

the magazine of Blood Pressure UK

ISSUE 38 > WINTER 2015

**POSITIVE**

# pressure

## **SLEEP APNOEA**

Why one reader won't be having a lousy night's sleep

**CAN THE  
NATURAL  
WORLD HELP  
OUR BLOOD  
PRESSURE?**



**Blood Pressure UK**

Helping you to lower your blood pressure

**KNOW  
YOUR  
NUMBERS!  
2015  
SEE HOW  
IT WENT**

FOLLOW US ON  LIKE US ON 

**POSITIVE**  
**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.

**Patron**  
Sir David Attenborough

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Chair**  
Professor Graham MacGregor

**Treasurer**  
Guy Biggin

Professor Gareth Beevers  
Nirmala Markandu  
Professor Bryan Williams  
Professor Mark Caulfield

**STAFF**

**Chief Executive Officer**  
Katharine Jenner  
**Head of Finance & Administration**  
Abdul Muyeed  
**Marketing Executive**  
Hemini Bharadia  
**Nutritionist & Health Communications Officer**  
Julia Wolman

**Design**  
www.chapmandesign.net  
**Print**  
Captiv8UK 01892 611500

Company number: 3251531  
Company Limited by Guarantee

Registered charity in England and Wales (1058944) and in Scotland (SC040230)



# Welcome

From Katharine Jenner, Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to the Winter 2015 edition of Positive Pressure. We're getting close to the shortest day on December 21st and I for one will be glad when the mornings and evenings start getting lighter again.

One person who will be staying healthy this winter is Janine Lewis from Reading who is running next year's London marathon in aid of Blood Pressure UK. While I am snuggled up in front of the fire she's out pounding the streets in preparation. You can read her story on page 3.

We have a new nutritionist on the team here at Blood Pressure UK. Julia Wolman joined us at the end of September and we've celebrated her arrival by asking her to give us some tips on what we should be eating. You can read these on page 18. We also look at some natural remedies which could help keep your blood pressure down and those you should avoid if you don't want your numbers to rise. Talking of numbers we had another very successful Know Your Numbers! Week and you can find out more on page 14-15.

It is really important that we know what you want from Blood Pressure UK. We've included a short survey with this issue of Positive Pressure and we'd be grateful if you could complete it and return it to us so we can provide you with the information and support you need.

We hope you have a very good Christmas and New Year and if you are looking for some healthy food options do look at the recipes we have selected for you on page 18-19.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of Positive Pressure.  
Best wishes

**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

## Nitric oxide in beetroot could help to lower blood pressure

If you want to lower your blood pressure you could think about eating more beetroot and celery.

Celery and beetroot are rich in nitrates which are known to help lower blood pressure. Other foods which are also rich in nitrates include lettuce, spinach, rocket, celeriac and parsley.

Nitric oxide is a gas produced naturally by the body and carried in the blood. It tells your blood vessels to expand, so lowering blood pressure. That's why beetroot in particular may be good for

blood pressure — the body converts the nitrites in this veg into nitric oxide.

Researchers have since found nitric oxide does a lot more and has many health benefits, including helping you to sleep and fight off infections.

 "Beetroot has long been studied due to its apparent blood pressure lowering effects, and although you need to eat it in large quantities, it does seem to have genuine health benefits. Certainly there is no

*harm in eating lots of beetroot, celery and spinach, as well as all other fruits and vegetables – but more importantly – make sure you eat them as part of a low salt diet. It should also be pointed out that while this is interesting research further studies need to be carried out on the effects that nitric acid has on blood pressure before it can be recommended over the long term".*



### READING MUM HOPES TO RAISE MONEY FOR BLOOD PRESSURE UK

A mum of two from Tilehurst in Reading is taking on the Virgin Money London Marathon on 24 April 2016 for

Blood Pressure UK. Janine Lewis, 50, was diagnosed with high blood pressure ten years ago, and with a family history of the condition wanted to do something to raise awareness and money for the charity.

Janine said: "My mother, her brother and her father had issues related to blood pressure resulting in early thrombosis, angina, strokes and heart attacks, usually in their forties. I also had preeclampsia issues throughout both of my pregnancies but never received follow up treatment after the children were born. I was potentially a ticking time

bomb for the 'silent killer', as they call high blood pressure, so I am keen to raise awareness of the condition and would like everyone to know their blood pressure numbers and check them regularly.

"When I was 40 years old I had lost a lot of weight and had gone to the doctor for a standard check-up. He told me I had high blood pressure and

prescribed medication to keep it in check and suggested some lifestyle changes, one of which was to exercise more so I took up running. When I saw that Blood Pressure UK were looking for someone to run the London Marathon for them, I jumped at the chance as I have not run a marathon unsupported before. I am now training hard ahead of the challenge to make sure I can compete injury free."



 "Not only is running a great way to keep Janine's own blood pressure down, but by raising money for Blood Pressure UK, Janine can help us lower the nation's blood pressure, too. Janine is an inspiring person and everyone here at Blood Pressure UK wishes her the very best of luck." To support Janine please visit [www.virginmoneygiving.com/JanineLewis](http://www.virginmoneygiving.com/JanineLewis)

# Blood pressure news

NEWS ♥

## SHOCKING LEVELS OF SUGAR AND SALT IN POPCORN

According to a survey by Consensus Action on Salt & Health (CASH), the perceived 'healthy snack' popcorn is stuffing us with unnecessary amounts of salt and sugar, with over a third (39%) containing as much salt, if not more, as KP original salted peanuts.

CASH surveyed the salt content of 154 flavoured popcorn products sold in major supermarkets, cafés and cinemas, and found nearly one in four popcorn products (23%) contained dangerously high levels of salt.

The saltiest popcorn in the survey contained 3.5g salt/100g (over ½ teaspoon of salt) – 40% saltier than seawater!



It is well known that eating more salt increases thirst and therefore is likely to increase the amount of fluid you drink. If part of this increase in fluid intake is obtained from sugar sweetened soft drinks (like those easily obtainable at the local cinema), approximately one extra can would be consumed. This would also add unnecessary amounts of calories to the diet, and thereby increase the risk of obesity and obesity related disease.

**Blood Pressure UK SAYS** "This is a perfect example of the food industry taking something that is good for health, and ruining it by adding large amounts of salt and sugar. Salt raises our blood pressure, leading to strokes and heart disease. Reducing salt is one of the most cost-effective measures to improve health."



## VARYING AMOUNTS OF SALT IN CHILDREN'S MEALS

An international survey of children's fast-food meals has revealed worryingly high levels of salt. The World Action on Salt and Health (WASH) survey looked at 287 popular kids' meal combinations and found 82% contained more than 1g of salt. That's more than a child aged 4-6 years old should be eating in one sitting, with some meals containing as much salt as 10 packets of ready salted crisps.

With over half of all meals (53%) containing more than half a day's worth of salt for a 4-6 year old (1.5g), WASH is calling for all food manufacturers to universally reduce the salt content of their products, to help us achieve the global maximum target of 5g of salt per adult per day – with children's meals taking priority.

The survey, the first of its kind looking at children's meals sold from popular fast food chains, revealed the saltiest children's meals around the world, highlighting not only the excessive amounts of salt in these meals, but

also the huge variation in salt contents of the same meals sold in different countries.

"The fact that these fast food chains are able to produce less salty children's meals in some countries means they can do the same in all countries, and should immediately. All children, regardless of where they are from, should be able to enjoy the occasional meal out, as a treat, without putting their health at risk." says Clare Farrand, Public Health Nutritionist and International Programme Lead at WASH.

"The more salt you eat as a child, the more likely you are to have serious health issues in later life", says Professor Graham MacGregor, Chairman of Blood Pressure UK.

"This can include high blood pressure, increased risk of stroke, heart disease, osteoporosis and kidney disease. That is why it is vitally important that children do not get used to the taste of salt."



