and a squirt of BBQ sauce in a bread roll.

"Having a barbecue is great fun, but there is no need to be eating dangerous levels of salt at the same time" says Blood Pressure UK's chief executive Katharine Jenner.

"Many of the products in a tasty barbecue, such as meat, potato salad and crème fraiche for dips naturally contain very little salt. I think many people would be surprised to learn you could have as much salt in your dip as in your crisps! It is important to think about how much you really eat in a barbecue, and be on the look out for lower salt alternatives when shopping."

Tips

- **Make your own marinades, dips and salads rather than using shop-bought products. Burgers are often saltier than sausages, so try making your own burgers.**
- **Venison burgers appear to be higher in salt compared to other burgers, try to limit these.**
- **'Flavoured' coleslaws with prawn or cheese tend to be higher in salt, stick to basic coleslaw, or better still make your own!**
- **Sauces such as ketchup and mustard are often high in salt, some are even saltier than seawater, limit the amount you have.**
- **Cheese can be very salty, try using cheddar cheese slices instead as these are often lower in salt.**



USE HERBS RATHER THAN SALT

Instead of reaching for the salt cellar when you are adding flavour to a meal, consider adding herbs and spices instead.

To help you experiment with herbs Schwartz have teamed up with Positive Pressure to give away a free sachet of herbs for all our members.

What are you going to do with yours? Let us know and the best suggestions will be featured in a future Positive Pressure.

Send your suggestions to adam.myers@bloodpressureuk.org



Is stress affecting your blood pressure?

Positive Pressure takes a look at what stress is and what you can be doing to prevent it

Many of life's demands can cause stress, particularly work, relationships and money problems. When you feel stressed, it can get in the way of sorting out these demands, or can even affect everything you do.

Stress can affect how you feel, think, behave and how your body works. In fact, common signs of stress include sleeping problems, sweating, loss of appetite and difficulty concentrating. You may also experience headaches, muscle tension or pain, or dizziness.

Although stress is not a confirmed risk factor for either high blood pressure or heart disease, and has not been proven to cause heart disease, scientists continue to study how stress relates to our health. And while blood pressure may increase temporarily when you're stressed, stress has not been proven to cause chronic high blood pressure.

Whilst the links between chronic stress and blood pressure are not clear, it is still worth keeping your stress levels as low as possible for a happy life.

Stress is not an illness itself, but it can cause serious illness if it isn't addressed.

Recognising the signs and symptoms of stress will help you figure out ways of coping and save you from adopting unhealthy coping methods, such as drinking or smoking. Spotting the early signs of stress will also help prevent it

getting worse and potentially causing serious complications.

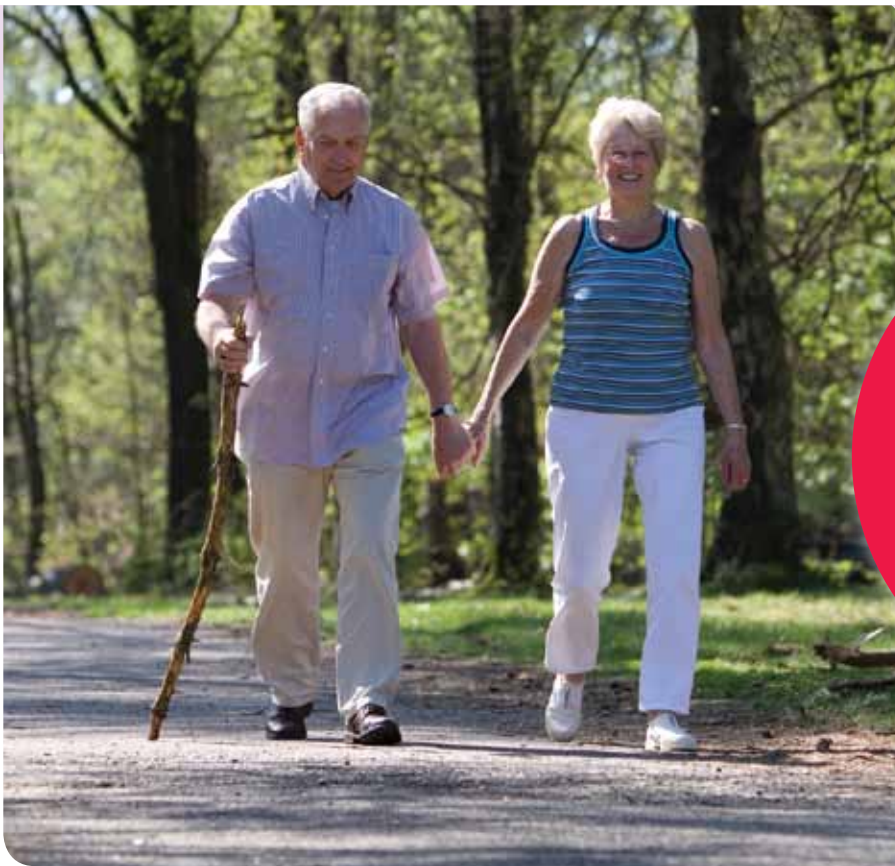
There are many things you can do to manage stress more effectively, such as learning how to relax, taking regular exercise and adopting good time-management techniques.

