

[IMAGE]

Diet as Good as Drugs for Reducing Blood Pressure

By Editorial Staff

High blood pressure or hypertension is known as a "silent killer" because typically, it has no symptoms until it causes a catastrophic health event, such as a heart attack or stroke. It's estimated that more than 75 million Americans currently suffer from high blood pressure, which makes effective treatment options of paramount importance. You can take medication, which may be effective, but comes with a lengthy list of potential side effects; or you can try a simple nondrug solution – changing your diet. Research suggests that a healthy diet – specifically the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet, which emphasizes high intake of fruits and vegetables, moderate intake of fat (less than 27 percent of calories), whole grains over processed grains / foods, and limited intake of red meat – can reduce blood pressure as much as blood pressure medication.

Reducing Blood Pressure - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark The keys to the DASH diet from a blood pressure-lowering perspective are that it encourages low / moderate intake of sodium, excess consumption of which has been linked to high blood pressure; and high intake of nutrients including potassium, which helps regulate BP. Lowering sodium intake can be as easy as not eating out so much, as sodium (salt) is commonly added to foods to make them taste better; and substituting salt for spices on some of your favorite home-made meals.

For more information about the DASH diet and tips to avoid high blood pressure and its health consequences, visit the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute [online](#).

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