

Got High Blood Pressure?

Here's how much your systolic pressure could fall with diet and exercise, according to the new guidelines.

Eat a DASH Diet

Load up on fruits and vegetables and shrink bad fats, added sugars, and salt. Here's a 2,100-calorie version. (Note: servings are small.)

↓11 points

	Daily Servings
 Vegetables & Fruit 1 serving: ½ cup (or 1 cup greens) or 1 piece fruit	11
 Grains 1 serving: ½ cup pasta or rice or cereal or 1 slice bread	4
 Low-fat Dairy 1 serving: 1 cup milk or yogurt or 1½ oz. cheese	2
 Legumes & Nuts 1 serving: ½ cup beans or ¼ cup nuts or 4 oz. tofu	2
 Poultry, Fish, Lean Meat 1 serving: ¼ lb. cooked	1
 Oils & Fats 1 serving: 1 Tbs.	2
 Desserts & Sweets 1 serving: 1 tsp. sugar or 1 small cookie	2
 Wild Card Poultry, Fish, Lean Meat or Oils & Fats or Grains or Desserts & Sweets	1

Exercise

Aim for 90 to 150 minutes a week of aerobics (brisk walking, biking, running, etc.) and/or resistance training (biceps curls, leg presses, etc.).

↓5 points



Source: adapted from J. Am. Coll. Cardiol. 2017. doi:10.1016/j.jacc.2017.11.006.

Lose Weight

Expect about a 1 point drop in systolic blood pressure for every 2 pounds you lose.

↓5 points



Get More Potassium

Goal: 3,500 to 5,000 milligrams a day. You get the most bang for your calorie buck with fruits and veggies.

↓4-5 points

	Calories	Potassium (mg)
Baked potato with skin (1 small)	130	750
Beet greens (½ cup cooked)	20	650
Yellowfin tuna (4 oz. cooked)	150	600
Sweet potato with skin (1 small)	130	540
Wild Coho salmon (4 oz. cooked)	160	490
Spinach (½ cup cooked)	20	420
Banana (1)	110	420
Low-fat plain yogurt (6 oz.)	110	400
Fat-free milk (1 cup)	80	380
Cantaloupe (¼)	50	370
Lentils (½ cup cooked)	120	370
Pinto beans (½ cup cooked)	120	370
Tomato sauce (½ cup)	30	360
Avocado (½ cup)	120	360
Spinach (2 cups raw)	10	340
Shelled edamame (½ cup cooked)	100	340
Peach or nectarine (1)	60	290
Brussels sprouts (½ cup cooked)	30	250
Orange (1)	70	240
Romaine lettuce (2 cups raw)	10	230
Apple (1)	100	200

Sources: USDA and manufacturers.

Cut Salt

Cut your sodium by 1,000 milligrams a day, ideally to 1,500 mg a day. Most sodium comes from packaged and restaurant foods that don't even taste salty. Some examples:

↓5 points

Salt Sneak	Instead, try:
Bread 100-200 mg (1 slice)	Try Pepperidge Farm or other brands with 100 mg per slice.
Cheese 150-250 mg (1 oz.)	Use Swiss (40-60 mg) or fresh mozzarella (80-100 mg) or just 1 "slim cut" slice.
Raw poultry 200 mg (4 oz.)	Buy chicken or turkey without salt "solution" (80 mg).
Deli meats 500-700 mg (2 oz.)	Get Boar's Head low-sodium meats at the deli counter (about 50-80 mg).
Soup 600-900 mg (1 cup)	Buy Imagine or other "light in sodium" soups (200-400 mg).
Pizza 1,000 mg (2 slices)	Replace meat with veggies (not olives). Go light on cheese.
Restaurant entrées (1,000-2,000 mg)	Save half for later. Add a salad or other veggies to boost the potassium.

Limit Alcohol

If you drink, stop at one drink a day for women or two for men. 🍷

↓4 points



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