Take action to tackle stress

There's no quick-fix cure for stress, and no single method will work for everyone. However, there are simple things you can do to change the

STRESS IS NOT AN ILLNESS ITSELF BUT IT CAN CAUSE SERIOUS ILLNESS IF IT IS NOT ADDRESSED





THE NHS CHOICES WEBSITE IS AN EXCELLENT RESOURCE FOR FINDING OUT ABOUT STRESS AND WHAT YOU CAN DO TO COMBAT ITS EFFECTS. VISIT WWW.NHS.UK FOR MORE INFORMATION

common life problems that can cause stress or make stress a problem. These include relaxation techniques, exercise and talking the issues through.

Find out more by checking out the ten stress busters recommended by Professor Cary Cooper and printed on the NHS Choices website www.nhs.uk

Be active

If you have a stress-related problem, physical activity can get you in the right state of mind to be

able to identify the causes of your stress and find a solution. Exercise won't make your stress disappear, but it will reduce some of the emotional intensity that you're feeling, clearing your thoughts and enabling you to deal with your problems more calmly.

Take control

There's a solution to any problem. The act of taking control is in itself empowering, and it's a crucial part of finding a solution that satisfies you and not someone else. ▶

SWITCH OFF YOUR MOBILE PHONE

Mobile phone calls give wrong number on blood pressure

If you want to avoid high blood pressure you could try switching off your mobile phone.

According to researchers from the Guglielmo Hospital in Piacenza talking on a mobile phone causes a significant rise in systolic blood pressure.



Is stress affecting your blood pressure ❤️

GET STRESS SUPPORT

Because talking through the issues is one of the key ways to tackle stress, you may find it useful to attend a stress management groups or class. These are sometimes run in doctors' surgeries or community centres. The classes help people identify the cause of their stress and develop effective coping techniques.

Ask your GP for more information if you're interested in attending a stress support group. You can also use the search directory to find emotional support services in your area.

If your stress is causing serious health problems, including temporarily raising your blood pressure, you may need to take medication or further tests.





Have some 'me time'

The UK workforce works the longest hours in Europe. The extra hours in the workplace mean that people aren't spending enough time doing things that they really enjoy. Set aside a couple of nights a week for some quality "me time" away from work

Avoid unhealthy habits

Don't rely on alcohol, smoking and caffeine as your ways of coping. It might provide temporary relief but it won't make the problems disappear. You need to tackle the cause of your stress.

Do volunteer work

Evidence shows that people who help others, through activities such as volunteering or community work, become more resilient. On a more basic level, do someone a favour every day. It can be something as small as helping someone to cross the road or going on a coffee run for colleagues. Favours cost nothing to do, and you'll feel better.

Work smarter, not harder

Working smarter means prioritising your work, concentrating on the tasks that will make a real difference to your work.

Be positive

Look for the positives in life, and

things for which you're grateful. Write down three things at the end of every day which went well or for which you're grateful.

Accept the things you can't change

Changing a difficult situation isn't always possible. If this proves to be the case, recognise and accept things as they are and concentrate on everything that you do have control over.

Connect with people

A problem shared is a problem halved. A good support network of colleagues, friends and family can ease your work troubles and help you see things in a different way.

Challenge yourself

Setting yourself goals and challenges, whether at work or outside, such as learning a new language or a new sport, helps to build confidence. That in turn will help you deal with stress.