**Blood Pressure UK SAYS** "Salt is a major cause of high blood pressure and we welcome any move to reduce the amount of salt children eat."

## Rise in numbers of children being treated in hospital for high blood pressure

Rising numbers of children are being treated in hospital for high blood pressure over concerns they are eating too much salt. Admissions have trebled in the last ten years and include almost 400 children under five. The figures, obtained by Channel 4's Dispatches from 29 NHS trusts, show that 1,064 children under 16 were admitted to hospital for high blood pressure between 2012 and 2014.

The hospitals could not confirm whether the high blood pressure was caused by excess salt or obesity, and in some cases it may be due to conditions affecting the kidneys or heart. But separate research found that half of all seven-year-olds have too much salt in their diet. Children of this age are only meant to eat a maximum of 5g of salt a day – but a quarter were found to be consuming more than 6.7g.

The study by the University of Bristol tracked 6,000 children from the ages of seven through to 15 and found much of the salt came from processed foods such as pizza. It also showed that the children who exceeded the recommended salt intake all

had high blood pressure at the ages of seven, nine, and 15 – by which stage it was two points above average.

This difference in adults is linked to an increased risk of heart attacks and strokes.



"This was a very disturbing programme by the Dispatches

team and we should all be alarmed by the rising numbers of children being treated in hospital for high blood pressure. We know that salt is a major cause of high blood pressure and the presence of high levels of salt in the food and snacks children like to eat is a grave concern."



## STROKES IN YOUNG PEOPLE ARE RISING

Strokes are becoming more common at a younger age, with about one in five victims now below the age of 55, research in the American

Academy of Neurology Journal suggests.

The study followed 1.3 million people in a US region and found 19% of those experiencing a stroke in 2005 were under 55, up from 13% in 1993.

This is despite a trend of overall falling rates of the condition.

Report author Dr Brett Kissela said: "The reasons for this trend could be a rise in risk factors such as diabetes, obesity and high cholesterol."

The study looked at all people over the age of 20 in greater Cincinnati and North Kentucky over three periods in 1993, 1999 and 2005.

It suggests a shift in the age of those experiencing stroke, from the old to the young, although experts say

the findings need to be treated with caution.



"This is worrying research. If the number of younger people having strokes is increasing, then greater strain will be placed on health services to support them with their recovery. High blood pressure is a major cause of stroke and young people should check their blood pressure regularly."



# Blood pressure news



## 61% of the UK population do not have the numeracy skills needed to maintain their health

a result of high blood pressure are particularly at risk, as this can affect their ability to manage their care. It can even result in a higher likelihood of having to receive emergency care.

Worryingly, this is not only a problem for a few. Research this year found that 61% of the UK population do not have the numeracy skills needed to maintain their health.\*

Whilst doctors are not yet prescribing numeracy lessons, there is help available. National Numeracy have built a great tool, called the National Numeracy Challenge which is free and confidential, and thousands of people have started using it to improve their maths skills.

Don't let your numeracy skills put your health at risk. Anyone can improve their everyday maths skills, regardless of age, confidence levels or experiences. We see people do it all the time. To find out more and to take the challenge, visit [www.nnchallenge.org.uk/bpuk](http://www.nnchallenge.org.uk/bpuk)

If you are struggling to interpret nutritional food labels or monitor your diet, as well as checking to see if you may need to improve your numeracy skills, Blood Pressure UK recommends FoodSwitch UK. This is a smartphone app developed by Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH). More information on FoodSwitch UK can be found on page 20, or to download the app for free, visit iTunes and Google Play.

*By Hannah Cowan, Research Executive for Health, National Numeracy.*

\*A mismatch between population health literacy and the complexity of health information: an observational study. British Journal of General Practice (2015)

## How numeracy could improve your health

It may seem odd for a doctor to prescribe a lesson in numeracy for people with high blood pressure. Yet evidence suggests that numeracy has a huge effect on people's abilities to understand, prevent and control their blood pressure levels.

Being numerate is vital for understanding your blood pressure numbers and leading a healthy lifestyle; it is difficult to monitor your weight, make sense of nutritional labels, or understand risks if you struggle with numbers. We know that poor numeracy affects all sorts of essential tasks for maintaining a regular blood pressure, for example people's abilities to monitor their diets, take regular exercise, give up smoking,

and interpret food labels all require an understanding of numbers.

Especially important for people with high blood pressure is that it is often symptomless – known as “the silent killer”. Patients sometimes have to be reminded that high blood pressure can lead to serious conditions later in life, such as strokes, heart attacks and diabetes. It's much harder for people with poor numeracy skills to analyse and act upon this risk, and they can be less likely to adapt their lifestyles to reduce their blood pressure, thereby increasing their chances of developing life threatening conditions.

Crucially, people who don't have a good grasp of numbers and have developed chronic health conditions as

## SHIFT WORKERS ARE 'MORE LIKELY TO HAVE HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE'

People who work shifts are more likely to be overweight and suffer a catalogue of health complaints, new research has found.

US researchers found these people are more likely to develop metabolic

disorders - such as diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure - compared to those following traditional work schedules.

Those who work unpredictable hours suffer the problems largely

as a result of sleep loss, say the researchers.

Furthermore, Dr Givens and her colleagues found that experiencing sleep problems increased the risk of being overweight or diabetic.



*"This is an interesting survey which confirms that a good night's sleep is very important. Shift workers need to pay special attention to their health – start by finding out your blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol levels for free at your local GP. If your blood pressure is high make an appointment to see your GP."*

## RESEARCH NEWS: The SPRINT Hypertension Trial

Initial results from the long-awaited SPRINT study have been released. SPRINT stands for Systolic Blood Pressure Intervention Trial which is a large and very important study from the US. The research began in 2009 with over 9,000 hypertensive patients aged 50 years and older and who had at least one other cardiovascular risk factor.

The research was designed to answer a key question: Will lowering blood pressure below the normal target of 140/90mmHg reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke and kidney disease?

Preliminary findings show that controlling blood pressure to a lower target of 120/80mmHg, compared to the conventional target of 140/90mmHg, resulted in reduced rates of heart attack, heart failure and stroke by almost a third. In fact the study was so successful that researchers stopped it earlier than planned. However, blood pressure was measured after a period of relaxation and the mean of three readings were taken by an automatic machine, with no observer present.



*"Findings clearly show that, in these types of individuals, better control of blood pressure to a lower level does result in considerable benefit. It is likely that blood pressure guidelines will be changed, but we need to analyse the full results of the*

*study first, which will be published by the end of 2015."*

We look forward to bringing you more information about this exciting study in the next issues of our E-newsletter and Summer Positive Pressure magazine.



Poor blood pressure control is a major risk factor for heart attacks and strokes. An important reason for sub-optimal blood pressure control is poor adherence or compliance with blood pressure medication due to side effects.



## INTOLERANCES TO ANTI-HYPERTENSIVE DRUGS: IS THE PATIENT TO BE BLAMED?

There are approximately 15 million individuals in the UK with high blood pressure (BP). Around half of patients with hypertension stop taking their medication within 12 months of being prescribed antihypertensive drugs. This article explores one of the reasons why this may be.

Patients can experience side effects which are well recognised but sometimes they can experience bizarre unpredictable ones which are rare and hard to explain, but are severe enough to warrant discontinuation of medication. Hence, these patients are not able to tolerate blood pressure lowering medication as per current treatment guidelines and are diagnosed as having multiple drug intolerance hypertension (MDI-HTN). Sadly, these patients are at a higher risk with poor quality of life and limited treatment options.

Patients with MDI-HTN were part of a study at the Barts Hypertension clinic in London where doctors developed a treatment protocol using drugs in small doses in tablet form, liquids or patches. According to this treatment protocol, patients with multiple intolerances are prescribed standard BP lowering medication in fractional doses (halving or

quartering pills). If not tolerated, patients are tried on liquid formulations of medications. If these are then not tolerated or not controlled, they are prescribed trans-dermal patches of BP lowering medications. If these strategies do not work, patients are prescribed BP lowering medication which are not licensed for high BP or hypertension but have been used for this indication.

