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● Fee's Fitness Over 40



Fee's Five Tips 2

Fee's Top FIVE Ways To Lower Blood Pressure:

1: Eat Healthy Foods to Lower Blood Pressure

A healthy diet is one of the most important lifestyle changes to make to lower your blood pressure. A healthy diet includes mostly:

- fruits,
- vegetables,
- whole grains,
- nuts and seeds,
- lean meats (such as chicken and pork), and
- low-fat dairy.



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Avoid foods high in saturated fats and cholesterol, such as red meat. These foods can cause a sticky substance called plaque to build up on the walls of your arteries, and harder the walls of your blood vessels and arteries. Both of these things force your heart to work harder to pump blood. Swap out processed foods like chips, crackers, and candy for the foods listed above whenever possible.

Other important dietary changes to discuss with your doctor include:

- eating less sodium (salt) and
- increasing potassium in your food or taking a potassium supplement.

Salt causes your body to retain water, which puts a strain on your kidneys and your blood vessels and raising blood pressure. Potassium relaxes the walls of your blood vessels to make it easier for blood to flow through, lowering blood pressure.

2: Lose Weight and Maintain a Healthy Weight

Extra body weight can increase your risk of hypertension because it causes many changes in your body. It can disrupt hormones that increase the risk of high blood pressure. It can also cause plaque buildup in your arteries, forcing your heart to work harder.

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Being overweight or obese also increases the risk of [obstructive sleep apnea](#), which is a common condition that contributes to high blood pressure. People with extra weight around their midsection (stomach) are at increased risk of high blood pressure. That includes men with a waist measuring 40 inches or more, and women with a waistline of 35 inches or more. Once you reach a healthy weight, continue to follow a heart-healthy diet to maintain that weight.

3: Exercise Often

Exercise helps strengthen your cardiovascular system (your heart and blood vessels) so they can efficiently pump blood throughout your body. It also helps prevent cholesterol and plaque buildup in your arteries. Experts at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recommend that adults get 150 minutes of moderate exercise each week. That is about 30 minutes of exercise a day for five days a week.

You don't have to do intense or hard workouts to get the benefits of exercise. Take a brisk walk, do some strength training, or try interval training workouts. Before starting any new exercise program, be sure to talk to your doctor.

4: Quit Smoking and Smokeless Tobacco

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Smoking cigarettes or using smokeless tobacco increases your risk of high blood pressure because nicotine causes your blood vessels to constrict (tighten). Narrow blood vessels mean your heart has to work harder to pump blood. Just 20 minutes after you quit smoking, blood pressure and heart rate drop dramatically, according to the American Heart Association. Within two weeks of quitting your circulation and lung function improve. Quitting smoking also improves your overall health and reduces your risk of heart disease.

5: Limit Alcohol and Caffeine Each Day

Drinking a lot of alcohol (more than one drink per day for women, or two drinks per day for men) can raise blood pressure. Plus, alcohol can interfere with blood pressure medications so they don't work as well. Drinks that are high in caffeine can also cause a spike in blood pressure for some people.

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