Treatment to lower blood pressure: Synexus is seeking people with high blood pressure for new study

Synexus, the world's largest multinational company dedicated to the successful recruitment and running of clinical studies and one of Blood Pressure UK's corporate partners, has launched a recruitment campaign for a new study which is assessing a treatment which may help lower blood pressure.

The study may be suitable for those who:

- ✓ Are aged over 18 years old
- ✓ Have or think they may have raised blood pressure

Synexus is currently recruiting patients for this study at all seven of its Dedicated Clinical Research Centres across the UK.

Those who would like to find out more or are interested in participating in this study should call 0845 270 1180 and quote reference code 10812

There is no obligation for people to participate and if they do decide to take part, their GP will be kept fully informed of their involvement. Patients will be reimbursed for their time and all reasonable out of pocket expenses if they are accepted onto the study.

Synexus has many years experience in conducting a wide range of clinical studies. Each year, thousands of patients take part in clinical studies at Synexus' Dedicated Clinical Research Centres. There are many different studies running at each of the Centres throughout the year including potential treatments for conditions such as osteoporosis, high-cholesterol, insomnia, asthma and childhood eczema as well as for smoking cessation and new vaccines.

Participating in a Synexus clinical study means patients receive increased medical attention and may benefit from medications that aren't yet available to other sufferers of their condition, while making a positive contribution to the health of future generations.



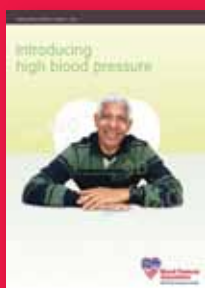
For more information about Synexus and the other studies that it is currently conducting, visit www.improvinghealth.com or www.bloodpressureuk.org/BloodPressureandyou/Clinicaltrials



help us to help you

Information & publications

We have a range of booklets and fact sheets giving valuable information about living with high blood pressure to help you understand it, lower it and and manage it.



Introducing high blood pressure

This booklet explains what high blood pressure is, who gets it and why. It gives basic information on lifestyle changes to lower blood pressure, and about measuring your own blood pressure at home.



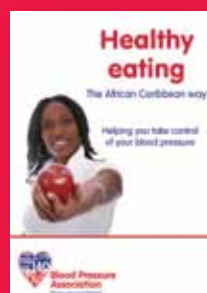
Measuring your blood pressure at home

This booklet can help you decide whether measuring your blood pressure at home is right for you, and how to choose the right type of monitor. It also gives you tips about how and when to measure your blood pressure to be sure you are getting reliable readings.



Healthy eating and blood pressure

This booklet looks at how what you eat can affect your blood pressure. It shows you how you can start to eat less salt, and how to get your five daily portions of fruit and vegetables. It also explains how alcohol, fats and sugar can all affect your heart and body.



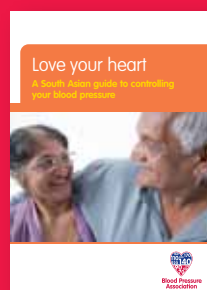
Healthy eating: the African Caribbean way

People of African Caribbean origin are more likely to develop high blood pressure. This booklet looks at how you can help lower your blood pressure by eating healthily. Traditional African Caribbean cooking can be high in salt and fat, so this booklet looks at how to prepare healthier alternatives.



Healthy lifestyle and blood pressure

This booklet shows how getting more active and keeping to a healthy weight can help lower your blood pressure. It looks at how you can start to build more activity into your day, and what types of activity may be best for you. It also talks about sensible approaches to losing weight if you need to.



Love your heart: a South Asian guide to controlling your blood pressure

High blood pressure is a major cause of heart disease and stroke. People of South Asian descent are much more likely to develop these health problems than other people. This booklet looks at how to lower your risk by keeping your blood pressure controlled.



Getting the most from blood pressure medicines

Most people with high blood pressure will need to take medicines to control it. This booklet talks about the different medicines for high blood pressure and about how you can get the best results from them. It also looks at side effects of blood pressure medicines and what you can do to avoid these.

Our medicines information sheets provide information for patients about the different blood pressure medications that are used to treat high blood pressure. They are all available to download from our website and titles include:

- ACE inhibitors.
- Angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs).
- Calcium channel blockers.
- Diuretics.
- Beta-blockers.
- Non-standard medicines for high blood pressure.



Blood Pressure UK

Helping you to lower your blood pressure

All these publications are free to Blood Pressure UK members.

Call **020 8772 4994** for your copy or visit <http://www.bloodpressureuk.org>