

# Lifestyle and High Blood Pressure

By Dr. Meghan Macdonald



## The DASH Diet

A healthy, balanced approach to help manage high blood pressure:

- Vegetables (4-5/day)
- Fruit (4-5/day)
- Grains (7-8/day)—choose whole grains!
- Low fat or no-fat dairy foods (2/day)
- Lean meats, poultry, or fish (2 or less/day)
- Nuts, seeds, dry beans (4-5/week)
- Fats and oils (2-3/day)

Let's talk about salt

Most Canadians consume too much salt! Controlling your sodium intake can help control your blood pressure!

### Tips to reduce salt

- Keep the salt shaker off of the table! Make your own salt-free spice mix.
- Read labels!
- Limit fast foods!
- Watched pre-packaged foods as 77% of salt comes from these. The main culprits include:
  - Bread (aim for no more than 170mg of sodium per slice)
  - Processed meats, and pre-packaged meat and poultry dishes (fresh is always better)
  - Pre-packaged vegetable dishes, including tomato and vegetable juice (fresh is best)
  - Soups (homemade is better with low-sodium broth)
  - Pasta dishes and sauces (make these from scratch)
  - Cheese and milk products (limit aged cheeses)
  - Sauces and gravies (look for reduced salt options or make these from scratch)

What about alcohol?

Women: No more than 2 standard drinks per day (max 10 per week)

Men: No more than 3 standard drinks per day (max 15 per week)

What about activity?

30-60 minutes of moderate activity 5-7 days per week

What about weight loss?

If you are overweight, losing 10lb (5kg) will lower your blood pressure

Other tips:

- Quit smoking
- Take medication (if needed) as prescribed
- Create a blood pressure action plan and monitor your blood pressure regularly
  - Go to <https://ehealth.heartandstroke.ca/HeartStroke/BPAP.Net/Tracker.aspx> to create your action plan!

For more information and to speak with a nutrition professional, call **Dial-A-Dietitian** at: **604-732-9191** (Greater Vancouver) or toll-free at **1-800-667-3438**

### References and more reading:

<http://www.heartandstroke.com/>  
<http://www.dietitians.ca/>  
<http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/>

### Portion Size Guide-Food

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE: FIST SIZED  
LEAFY GREENS: 2 FISTS  
MEAT: PALM-SIZED  
MILK: 1 CUP; YOGURT: ¾ CUP; CHEESE: THUMB SIZED  
BREAD: SIZE OF YOUR HAND  
CEREALS/GRAINS: 2 HANDFULS  
BEANS/SEEDS/NUTS: 1 HANDFUL  
FATS: THUMB TIP

### SALT-FREE SPICE MIX

- 1/3 cup garlic powder
- 1/3 cup onion powder
- 1/3 cup oregano
- 2 tbsp thyme
- 1 tsp parsley flakes
- 1 tsp ground pepper

[www.doctoroz.com](http://www.doctoroz.com)

### Portion Size Guide-Alcohol

- 5 FL OZ WINE
- 12 FL OZ BEER
- 1.5 FL OZ HARD LIQUOR