Blood pressure was significantly reduced among patients after just six months on the novel treatment strategy, and the results were sustained. Significantly, the patients experienced no debilitating side effects.

The full study and results were published in the *Journal of Clinical Hypertension* earlier this year. One of the doctors from the Barts Hypertension Clinic working on this study and author of the paper, Dr Manish Saxena, says it is exciting work, as this study shows that these treatment strategies can help achieve good BP lowering in patients with MDI-HTN. Fractional dosing reduces the amount of medication taken by patients and is better tolerated. Liquid formulations are free of excipients which can cause

side effects in some patients. Trans-dermal patches reduce gastric irritability which can contribute to intolerances in the first place. If nothing works, medication like mononitrates or SPDEI like Viagra can help to lower BP in those patients who have very limited treatment options. These strategies are better tolerated and improve quality of life in patients.

Dr Manish Saxena also said: "In the future, a larger randomised controlled study for a longer period may be needed, but in the meantime this can be a useful treatment strategy for the many patients with MDI-HTN who otherwise might run the risk of having a stroke or heart attack if their blood pressure is not controlled to a safer level."

If you are experiencing symptoms which you think may be caused by your high blood pressure medication please speak to your doctor or nurse who may be able to give you some advice.

*By Dr Manish Saxena, Clinical Research Fellow, WHRI, Bart's Health & QMUL and Dr Mel Lobo, Director Barts BP*

### PLEASE REMEMBER

Intolerances to blood pressure medications are rare, however, if you experience symptoms which you think may be caused by your high blood pressure medication please speak to your doctor or nurse who may be able to give you some advice.

## CASE STUDY

# WHY I WON'T HAVE ANOTHER LOUSY NIGHT'S SLEEP



In the summer we ran a feature on obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA), a condition which interrupts sleep patterns and can lead to high blood pressure.

Apnoea is where the muscles and soft tissues in the throat relax and collapse sufficiently to cause a total blockage of the airway for ten seconds or more. During an episode, the lack of oxygen triggers you out of a deep sleep – either to a lighter sleep or wakefulness – so your airway reopens and you can breathe normally.

Positive Pressure reader, Malcolm Matson, has been diagnosed with the condition and shares his story with Positive Pressure.

Malcolm (72), an entrepreneur and company director from London was diagnosed almost by chance.

"I've suffered with high blood pressure and some years ago I was asked to take part in a British Heart Foundation funded blood pressure trial on resistant hypertension known as Pathway II Study. In the course of the trial I met Dr Manish Saxena, Clinical lecturer at William Harvey Research Institute and Barts Health, who was one of the doctors running the trial. He asked me about my sleeping patterns and whether I had any problems with snoring. He gave my wife, Alexandra, and I separate questionnaires to fill in and that's when we found out just how bad my snoring was. I knew the snoring was disrupting my sleep but for my wife it was diabolical. The noise was keeping her awake and she was also frightened as I appeared to stop breathing and then would take a big gasp of air.

"Manish arranged for me to go and see Dr Simon Lloyd-Owen, respiratory physician at the London Chest Clinic and to be monitored for 24 hours. Dr Lloyd-Owen confirmed sleep apnoea and prescribed a CPAP machine. The benefits of the machine were apparent from the very first night I used it. My sleeping pattern was better but for my wife it meant a much better night's sleep with no disturbances. I've used it ever since and I now sleep well and so does my wife."

Malcolm recognises that many people find the mask and the constant air flow from the machine uncomfortable but he urges them not to give up using it. "It really helps and it is much better for you and your partner if you use it," he said.

When he was away travelling Malcolm spent a night without his CPAP machine and really noticed the difference. "I had a lousy night's sleep and felt much worse than normal in the morning. I won't travel without it again," he said.

Having been diagnosed with the condition, Malcolm is keen to promote awareness of sleep apnoea. He believes every GP should be encouraged to ask their patients if their partner snores, and if they do, to invite them in for a chat with a practice nurse.

"Early diagnosis and awareness of sleep apnoea are very important," he said.

Malcolm has also suffered from high blood pressure for 40 years but it is under control with medication and his current numbers are 120/80.

A CPAP or Continuous Positive Airway Pressure machine is a small pump that delivers a continuous supply of compressed air through a mask that either covers your nose or your nose and mouth. The compressed air prevents your throat closing.

CPAP can feel peculiar to start with and people may be tempted to stop using it. But people who persevere usually soon get used to it and their symptoms improve significantly.

CPAP is available on the NHS and is the most effective therapy for treating severe cases of OSA. As well as reducing symptoms such as snoring and tiredness, it can also reduce the effects of OSA, such as high blood pressure, increased blood sugars, day time tiredness and associated accidents. In every patient with high blood pressure which is difficult to manage, possibility of underlying OSA should be considered by the treating physician.



**I knew the snoring was disrupting my sleep but for my wife it was diabolical. The noise was keeping her awake and she was also frightened as I appeared to stop breathing and then would take a big gasp of air.**

# Can the NATURAL WORLD help our blood pressure?



We know there are many conventional medicines to help lower blood pressure but could we also get a helping hand from some natural remedies? Professor Gareth Beevers, Blood Pressure UK's adviser takes a look and de-bunks some of the claims.

### Beetroot juice

**Claim:** Drinking 250ml (8oz) of beetroot juice every day can cut systolic pressure by 10mm Hg, studies suggest. Beetroot contains nitrate, a compound thought to help raise levels of nitric oxide, which is known to widen and relax blood vessels.

**Expert opinion:** Beetroot juice can help to lower blood pressure, but it can also have a dramatic laxative effect so for many people it will not be suitable. There is also a limit to how much beetroot juice anyone would want to drink. By all means drink beetroot juice but don't expect it to have a dramatic effect on your blood pressure.

### Fish oil

**Claim:** Omega-3 oils - found in oily fish such as tinned or fresh sardines, mackerel and salmon, and fresh tuna (but not tinned tuna) - may reduce the pressure needed to force blood through blood vessels.

**Expert opinion:** It seems fish oil may slightly lower blood pressure - but you need to consume a lot to get a small benefit. According to the American Heart Association, you need 2g a day of omega-3 to achieve this. A 3oz serving of salmon provides 1.1 to 1.9g total omega-3. In reality, you would need to eat oily fish at least three times a week and although I like my smoked mackerel I can't see myself eating it that frequently. It's probably best to include oily fish as part of your balanced diet but don't rely on it to reduce your blood pressure. UK advice recommends eating two portions of fish per week, one of which should be oily.

### Hawthorn tincture

**Claim:** One small study found people on blood pressure medication saw an average 2.6mm Hg reduction in diastolic blood pressure after 16 weeks taking 1,200 mg of hawthorn.

**Expert opinion:** The evidence suggests that hawthorn can have a very small effect on blood pressure, but it would probably be better for controlling a borderline problem, such as a blood pressure reading of 135/80. It was a very small study and therefore we should take its claims with a pinch of salt. You would need to have a much larger study before any claims could be substantiated.

### Arginine tablets

**Claim:** Arginine, an amino acid found in nuts and chocolate, is thought to work like beetroot - increasing levels of nitric oxide in the blood. A study in the American Journal of Hypertension in 2000 found it could slightly reduce blood pressure.

**Expert opinion:** There's no question that nitric oxide dilates blood vessels, and many blood pressure drugs work by increasing its levels. However, there are too few studies to substantiate the claims about arginine. You also need to ask why you would want to take arginine tablets rather than tablets which have already been proven to reduce blood pressure.

**Theoretically many of the claims are interesting but they're not really practical**

### Potassium pills

**Claim:** Increasing the potassium in your diet can lower your systolic blood pressure by 3-4mm Hg, according to Blood Pressure UK. As potassium levels go up, salt comes down.

