

High Blood Pressure & Blood Sugar

1. High blood pressure means that your heart is working too hard to pump blood through your body.
2. High blood pressure (hypertension) has no obvious symptoms. Many people don't know they have it.
3. Hypertension is a condition that often affects people with Type 2 diabetes.
4. Both conditions are aggravated by obesity, a high-fat/high-sodium inflammatory diet, & inactivity.
5. Together, high blood pressure and high blood sugar increase the risk of heart attacks, strokes, kidney disease, and eye disease.

High blood pressure and diabetes are two of the leading risk factors for heart disease, including heart attacks and strokes. They are closely linked. High blood pressure occurs in about 30% of people with Type 1 diabetes, and 50-80% of people with Type 2 diabetes. In healthy people, a blood pressure reading of 140/90 is considered normal, but for Type 2 diabetics, doctors recommend keeping readings lower, below 135/80.

What does this mean?

The first number (135) is the systolic pressure. It shows the pressure as the heart contracts.

The second number (80), is the diastolic pressure. This is the pressure as the heart relaxes.

It is recommended to check your pressure at least four times each year, plus use a self-monitoring system at home. Record the results, and share them with your doctor.

Risk Factors for Hypertension with Diabetes

Having Type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure increases your chances of developing other diseases, such as kidney disease and retinopathy (eye blood vessels), which may cause blindness.

Uncontrolled diabetes is not the only health factor that increases the risk of high blood pressure. Your chances of having a heart attack or stroke are higher if you have any of the following risk factors:

· family history of heart disease	· too little potassium	· high-fat, high-sodium diet
· sedentary lifestyle	· stress	· obesity
· smoking	· sleep apnea	· too much alcohol



Preventing Hypertension using Diabetes Care Techniques

There are many minor lifestyle changes that can lower your blood pressure. Most are dietary, but daily exercise is also recommended. Any aerobic activity can make your heart healthier. The American Heart Association recommends a minimum of "150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity and/or 90 minutes per week of vigorous cardio-respiratory exercise." In addition to lowering blood pressure, physical activity can strengthen the heart muscle and may reduce arterial stiffness, which happens as people age but is often accelerated by Type 2 diabetes. Some ways to incorporate exercise into your life include taking the stairs instead of the elevator, or parking your car farther from the store.

You may be familiar with the need for improved eating habits, such as removing sugar from your diet, but eating heart-healthy also means cutting out salt, high-fat meats, and dairy product. Some suggestions include:

• fill up on several servings of vegetables at meal times	• eat more whole food, less processed foods	• choose leans meats and fish, or meat substitutes
• eat more whole fruit	• limit table salt	• reduce white bread, rice, potatoes
• eat smaller meals	• increase fiber	• don't skip breakfast

Treating Hypertension and Diabetes Together with Medication

While some people can improve their Type 2 diabetes and hypertension with lifestyle changes alone, most require some medication. Many people also benefit from incorporating natural treatments such as herbs, supplements, and other complimentary practices. Talk with your health care provider to make a plan that works for you.

