

How can I lower my blood pressure?



1. Eat a healthy diet

Cut down on the amount of salt in your food and eat plenty of fruit and vegetables. The [Eatwell Guide](#) highlights the different types of food that make up our diet, and shows the proportions we should eat them in to have a well-balanced and healthy diet.

Salt raises your blood pressure. The more salt you eat, the higher your blood pressure. Aim to eat less than 6g (0.2oz) of salt a day, which is about a teaspoonful. Eating a low-fat diet that includes lots of fibre – such as wholegrain rice, bread and pasta – and plenty of fruit and vegetables also helps lower blood pressure. Aim to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables every day.

2. Get active

Adults should do at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity such as cycling or fast walking every week. Get more [ideas on how to get active](#).

3. Lose weight

Being overweight forces your heart to work harder to pump blood around your body, which can raise your blood pressure.

Find out if you need to lose weight with the [BMI healthy weight calculator](#) and get tips on [losing weight safely](#).

4. Limit your alcohol intake

Regularly drinking alcohol above recommended limits can raise your blood pressure over time. Staying within these recommended levels is the best way to reduce your risk of developing high blood pressure:

- men and women are advised not to regularly drink more than 14 units a week
- spread your drinking over three days or more if you drink as much as 14 units a week

Find out [how many units are in your favourite drink](#) and [get tips on cutting down](#).

5. Cut down on caffeine

Drinking more than four cups of coffee a day may increase your blood pressure. If you're a big fan of coffee, tea or other caffeine-rich drinks, such as cola and some energy drinks, consider cutting down.

6. Get a good night's sleep

Long-term sleep deprivation is associated with a rise in blood pressure and an increased risk of hypertension. It's a good idea to try to get at least six hours of sleep a night if you can.

7. Take your medicines as prescribed

Most people will need to take more than one type of medicine to control their blood pressure. Don't stop taking your medication without consulting with your GP first.