

Resources for Blood Pressure

- 1. See your Primary Care Provider regularly for blood pressure monitoring.** The only way to know if you have high blood pressure is to have it checked by a health professional at least once every two years, more if it's been high in the past. Always take your prescribed medications as directed by your physician.
 - Find a St. Thomas physician by calling 284-LIFE (5433) or visit <http://carenet/> and click on the "Physician/AHP Directory" link under the "Reference" section.
 - Find a participating physician by calling Blue Cross Blue Shield at 1-800-565-9140 or visit www.bcbst.com.
- 2. Have your blood pressure checked at The Wellness Center.** Free blood pressure checks are available Monday-Thursday from 5am- 8:30pm, Friday from 5am-7:30pm, Saturday from 8am-3pm, and Sunday from 10am-3pm. Call 222-2056 for more information.
- 3. Learn more about DASH.** Research has shown that diet affects the development of high blood pressure. Blood pressure can be significantly improved in many cases by following the DASH or "Dietary Approaches to Stopping Hypertension" program. Find out more at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/dash/new_dash.pdf.

Nutrition tips at a glance:

- **Reduce sodium in your diet**
 - Choose fresh foods
 - Avoid adding salt at the table
 - Limit canned soups, frozen dinners, and entrees with vegetables sauces
 - Reduce your intake of bacon, sausage, hot dogs, corned beef, pastrami, bologna, and salami
 - Avoid smoked, pickled, or cured foods
- **Drink Adequate Fluids** - Drink 8 cups of water per day
- **Reduce Caffeine**
 - Limit caffeinated drinks to fewer than 3 cups a day
 - Avoid caffeine-containing medications such as Anacin, Dristan, Excedrin and Midol, NoDoz, and Vivarin
- **Increase foods that are high in Potassium, Magnesium, and Fiber**
 - 4-5 servings a day of whole fresh fruit and 4-5 servings a day of vegetables (1 serving = 1 cup)
 - Citrus fruits 3 times a week

- Nuts, seeds, dried beans and peas at least 4 times a week
 - Potatoes, tomatoes and bananas
 - 100% Whole grains and 100% whole grain products
- **Increase foods that are high in Calcium**
- Choose 2-3 cups of low-fat or fat-free dairy products daily
 - If you do not eat dairy products, supplement your diet with Calcium
4. **Visit the PHD (Personal Health Development) Network web** site to read more about controlling hypertension at <http://www.activhealth.com>.
5. **Maintain a healthy weight, or lose weight if you are overweight.** People with a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or higher are more likely to develop high blood pressure.
- Call The Wellness Center at 222-2056 to find out how to get assistance starting an exercise program.
 - The Nutrition Therapy Department offers a weight management program. Call 222-6895 for more details.
6. **Get physical activity most days of the week.** Less active people have a greater risk for developing high blood pressure. Contact The Wellness Center at 222-2056 to find out how to start an exercise program. The American Heart Association and the American College of Sports Medicine recommends for healthy adults to participate in:
- Moderate intensity aerobic activity (example: walking) for a minimum of 30 minutes 5 days each week.
- OR**
- Vigorous intensity aerobic activity (example: running) for a minimum of 20 minutes 3 days each week.
- AND**
- 8-10 Strength training exercises 8-12 repetitions each a minimum of 2 days each week.
7. **Quit smoking.** Contact the **Pulmonary Services Department** to find out more about the smoking cessation programs offered at St. Thomas Hospital at **222-6506**.
8. Contact the **American Heart Association** of Middle Tennessee at 327-0885 or visit their website at www.americanheart.org for blood pressure resources.
9. Visit the **National Institute of Health's** website at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp/ for blood pressure information.

Questions? Contact The Wellness Center at 222-2056.