**Expert opinion:** You'd need to eat six or seven portions of fruit and vegetables a day to achieve this. Tomatoes and bananas are highest in potassium. We should all be eating more fruit and vegetables because they are beneficial to our health in many ways, not just our blood pressure. Potassium tablets should not be taken unless prescribed by your GP.

### CoQ10 supplement

**Claim:** CoQ10 is a vitamin-like substance made naturally in the body which helps cell growth. A deficiency can cause high blood pressure.

**Expert opinion:** The highly respected Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews supports the view that Co Q10 deficiency is often associated with hypertension so this seems potentially reliable evidence. Taking a supplement might be helpful but I would want to see more research and to be assured that there are no side effects.

### Vitamin C

**Claim:** Vitamin C can increase nitric oxide in the blood.

**Expert opinion:** The best research was done by John Hopkins University, which has a very good reputation, so vitamin C could well be helpful. The researchers looked at 29 studies in which people taking an average of 500mg daily (the recommended daily amount is

## There's a limit to how much oily fish anyone would want to eat per week

60mg), for eight weeks saw their systolic blood pressure drop by an average of 3.84mm Hg and diastolic by 1.48mm Hg. Good sources of vitamin C include strawberries, kiwi fruit, oranges, red peppers, broccoli and potatoes.

### Hibiscus tea

**Claim:** Drinking tea brewed from 3.75g of hibiscus petals - which have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties - can reduce mildly raised blood pressure, a 2008 study by Tufts University in Boston found.

**Expert opinion:** Hibiscus seems to work like a very low-dose ACE inhibitor and diuretic (these remove unwanted fluid from the body), but any effects shown in the study were small and therefore should not be given too much credence.

### Garlic pills

**Claim:** Compounds in garlic have been found to help blood pressure by increasing nitric oxide and also working on the angiotensin system that regulates blood pressure. (Angiotensin is a chemical that constricts blood vessels.)

**Expert opinion:** In a 2010 study at the University of Adelaide, some people taking four capsules a day saw a 'slight' reduction in their blood pressure, but you could be spending a lot on supplements for a very small result. Again I would question why you would take garlic pills rather than clinically proven drugs for blood pressure.

### Macca tea

**Claim:** The amino acid theanine is found in tea, and particularly in Macca tea, made from the Peruvian macca plant. It has been shown to increase nitric oxide production.

**Expert opinion:** It seems a bit of a long shot and I don't think I will be trying it.



## WHY WE NEED TO THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT THESE CLAIMS

Professor Beevers says: "Most of these natural remedies have only been studied in small trials many of which were not of great quality. Bigger better studies might not confirm the benefits shown in earlier work and therefore we should not be too quick to believe the benefits that are claimed.

"Theoretically many of the claims are interesting but they're not really practical. Do you really want to eat oily fish 3 or 4 times per week? Similarly beetroot juice is nice but enough is enough.

"What we do know is that reducing your salt intake has a good effect on blood pressure. Excess amounts of salt increases the weight of your blood and forces the heart to work harder to pump it.

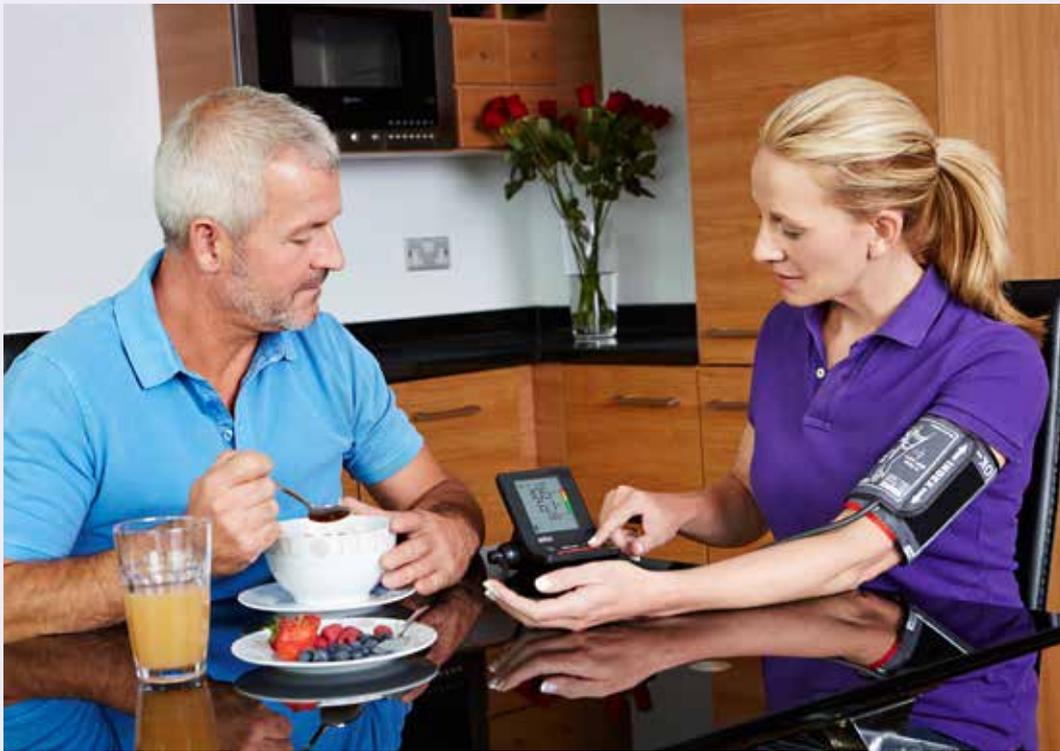
"The average UK intake is 8g of salt a day. Reducing intake to below 3g can cut systolic pressure by 10-12mm Hg within two weeks."

And, there are some natural products you would be better off avoiding if you want to keep your blood pressure low.

Black liquorice, Arnica, St John's wort and Senna can all raise blood pressure or interfere with medicines treating it as can Gingko, ginseng, guarana and ephedra, and bitter orange.

It's important to talk to your pharmacist before using herbal remedies if you have borderline high blood pressure. Just because something is natural it doesn't always mean it's good for you.

Caffeine is natural, but it's another common cause of hypertension - it causes blood vessels to constrict so the heart has to work harder to pump blood through them.



# BRAUN



ADVERTISING FEATURE ♥

# Keep your heart healthy

Braun Health Expert Dr Martin Godfrey gives his top tips for measuring blood pressure at home.

**D**id you know that nearly half of all adults over the age of 25 suffer from high blood pressure<sup>1</sup>? However, as there are no outward symptoms, only 40% are aware that they have the condition. If diagnosed early enough, simple changes to your lifestyle can help to reduce your levels.

## Don't know your numbers?

Many people only get their blood pressure checked while visiting their GP – which often is not all that regularly. Research from Braun Blood pressure monitors<sup>2</sup> reveals that four out of five adults in the UK don't know their own blood pressure reading and 77% do not know what a healthy range is – potentially worrying as high blood pressure can cause a range of illnesses including strokes, heart attacks, kidney disease and even some types of dementia.

## DIY monitoring

You do not need to visit your GP to have your blood pressure measured. You can find out your reading and regularly monitor it by making a small investment in a blood pressure monitor to be used at home. A number of devices are available and most can be bought from high street pharmacies such as Boots, including the Braun ExactFit™ 5 - BP6200 Upper arm blood pressure monitor or the Braun VitalScan™ 3 - BBP2200 Wrist blood pressure monitor.

## Tips for home monitoring

If you are monitoring at home, it is important to ensure you

are getting accurate readings. These tips should ensure correct readings every time:

- Make sure the cuff fits correctly
- Don't smoke, drink caffeinated beverages or exercise within the 30 minutes before measuring your blood pressure
- Sit still, with a straight and supported back. Feet should be flat on the floor. The arm should be supported on a flat surface at heart level
- Take multiple readings and measure at the same time daily
- Look for monitors with user friendly features such as a soft inflation which allows more comfortable and faster measurements

## Use free apps

Apps such as the Braun Healthy heart app are available to download free of charge and provide a number of benefits when used with a home-use blood pressure monitor. The Braun Healthy heart app allows users to record their blood pressure readings – very useful for when you visit your GP as you can instantly show them your recent blood pressure history.

