

## QUESTION OF THE WEEK

# Q: What causes high blood pressure?



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There are some definite lifestyle choices that can cause hypertension. Among these: excess alcohol consumption, smoking, using too much salt, obesity and lack of exercise. All of these are modifiable.

There are also rare medical conditions such as a type of tumor called a pheochromocytoma that can raise your blood pressure (but these tend to be so rare that most physicians may encounter one patient with them in his or her career).

Most of the time, we are not sure why a person develops hypertension. Research has not yet been able to pinpoint an exact cause. In these cases, it is called essential or primary hypertension.

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