

QUESTION OF THE WEEK



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SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-PRESS

***How can I control
borderline hypertension
without medication?***

The Eighth Joint National Committee released recommendations on blood pressure control in the spring of 2014. They recommended blood pressure in the general population younger than 60 years old be controlled to achieve blood pressure less than 140/90 and in the general population older than 60 years old be controlled to achieve blood pressure less than 150/90.

If a patient has borderline hypertension many non-medication adjustments can be made to avoid going onto antihy-

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The DASH diet (Diet Approaches to Stop Hypertension) is rich in fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy products and limited in saturated fat and total fat.



Control

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pertensive medication. Following the DASH diet (Diet Approaches to Stop Hypertension) and reducing sodium have both been shown to lower blood pressure. Combining the two measures is more effective than either measure separately. The DASH diet is a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and low fat dairy products and limited in saturated fat and total fat. The recommended goal for sodium is not to exceed 1500 to 2000 mg total per day. Evidence shows that decreasing sodium by 1000 mg per day is beneficial even if the goal of 1500 to 2000 mg is not achieved.

Several other measures also help to decrease blood pressure. Weight reduction helps to lower blood pressure. Losing four kilograms of weight can significantly lower blood pressure. Ideally one should attempt to lose weight to achieve a body mass index of 20 to 25. Regular aerobic exercise also lowers blood pressure. Forty minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise is very effective. Such exercise would include vigorous walking, bicycling, jogging, running, swimming and exercising on a treadmill or elliptical trainer.

Moderation of alcohol consumption and smoking cessation are also helpful in lowering blood pressure. For women, this means limiting alcohol to no more than one drink per day and for men this means limiting alcohol to no more than two drinks per day. Complete discontinuation of smoking is recommended to meet the tobacco guideline.

For people with bor-

derline hypertension, consuming a healthy DASH diet, restriction of sodium, weight reduction, regular aerobic exercise, moderation of alcohol and cessation of smoking can all help achieve healthy blood pressure without needing medications.

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One goal: ~~Blindness~~

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