These products are distributed by Kaz Europe Sàrl, a subsidiary of Helen of Troy Limited (NASDAQ: HELE), under license to the 'Braun' trademark.

1 IHS / InMedica 2013

2 Research conducted by Opinium for Braun, June 2015. Search was conducted amongst 2,005 UK adults.



# MAKING EVERY SECOND COUNT

From EDF Energy to Samsung UK Ltd, we ensured there were venues nationwide for the UK to make every second count and learn about the highs and lows of blood pressure during Know your Numbers! Week 2015.

14-20th September marked the 14th year of our annual blood pressure testing campaign, Know Your Numbers! Week – the nation's largest blood pressure testing and awareness event.

This year 1,000 Pressure Stations once again signed up to take part in our flagship campaign and offer free blood pressure checks in a bid to help people across the nation to know their numbers. Local pharmacies, GP's surgeries, town halls, work places and even Samsung UK Ltd all did their part in highlighting the UK's biggest silent killer. We also encouraged people to test their blood pressure in the comfort of their own homes with a home blood pressure monitoring kit.

High blood pressure is responsible for 60% of strokes and 40% of heart attacks. A shocking 1 in 3 adults have the condition yet a third of them have no idea as it has no symptoms.

This year's campaign focused on the importance of making every second count and emphasised how in the time it takes to boil a kettle the public could undertake a home blood pressure test or book an appointment with their local GP for a check – something which might just save their life.

We also undertook a survey and released research which highlighted that a shocking 29% of people spend more time worrying about their

finances than their own health.

In addition the survey revealed that finances topped the list of what most Britons worry about, followed closely by their children (17%), then their own health third, at just 15%. For the first time an eye catching infographic was created to capture and showcase this data as part of this year's campaign, which was publicised widely on social media. See right.

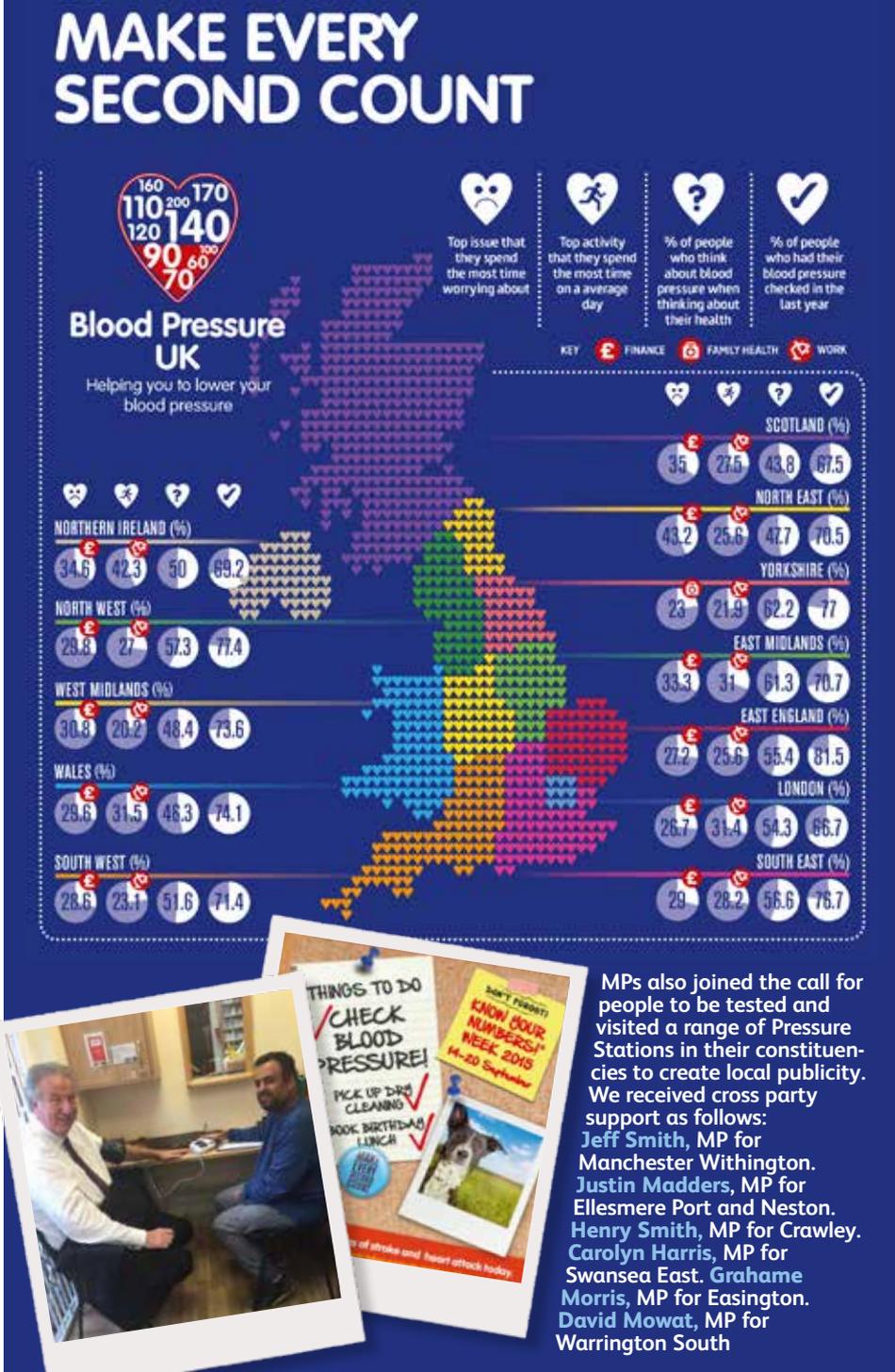
The independent survey of over 1000 Britons also showed that they spend most time working (26%) or surfing the internet (17%), but if they had a few extra minutes of time in their day, rather than undertaking a potentially life-saving blood pressure check (11.6%), top of their list of things to do would be to make a cup of tea (44%)! A shocking 33% of people hadn't had their blood pressure checked in the last year as they didn't think it affected them and 25% didn't even consider high blood pressure as a health issue.

London Live helped us to kick start the campaign, when our chairman Professor Graham MacGregor was interviewed for the launch of the event. This was followed up by an interview on BBC Radio Northampton and mentions in the Times, Daily Express, the Daily Mirror, Prima and Top Santé magazines, along with plenty of regional coverage across the country.

This year social media played an even bigger part in the campaign, with over 150 tweets and many retweets on social media site Twitter. Total Health Pharmacy in Watton have been taking part in Know Your Numbers! Week for over 10 years and recorded 53 tests during the course of the week. Their Director, Rachel Ray said: "Although we offer testing all year, the week is a really good focus and we see more people asking for a test. The Twitter suggestions were great and we used them more or less daily".

Other Pressure Stations included Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, Dee Atkinsons Herbalists and Napiers Clinic in Edinburgh, Basildon Hospital and major pharmacy chain Davidsons Chemists in Scotland.

This year the charity was supported in its Know your Numbers! Week cam-



paigned by Public Health England and Amazon UK as part of their healthy heart month event. Professor Kevin Fenton, Public Health England's Director of Health and Wellbeing said "Know Your Numbers! Week is a fantastic initiative, helping to identify people living with high blood pressure but who are undiagnosed, and raising awareness of this silent killer.

"Public Health England is committed to play its part to help better prevent, detect and manage high blood pressure, working with our many partners."

