

Lifestyle Interventions for Managing Hypertension

Presented by: Samantha Crease, PCN Dietitian
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Objectives



Brief overview of lifestyle interventions to help improve blood pressure



Discuss some practical tips to making lifestyle changes

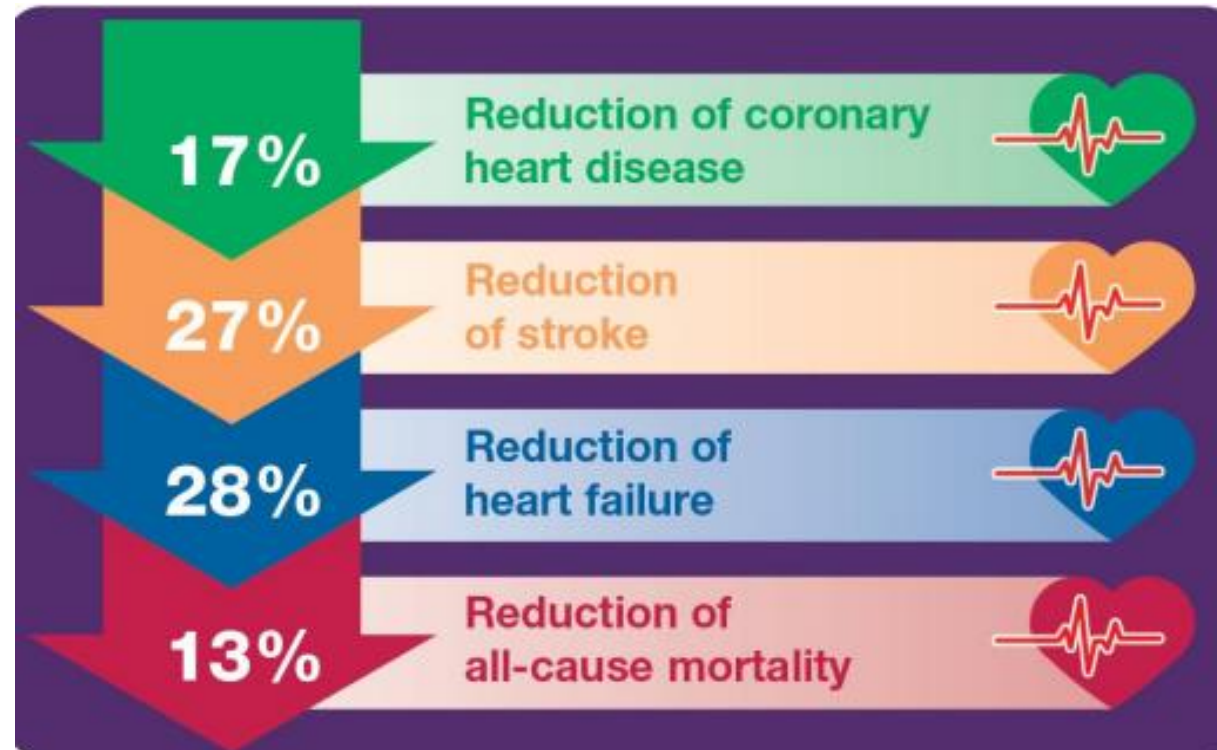


Goal setting



Signposting to further information: [Blood Pressure UK](#)

A major systematic review found that in the populations studied, every 10mmHg reduction in blood pressure resulted in the following reductions.







Blood pressure lowering for prevention of cardiovascular disease and death: a systematic review and meta-analysis

Ettehad D, Emdin CA, Kiran A, Anderson SG, Callender T, Emberson J, Chalmers J, Rodgers A, Rahimi K. Blood pressure lowering for prevention of cardiovascular disease and death: a systematic review and meta-analysis. Lancet. 2016 Mar 5;387(10022):957-967. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(15)01225-8. Epub 2015 Dec 24. PMID: 26724178.

