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You can control Hypertension!

According to the CDC, 1 in 3 people have high blood pressure. Medication can help control HBP. But HBP is a chronic health condition, so healthy habits are essential. Most doctors suggest you stop smoking, eat a low-fat high-fiber diet, and exercise. Some medical professionals suggest the DASH Diet.

DASH, which stands for, Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension. This includes fruits and vegetables (8-10 servings a day), whole grains, beans, nuts, low-fat dairy, lean meat (poultry, seafood), You should limit red meats, added sugars, and unhealthy fats.

Most people still believe their food doesn't taste well until they add, just a little salt. Your daily intake of salt should be no more than 2300mg. Just 2 tablespoons of salad dressing can have ¼ of your daily allowance. For more information on hypertension, cut and paste the following link.

"How do you handle stress as you navigate the Pandemic?"

The Pandemic has been with us since December 2019. That means it has taken two years and a month for us to lose our minds.



How can I make this statement? Just look around your neighborhood. Does the neighborhood look and feel the same as it did in September of 2019? My neighborhood doesn't. In the Spring of 2020, I saw children on my street riding bikes. Bikes! I moved to my neighborhood in the Spring of 2008. I have never seen that many kids riding bikes at the same time.

Okay, maybe kids riding bikes aren't a big deal. Well, how about this one? How's your stress level since the Pandemic started? I bet I have your attention now. I don't have to read any studies or reports of the state of stress in our country today. All I have to do is turn on a news program or simply take a flight anywhere. If I don't witness a stressful situation firsthand, it won't take too many swipes on my smartphone to find it in a video online.

According to the CDC, the pandemic has had a major effect on our lives. Many of us are facing challenges that can be stressful, overwhelming, and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Public health actions, such as social distancing, are necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and its' variants. But they can make us feel isolated and lonely and can increase stress and anxiety.

If you look real close, you will see this stress in your family, friends, and neighbors. And if you look close, you will feel this stress on you. Here are a few signs that you may be stressed.

- Feelings of fear, anger, sadness, worry, numbness, or frustration
- Changes in appetite, energy, desires, and interests
- Difficulty sleeping or nightmares
- Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems, and skin rashes
- Increased use of tobacco, alcohol, and other substances

I believe everyone sees themselves in at least one of the categories above. When the Pandemic started, I admit I was fearful at times. Not because of the lack of faith, it was the lack of information and a cure that gave me pause. Be honest with yourself. Which category did you, or do you find yourself in? Relieving ourselves of stress lies in being honest with ones self.

CDC BP Information

Measuring your blood pressure is an important step towards keeping a healthy blood pressure level.

Because high blood pressure and elevated blood pressure have no symptoms, checking your blood pressure is the only way to know if it is high.

You can measure your blood pressure at home with a home blood pressure monitor. Or you can visit your doctor or nurse to have your blood pressure checked.

If you have high blood pressure. You should take steps to control your blood pressure so that you can lower your risk for heart disease and stroke.

You can get your blood pressure measured:

- By a healthcare team member at a doctor's office.
- At a pharmacy that has a digital blood pressure measurement machine.
- With a home blood pressure monitor that you can use yourself.

Thanks to the CDC, we have learned some of the causes of our stress. It may be easier to understand if we know why we blow up at our spouse or children. Everyone may feel stress from time to time, but where does stress come from? According to The Cleveland Clinic, stress is the body's response to a challenge or demand. Everyone experiences stress, which can be triggered by a range of events, from small daily hassles to major changes like a divorce or job loss. The stress response includes physical components such as an elevated heart rate and blood pressure, thoughts and personal beliefs about the stressful event, and emotions, including fear and anger. Although we often think of it as being negative, stress can also come from positive changes in your life, like getting a promotion at work or having a new baby.**

The next step is to better understand how we can control our stress. We must not forget that stress contributes to high blood pressure (HBP) too. Dr. Ernesto L. Schiffrin, physician-in-chief at Sir Mortimer B. Davis-Jewish General Hospital in Montreal says, stress may lead to high blood pressure, which can pose a risk for heart attack and stroke. Stress also may contribute to such cardiovascular disease risks as smoking, overeating, and lack of physical activity. "Chronic stress has been shown to be associated with increased cardiovascular events.***

Now that we're all on the same page concerning stress and our health. It's time to once and for all, understand how to get rid of stress in our lives. I'm quite sure there are many home remedies for stress, which have been passed down for generations. We prefer to get our information from the experts. Our friends at the Cleveland Clinic have given us some techniques to handle our stress.

- **Exercise regularly.** In addition to having physical health benefits, exercise has been shown to be a powerful stress reliever
- **Stop using tobacco and nicotine products.** People who use nicotine often refer to it as a stress reliever. However, nicotine places more stress on the body by increasing physical arousal and reducing blood flow and breathing
- **Reduce triggers of stress.** You can free up time by practicing time-management skills like asking for help when it's appropriate, setting priorities, pacing yourself, and reserving time to take care of yourself
- **Set realistic goals and expectations.** It's okay—and healthy—to realize you cannot be 100% successful at everything all at once. Be mindful of the things you can control and work on accepting the things that you can't control.**** (*)Available upon request.

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