

LOWERING BLOOD PRESSURE NATURALLY

High blood pressure is a very serious problem in America, as well as other “modern” societies. It is definitively linked to increased risk of heart attack, heart failure, strokes, aneurysms, and kidney failure. About 1 in 3 American adults have it, but many don’t know it, primarily because it often has few, if any symptoms. Because of this, it is often referred to as the “silent killer”.

Normal blood pressure is considered to be 120/80 mmHg or below. Every 20/10 mmHg increment over 115/75 doubles your risk of cardiovascular disease. In the U.S., it is pretty much a given that we will develop high blood pressure as we age. However, this is not the case in traditional cultures eating a more natural diet.

Typically, if you have high blood pressure, your doctor will prescribe some type of blood pressure lowering medication. Unfortunately, they all come with a list of side effects, some nastier than others. So let’s take a look at some natural approaches to this problem:

The stock advice you are liable to hear in this regard is to lose weight, exercise more, and avoid salt in your diet. And this is all valid advice. However, there are other dietary approaches that will increase your results exponentially, and some of them may surprise you.

The first would be to try totally eliminating wheat products, because of their high gluten content. Other high-gluten grains include rye and barley. Unless you are of Mediterranean descent, you are probably intolerant of gluten to some degree. This can lead to a dramatic spike in your blood sugar (higher and faster than table sugar), autoimmune-induced inflammation in the thyroid, irritable bowel syndrome, gastric reflux, behavioral problems, and chronic inflammatory conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, ulcerative colitis, systemic lupus, pancreatitis. It has also been linked to anemia, mood swings, fatigue, fibromyalgia, eczema, and osteoporosis.

According to William Davis, MD, who specializes in helping his patients control their blood pressure naturally, removing gluten from the diet is the most potent strategy he has found in his years of doing this type of work. He reports that his typical patient employing this strategy lowers their blood pressure 20-40 mmHg, enjoys a dramatic loss of weight, lowers their triglycerides, increases their HDL, and decreases their LDL!

There are also 9 supplements that have proven blood pressure-lowering properties:

Vitamin D3: 6,000 IU/day is the typical dose needed to bring blood levels of 25-hydroxyvitamin D into the optimal 60-70 ng/mL level. This is way more than the woefully outdated RDA of 400 IU/day. And lowering blood pressure is only one of the many remarkable health benefits of Vit D3.

Coenzyme Q10: While CoQ10 is produced naturally in the body, we make much less of it as we get older, and blood levels are dramatically diminished with the use of statin (cholesterol-lowering) drugs. Pooled data from 12 studies showed that supplementing with CoQ10 lowered blood pressure by 17 mmHg systolic and 8 mmHg diastolic. For most people 50-100 mg/day should be adequate. If you're taking statin (cholesterol-lowering) drugs 400-600 mg/day would be ideal.

French Maritime Bark Extract: A University of Arizona study demonstrated a 50% reduced need for blood pressure medication in diabetic patients taking 125 mg/day.

Anthocyanins: These are plant flavonoids that give the red, purple, and blue colors to cranberries, blueberries, eggplant, grapes, red wine, pomegranate, bilberries, lingonberries, black currants, blackberries, and raspberries. They can be consumed by regularly eating berries, and are also available in supplement form.

Magnesium: Around 500 mg/day seems to be the best dosage, leading to a 6-8 mmHg drop in systolic blood pressure.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids: While their effect on blood pressure is modest (2 mmHg systolic), their other dramatic effects on overall health make them an important addition to the list. Around 3,000 mg/day is a good daily dose.

Resveratrol: Found in dark-colored grapes, Resveratrol also has many health-promoting qualities, among them a modest impact on blood pressure.

Acetyl-L-carnitine: In one study, this amino acid reduced systolic blood pressure 9 mmHg at a dosage of 1,000mg 2x/day. It also improved insulin response and reduced blood sugar.

Melatonin: At a dosage of 2 – 2.5 mg, melatonin not only has sleep-enhancing properties, but also reduces systolic blood pressure during sleep by about 6 mmHg.

If you would like to try the effect of some or all of these approaches on your own blood pressure, be sure to purchase a reliable at-home monitor, and check your blood pressure at the same time every day.

Did you know that the average American consumes 760 calories per day from what they drink? That means that most people could lose 1 ½ pounds per week simply by drinking only water!