DASH Diet

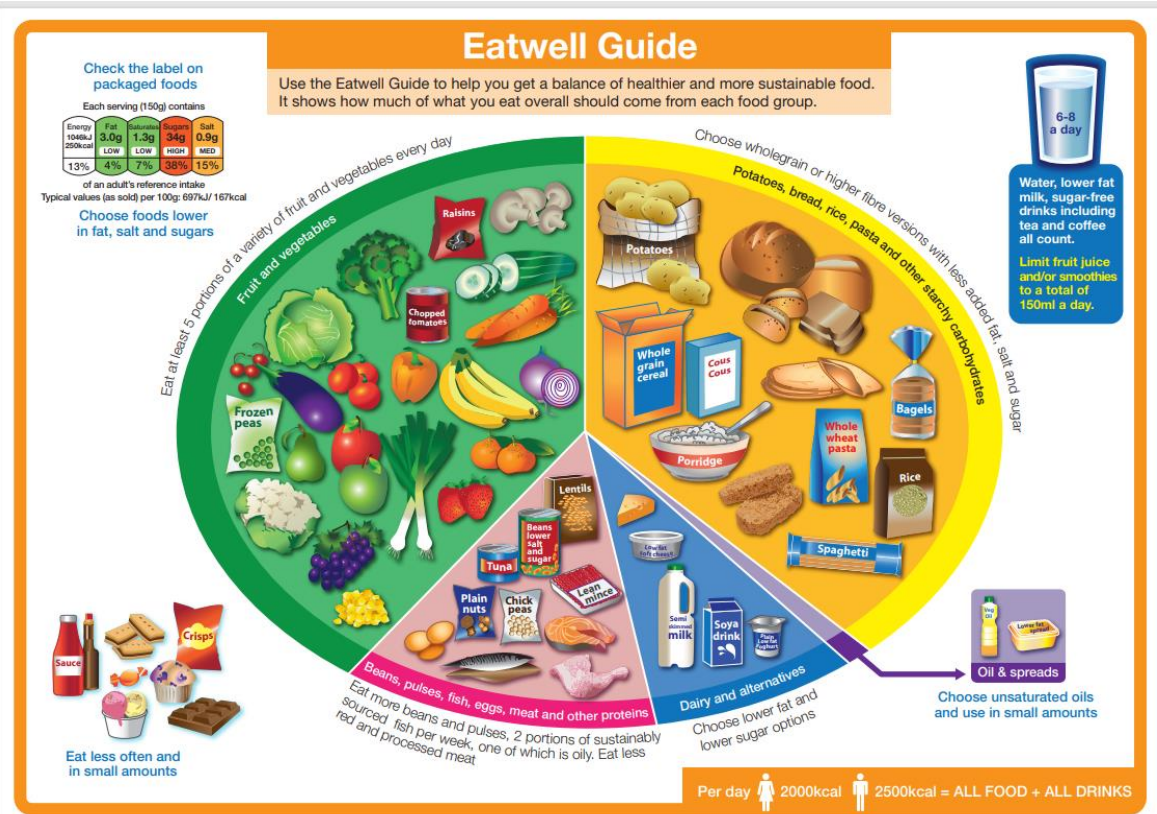
DASH Eating Plan

The Benefits: Lowers blood pressure & LDL “bad” cholesterol.

 Eat This	 Limit This
 Vegetables	 Fatty meats
 Fruits	
 Whole grains	 Full-fat dairy
 Fat-free or low-fat dairy	
 Fish	 Sugar sweetened beverages
 Poultry	
 Beans	 Sweets
 Nuts & seeds	
 Vegetable oils	 Sodium intake

