

BLOOD PRESSURE



&

Naturopathy



Blood Pressure & Naturopathy

Let's talk about blood pressure or more accurately high blood pressure, which is usually more problematic. You can get low blood pressure but more commonly, in clinic we see people coming in with symptoms of high blood pressure.

Technically the term for that is hypertension. The reason that this can be a problem is that it's a risk factor for cardiovascular disease.

So, uncontrolled high blood pressure or hypertension can lead to things like an increased risk of heart attacks and stroke.



I want to give you a bit of background on hypertension before we talk about some of the things that you can do.

It's a bit confusing sometimes to understand the way that blood pressure is measured. There are two numbers to read, one on top of the other. The one on the top of the line is called the systolic pressure and the one on the bottom is diastolic pressure.

We consider the number on the top (the systolic) to be high if it is over 140. So anything above 140 is considered an issue.

The bottom line (the diastolic) anything over 90 is considered high.



If someone has 140/90 blood pressure, that might be the start of us having to look at managing hypertension for that person.

Statistics show that 30% of people have hypertension in Western countries. Many of these symptoms remain uncontrolled.

1 in 10 people are on blood pressure medications in Australia, so it is a really common medication that people might be on.



Factors That Impact Blood Pressure

Uncontrolled Weight

If you are overweight you may like to look at reducing and managing your weight.

You can do this via:

Looking at a diet which increases fruit and vegetables, so a diet low in fruit and vegetables would obviously be a factor.

There is a diet in particular called the **DASH diet**, which is an acronym, (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension).



It is similar to a **Mediterranean diet** but it is specific for people with blood pressure conditions as it is low in sodium.

When people suffer from hypertension, they will get recommended to have low sodium in their diet, so the **DASH diet** is something you can look up that is specific for controlling hypertension.

I think generally, you can say to help hypertension, eat a **Mediterranean Diet**, and eat fruit and vegetables. Eat unrefined foods. Eat good healthy fats.

Do not eat a lot of processed and refined carbohydrates.



Eat Low Salt

The usual recommendation is 1500 milligrams to 2000 milligrams, maximum per day.

It sounds like a lot, but it's really easy to get that amount of salt, especially if you are having processed foods.

Sodium works in ratio with potassium.

Potassium is found in a lot of green vegetables and all of the good healthy foods, so you can see how that works together.



When eating an unhealthy diet high in refined foods, you're going to have high salt, which will have a lot of potassium so reversing that goes a long way in helping manage hypertension.

Exercise

This is not new information that would surprise you but the recommendation is a minimum of 30 minutes per day.

Alcohol

Drink a maximum of 1 to 2 units a day. That's a **maximum**, preferably far less or have alcohol free days of course.



Reducing Stress & Eliminating Smoking

The main thing that is problematic, is anything that damages the endothelium.

The endothelium is the lining of the blood vessels.

If you have damage in those walls then you get inflammation and all these factors add to the probability of getting hypertension.

To protect the endothelium you can take some good antioxidants to help reduce inflammation.



Vitamin E

Research sits around 200 to 400 IU's per day.

We used to always have just Alpha Tocopherol. In Vitamin E there's different types of tocopherols. We've now come to understand, if you are taking a supplement, to get a supplement that has mixed tocopherol, so it will have not just Alpha tocopherol but it has Gamma and Delta Tocopherol as well.

Vitamin D

You can get this through controlled exposure to sunlight.



The foods you can get Vitamin D in are; cod liver oil - fish oil, butter, egg yolks. The yellow foods give you Vitamin D.

Garlic

There's some really good research on garlic, which has shown a direct reduction in blood pressure.

In the trials I have read they were using aged garlic extract. Kyolic is a brand here that sells aged garlic extract in Australia. When taking this brand use just 2 caps a day.

So obviously adding that in your diet can be helpful.



Dried Wakame

Wakame, *Undaria pinnatifida*, is a sea vegetable, or edible seaweed. It has a subtly sweet flavour and is most often served in soups and salads. Sea-farmers have grown wakame in Japan since the Nara period. So you can add this to your diet too.

Lycopene

Which is a compound that's found in tomato product. Fortunately with lycopene it doesn't matter if you're cooking it. So you can get it from Italian based pasta sauces.



Some of the other nutrients, which you probably need to take in a supplemental form to get the recommended doses that were shown to be helpful in research is:

Taurine

Take 1 - 3 grams twice a day. When taking a supplemental powder form, it's quite easy to reach.

CoQ10 - (Coenzyme Q 10)

Take 100 - 200 milligrams a day.



Vitamin C

Take a minimum 250 to 500 milligrams a day.

Herbs

A couple of herbs that are very particular for hypertension are **Hawthorn Berries** and **Olive Leaf Extract**. There is some really good research on olive leaf extract in relation to blood pressure.

This is a really quick snapshot of some of the things that you might take into consideration if hypertension is something you are dealing with.



I hope you find this rundown about the naturopathic perspective on blood pressure helpful.



**This Ebook is a collaboration between
Jayne Larkins from Vital Child
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