Katharine Jenner, Chief Executive of Blood Pressure UK, added: "With so

much happening in our lives it is often difficult to find the time to prioritise our health, but a quick free painless check of your blood pressure could be all it takes to prevent more serious issues developing later on in life. We're grateful to everyone who supported this campaign and made it such a success."

**Thank you** These are just some of the events and activities that took place during Know your Numbers! Week 2015. We would like to thank the health professionals, numerous organisations and all of our loyal supporters who helped to make it such a success.

# Treatment for Resistant Hypertension

Uncontrolled blood pressure (BP) is a risk factor for not only strokes and heart attacks, but also causes damage to eyes, heart and kidneys (target organ damage) in the long term.

**E**vidence shows that less than half of patients treated for hypertension (HTN) are able to achieve satisfactory BP control. It is well recognised that poor compliance with BP lowering medication is an important reason for sub-optimal BP control. In patients compliant with medication, there is still a group who have poor BP control in spite of being on three types of medication – this is known as resistant HTN. The true incidence of resistant HTN is estimated to be only about 6-8% in the hypertensive population but it still poses a significant challenge to clinicians, as it is an important risk factor for cardiovascular morbidity and mortality worldwide, with no clear evidence based pharmacological treatment options.

A multi-centre randomised controlled study has looked at the best treatment option for resistant HTN. This research, known as the Pathway II study was designed and carried out by a team of experts from the British Hypertension Society, headed by Professor Morris Brown. The study results, published in *The Lancet*, showed that spironolactone was the most effective blood pressure-lowering therapy overall. This finding, together with hormone measurements in the patients, also suggests that the predominant underlying cause of resistant hypertension is sodium or salt retention in the body.

As part of this one year cross-over study, patients with resistant HTN had three different classes of anti-hypertensive drugs added to their stable combination for 12 weeks each. The added drugs were spironolactone



**In patients compliant with medication, there is still a group who have poor BP control in spite of being on three types of medication**

(a potassium sparing diuretic), Doxazosin (an alpha blocker), Bisoprolol (a beta blocker) and a placebo or dummy medication. In each cycle, every patient was given a

low dose for 6 weeks followed by high dose for another 6 weeks of each medication. Patients' home and clinic BP were measured at the end of each cycle. A hormone secreted from the kidneys known as renin, which is involved in the regulation of BP, was measured at baseline to assess if it could predict response to these three different classes of drugs. Results from this study show that spironolactone was the most effective drug in lowering BP in patients with resistant HTN already on ACD combination. Results also show that patients with low renin levels are likely to respond better to added spironolactone.

Professor Mark Caulfield, one of the principal investigators of the study based at the William Harvey Research Institute at Barts School of Medicine, and who is also a Trustee of Blood Pressure UK, commented that: "A novel feature of this study was the use of an automated BP monitor in the clinic and at home across each treatment cycle. It is remarkable that we saw a major improvement in the blood pressure of nearly three quarters of patients with resistant hypertension when spironolactone was added to their usual treatment regime".



**Dr Manish Saxena (Co-author) said "PATHWAY II unequivocally answers whether diuretic therapy with spironolactone is more effective at reducing BP than doxazosin which acts to open arteries, or bisoprolol which reduces the output from the heart." Dr Saxena believes this research will be helpful for informing future guidelines for the better management of resistant HTN in millions of patients worldwide. If you suffer from resistant HTN with poor BP control in spite of being on 2-3 drugs, you can discuss a trial with spironolactone with your GP or physician.**

With Careway pharmacies located in communities around the UK, you'll never be far away from expert care and advice, whenever you need it



# STAY WELL THIS WINTER with your Careway pharmacy

**H**ealth problems such as coughs, colds, flu, aches, pains, tummy upsets and dry skin can be common during the winter months. But the good news is your local Careway pharmacy can help keep you healthy over these cooler, wetter months.

**Coughs, colds and flu** According to the NHS, most people will catch a cold this winter and some will develop flu. If you find yourself going down with a winter bug, there are lots of soothing over-the-counter remedies available at Careway pharmacies – just ask the pharmacist to help you choose the best remedy for your symptoms.

Many Careway pharmacies also offer flu jabs: if you haven't had yours yet, find your nearest pharmacy offering flu services by using the Pharmacy Finder at [www.careway.co.uk](http://www.careway.co.uk). Many pharmacies are offering free NHS jabs alongside a private service, we recommend you check with your local pharmacy first.

**Aches and pains** We all seem to have more aches and pains during the winter than at other times of the year. But keeping pain under control can help you live your life fully. Using the right pain relief product for your symptoms can make a big difference, so ask your local Careway pharmacist to explain the benefits of the products available.

**Tummy upsets** The festive season can put pressure on your digestive system, thanks to all that party food and drink. But there's no fun in having an upset stomach, heartburn or indigestion. Again, all the products you need to relieve your symptoms are available at your local Careway pharmacy, including antacids and probiotics for promoting gut health (your pharmacist can recommend the product that would be best for you).

**Dry skin** Winter comes with cold winds and central heating, both of which can make your skin more dry than usual – especially if you have a condition such as eczema. So ask your local Careway pharmacist about products that can keep your skin smooth and supple at this time of year, such as moisturisers called emollients and soap-free cleansers.

## Appointment-free advice

Careway pharmacies deliver high levels of care and expertise in the heart of local communities around the UK. You can visit a Careway pharmacy and talk to a highly trained pharmacist about any concerns you or your family may have about your health in complete confidence – all without an appointment.

Careway pharmacies also offer a range of specialist in-store services such as blood pressure testing and heart health checks, keeping you in control of your health all year round. And of course, your local Careway pharmacy is still the best place to take your prescription and buy over-the-counter medicines, skincare and beauty products.

Plus while you're there, you can pick up a free copy of All About Health magazine to stay in touch with the healthcare matters that affect you and your family.

• Careway is a Blood Pressure UK partner organisation. To find out more – and to find your nearest Careway pharmacy – visit [www.careway.co.uk](http://www.careway.co.uk). You can also keep in touch via social media: like the Careway Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/CarewayUK](http://www.facebook.com/CarewayUK) and follow Careway on Twitter (@carewayuk) for the latest health news and advice, regular giveaways and to enter Careway competitions #winterready.

# FOCUS ON NUTRITION



As a Registered Nutritionist I enjoy advising people on healthy eating and am only too aware of how much conflicting information is out there. I'm delighted to have joined Blood Pressure UK where I look forward to answering all your questions on diet and blood pressure. Here are a few to get us started:

FOCUS ON NUTRITION ♥

**Q I've recently been diagnosed with high blood pressure. Which part of my diet should I look at changing first?**

**A** Eating a healthy diet is important for lots of reasons and maintaining a healthy blood pressure is one of them. In particular, following a low-salt diet is especially important. We currently eat on average 8g of salt per day; if we can reduce this to below 3g this can cut systolic pressure by 10-12mmHg within a couple of weeks. Top tips for lowering salt intake include not adding salt in cooking or to meals at the table, eating less processed foods and checking nutritional labels to help you make lower-salt food choices.

**Q I never add salt to my food so why is my blood pressure still high?**

**A** Unfortunately it is not just the salt in food that matters but also, and perhaps more importantly, it is the salt which is added by manufacturers in processing. It is best to limit intakes of processed food and where possible check labels and choose those which have less than 0.3g salt per 100g. High blood pressure can also develop for other non-dietary reasons such as our age, family history or smoking.

**Q Are bananas good for high blood pressure?**

**A** Bananas may be helpful due to their high potassium content. Potassium is a mineral with many important functions in the body, including controlling the balance of

fluids and possibly helping to lower blood pressure.

**Q I have heard that cheese contains a lot of salt so should I stop eating it?**

**A** Most cheeses are usually high in salt and/or saturated fat, for example cheddar, brie, stilton, parmesan and processed cheeses, so should be eaten in small portions and only occasionally or as a treat. Lower salt options such as cottage cheese and mozzarella would be better options, though should still be eaten in moderation.



DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION ON DIET AND BLOOD PRESSURE?

Please send it to [Julia.wolman@bloodpressureuk.org](mailto:Julia.wolman@bloodpressureuk.org) or write to Julia at  
**FREEPOST Blood Pressure UK,**  
Wolfson Institute  
Charterhouse Square,  
London, EC1M 6BQ

## 3 great low salt recipes to inspire & tempt

Christmas is a time when we are tempted with more high fat, sugary and salty foods than at any time of the year but you can eat healthily. Here are some recipes to keep you on the straight and narrow this festive season.





## EASY LOW SALT BREAD

The seeds give this wholemeal bread a wholesome, savoury flavour without affecting the salt content. A great alternative to salty shop bought bread and perfect for turkey sandwiches

- Makes: 10 portions
- Prep time: 10 minutes
- Cooking time: 28 minutes
- 1 heaped tbs poppy seeds
- 1 heaped tbs sesame seeds
- 1 heaped tbs sunflower seeds
- 570g strong wholemeal flour
- 1 packet easy bake yeast
- 225ml hot water
- Approx 170ml cold water
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 generous tbs walnut oil
- Add 225ml hot water to a measuring jug and dissolve the honey and oil in the water. Make up to 425ml with cold water and add to the dry ingredients and mix.
- Sprinkle some flour onto a chopping board or similar and turn out the dough. Knead for a couple minutes to get into shape. Well oil a bread tin, add the dough and leave to rise for 40–60 minutes in a warm kitchen or airing cupboard, with a tea-towel loosely over the top.
- Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/gas 6.
- Bake for 28 minutes, turning once.

## FRUIT AND NUT MUESLI

Breakfast cereal is well known for its high salt content. This delicious, crunchy muesli is a filling, healthy and low salt start to the day. This recipe will see you through the whole week.

- Makes: 7 portions
- Prep time: 10–15 minutes
- Cook time: 8–10 minutes
- 350g jumbo porridge oats
- 50g hazelnuts, roughly chopped
- 50g flaked almonds
- 50g Brazil nuts, roughly chopped
- 50g sultanas
- 50g raisins
- 50g dried apricots, chopped
- 50g dried dates, chopped
- Preheat the oven to 165°C/325°F/gas 3.
- Spread the oats and nuts out evenly on a baking tray and toast in the oven for 8–10 minutes, keep an eye on them so they don't burn. Remove from the oven and leave to cool.
- To make the muesli simply mix the toasted ingredients with the fruit and store in an airtight container.

## GINGER AND COCONUT PANNA COTTA

Reproduced with permission from Heart Food – the Healthy Heart Cookbook by Veronica Cuskelly and Nicole Senior. Published by New Holland Publishers, Australia. This panna cotta is delicately flavoured with ginger and coconut essence to retain the lovely caramel creamy taste achieved using the evaporated milk. Increase the ginger and coconut essence if a more intense flavour is desired.

- Serves: 4
- Prep time: 5–10 minutes
- Cooking time: 10 minutes plus refrigeration time
- 1 x 375ml tin light evaporated milk (1.5% fat)
- 2cm ¾ inch piece ginger, peeled and diced
- 2 teaspoons powdered edible gelatine
- 2 tablespoons hot water
- ¼ teaspoon coconut essence
- 2 passion fruit, halved
- 600 paw paw or papaya, sliced
- Place the evaporated milk and ginger in a saucepan over a low heat and stir thoroughly.
- Add the gelatine to the hot water and stir until dissolved. Stir into the milk mixture and mix well (make sure the dissolved gelatine and milk are the same temperature to avoid lumps).
- Strain the mixture into a jug, discarding the ginger. Stir in the coconut essence. Pour the mixture into 4 x 125ml capacity dishes and leave to cool. Cover and set in the refrigerator for about 4 hours or overnight.
- Turn the panna cotta out onto serving plates – you may need to quickly dip dishes into warm water or run a knife around the edge of the dishes. Serve with passion fruit and paw paw.

### Suggestions

- Instead of passion fruit and paw paw try serving it with pineapple and lychees, papaya and lime juice or cherries and strawberries.

# Are you a savvy shopper?

If there's one thing that the recession has taught us, it's that there is no need for loyalty in supermarkets. Long gone are the days when people would do one big weekly shop.

Instead we have all become accustomed to shopping around for what we need; spotting the best deals and getting value for money. This new approach needn't be confined to price however. Our health is extremely important and heavily influenced by our shopping habits. But with the majority of diseases being related to diet (heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity and type 2 diabetes), it's time we started prioritising our health when deciding what to put in our shopping baskets. Sometimes this can be easier said than done. All too often labels are inconsistent in terms of what nutrition information appears on front of pack and making a decision based on whether it's good for us can be easily overlooked in our rush to get to the checkout.

Which is why Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH) has developed the FoodSwitch UK smartphone app in conjunction with The George Institute for

Global Health Australia. By simply scanning a barcode from thousands of food and drink products, FoodSwitch enables you to see whether the product is high (red), medium (amber) or low (green) in fat, saturates, sugars and salt. You'll also be able to see a list of healthier food choices you could switch to across similar categories of food or drink.

For people with, or being treated for high blood pressure, SaltSwitch has proven to be an extremely helpful feature of the app. Eating too much salt is a major factor in the development of high blood pressure and as so many of the food products we buy already contain added salt, such as in bread, soups, cheese and meat products; it is vital that we are aware of how much salt is 'hidden' in our food. By listing alternatives based on their salt content, SaltSwitch enables you to easily choose products with less salt, thereby helping to reduce

the amount of salt in your diet.

There is increasingly high demand for health-apps which are evidence based. With over 45,000 downloads to date and many Health Care Professionals recommending the app to their patients, FoodSwitch has proven extremely useful to people across the UK. FoodSwitch, which is supported by 14 health organisations including Blood Pressure UK, has been recognised as one of the most innovative health apps in the UK (PHE), as well as having 'the potential to change every shopping basket in the country'.



No longer being confined to one supermarket means you can shop around to find the healthiest products.

Be a smart shopper; download FoodSwitch UK for free from iTunes and Google Play!

*By Steph Tucker, Assistant Nutritionist at CASH*

# MEMBER SURVEY

Our members are very important to us. We want to ensure we are giving you the best information and advice possible in return for supporting Blood Pressure UK.

1. Overall, how satisfied are you with our member's resources (website, leaflets, e-newsletter, magazine, phone line)?

- Very satisfied
- Quite satisfied
- Unsure
- Quite dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

**Comments** – how could we improve our member resources for you?

2. On average, how often do you visit our website [www.bloodpressureuk.org](http://www.bloodpressureuk.org)?

- Once a month or more
- Every 2-6 months
- Every 6-12 months
- More than 12 months ago
- I have never visited (please go straight to question 4)

**Comments** – how could we improve our website so that you will want to visit more often?

3. How easy is it to find the information that you need on the Blood Pressure UK website?

- Very easy
- Quite easy
- Unsure
- Quite difficult
- Very difficult

**Comments** – which section(s) of the website do you most frequently look at for information?


For a chance to win a free blood pressure home monitoring kit, please fill in this brief questionnaire and return to the freepost address at the bottom of the page. You can also do this online at <http://goo.gl/forms/pgqKRZ5SQI>

4. Which, if any, of the following do you think could be useful additional web-based resources for members? (please tick all that apply)

- Recipe ideas
- Members' forum
- Factsheets
- Webinars
- Health news updates

**Comments** – do you have any other suggestions for useful website resources?

5. Which of the following social media resources do you use for general purposes?

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Other (please specify)

None

6. Which of the following social media resources do you use to follow Blood Pressure UK?

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Other (please specify)

None

**Comments** – what could we do to encourage more members to engage with Blood Pressure UK on social media?

7. Finally, please tell us about yourself: Your age group:

- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85+

8. Your gender

- Male
- Female

Thank you for your feedback. We really value your opinions and will take your ideas into consideration. The results of this survey will be available in the next issue of Positive Pressure.

Please return your completed survey to the FREEPOST address below, by Friday 15th January. If you would like to be entered into the competition to win a free blood pressure home-monitoring kit please provide your name and address. FREEPOST, Blood Pressure UK, Wolfson Institute, Charterhouse Square, London, EC1M 6BQ



Bringing the family together at Christmas time is a great occasion and worth celebration. Often a full house can lead to a stressful time in the kitchen, but there's no need to raise everyone's blood pressure! Help maintain normal blood pressure levels, by using LoSalt this Christmas during cooking and at the table. The dinner will be great tasting and you'll be reducing salt consumption levels by **two-thirds** (as compared to using regular table, sea or rock salts).



## A LoSalt Centrepiece for Christmas

Try our great Herbed LoSalted Roasted Turkey for your yuletide spread – packed with flavour and low in sodium, guaranteed to be an instant family favourite!

### Ingredients

- 1 (12 lb) Turkey (thawed if frozen, and giblets removed from cavity)
- 3 tbsp. fresh chopped marjoram
- 3 tbsp. fresh chopped tarragon
- 3 tbsp. fresh chopped thyme
- 3 tbsp. fresh chopped parsley
- 3 tbsp. fresh chopped sage
- 3 tbsp. fresh chopped rosemary
- 3 tsp. LoSalt
- 2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- ½ cup softened butter (1 stick)
- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 onions, quartered
- 1 head celery, roughly chopped
- 4 carrots, peeled and chopped

### Method

- 1 Preheat oven to 180 degrees celsius.
- 2 In a small bowl combine the herbs, 2 tsp LoSalt, black pepper, olive oil and butter.
- 3 Place your fingers between the skin and meat of the bird, and gently loosen the skin. Next, using your fingers smooth the herb mixture under the skin, turning to make sure each area is covered. Excess herb mixture can be rubbed on the outside of the breast and legs.
- 4 Insert all the chopped vegetables into the turkey's cavity and place the bird in a roasting tray.
- 5 Sprinkle a further 1 tsp LoSalt on to the skin of the bird and cover with foil. Place the bird in the oven.
- 6 A 12 lb. turkey should be cooked for approximately 3½ to 3¾ hours. Remove the foil for the last hour of cooking time. The turkey should be roasted until a meat thermometer inserted into the thickest portion registers 77 degrees celsius.
- 7 Once removed from the oven, remove the vegetables from the cavity and let rest for 20 minutes before slicing and serving.

**Rosemary Mashed Potato**  
This fantastic recipe using LoSalt is light, fluffy and low in sodium, and will be a great addition to any roast dinner. Serves 4-6

### Ingredients

- 1lb red skinned potatoes, washed and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 3 tbsp light cream cheese
- 2 tbsp milk
- ½ tsp chopped fresh rosemary leaves
- ½ tsp LoSalt
- Pinch garlic powder

### Method

- 1 Cook potatoes in a large pot of boiling water laced with LoSalt until tender, about 15 minutes.
- 2 Meanwhile, using a hand mixer, in a medium mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese and milk on low speed until well-combined.
- 3 Drain the cooked potatoes and transfer to the bowl with the cream cheese. Beat in the potatoes, rosemary, LoSalt (½ tsp) and garlic until combined and leaving some lumps. Serve immediately.

### Top tips...

All fresh herbs can be substituted for 1 tbsp of dried herbs.

Check NHS Choices guidelines if a different size turkey is being prepared.

For more great recipes visit our website: [www.losalt.com](http://www.losalt.com)

# 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 as complicated as you might 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.

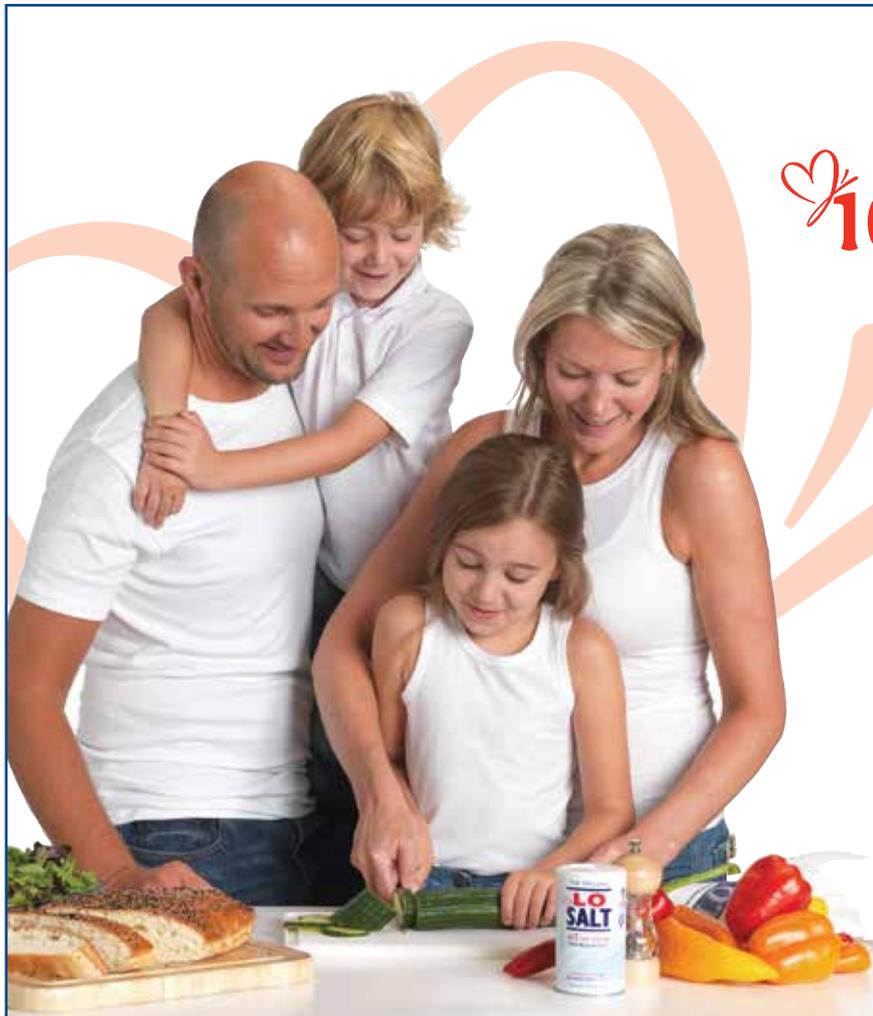
Obviously, providing for your family and friends comes first, but once that is done please consider a gift to Blood Pressure UK in your Will.



**Blood Pressure UK**

Helping you to lower your blood pressure

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](http://www.bloodpressureuk.org), or by writing to: Blood Pressure UK, Wolfson Institute, Charterhouse Square, London, EC1M 6BQ.



**66% LESS SALT**  
**100% GREAT TASTE**  
**THAT THEY LOVE**



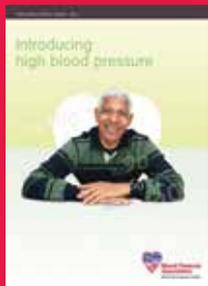
**LoSalt** is the great tasting way to a healthier lifestyle, containing only one-third the sodium of regular table, sea and rock salts.

**LoSalt** is low in sodium salt and high in natural potassium

[www.losalt.com](http://www.losalt.com)

# 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.



## 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 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.



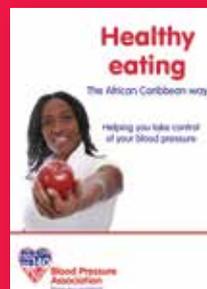
## Love your heart: a South Asian guide to controlling your blood pressure

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.



## 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: 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.



## 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 7882 6255/5793** for your copy

or visit <http://www.bloodpressureuk.org>