www.nhlbi.nih.gov/DASH

The Eatwell Guide

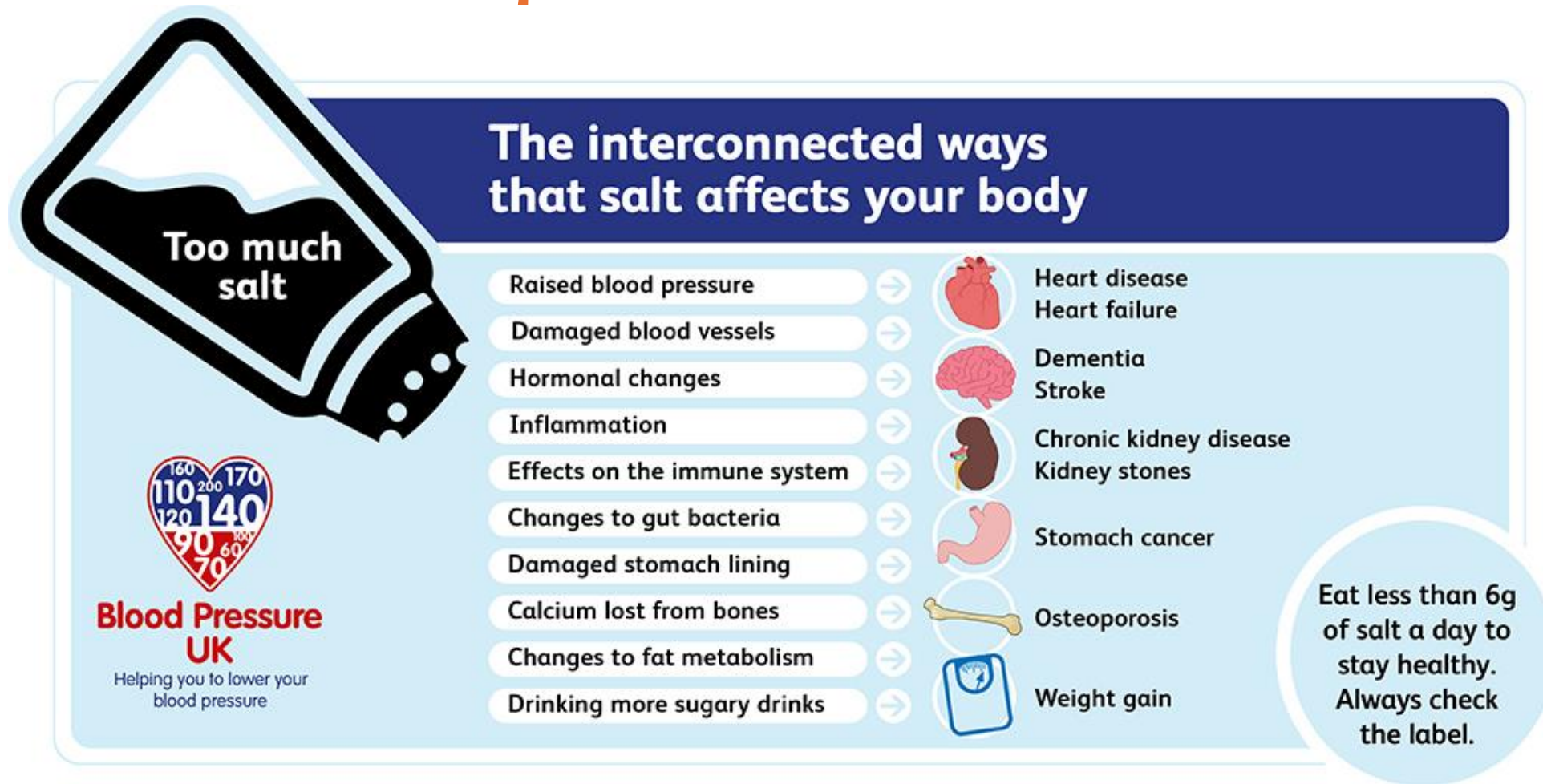


Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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- **Fruit and vegetables** are rich in calcium, potassium, magnesium and fibre (beneficial for lowering blood pressure). Aim to eat at least [five portions per day](#). Fresh, frozen, dried, juiced and canned all count. If you are using canned varieties, look for those with lower salt and sugar.
- **Dairy foods** are good sources of [calcium](#). Opt for lower fat versions such as semi skimmed milk, low-fat yoghurts and low-fat cheese. Include two to three servings per day.
- **Wholegrain foods:** like [wholegrain](#) breakfast cereals and breads, brown pasta and rice and oats are high in fibre, potassium and magnesium. Essential for fibre and B vitamins.
- **Lean proteins: focus on lean meats, poultry and fish. Also include plant based proteins like beans, pulses and lentils, nuts and seed.**
- **Oily fish** are rich in [omega-3](#) fatty acids, which have been shown to have some effect on reducing blood pressure. Aim for two portions of fish per week one of which is oily: Salmon, pilchards, sardines, mackerel, herring or trout per week.
- **Dietary supplements** such as calcium, magnesium and potassium **are not recommended** for reducing blood pressure, as consuming more than you need can be harmful. Talk to your doctor if you are thinking about taking a [supplement](#).
- **Reduce saturated fats and cholesterol:** Choose healthy fats such as those found in nuts, seeds and vegetable oils and limit foods high in saturated fats like fatty meats, full fat dairy products and fried/readymade foods.
- **Reduce** intake of **caffeine** containing drinks, like coffee, tea and cola drinks may increase your blood pressure.

Diet – Salt



- Avoid/ limit ready-made foods; bread, sauces, ready meals, takeaways.
- Check food labels if you are buying ready made foods.
- Avoid highly processed meats: sausages, bacon, ham. Alternative protein sources, tinned fish (in water), eggs.
- Food labelling helpful for bread/sauces/stock cubes ect. [Blood Pressure UK](#)
- Choose lower salt stock cubes
- Use herbs and spices instead of salt for flavour.
- Avoid salt containing products marketed as 'healthy'.
 - For example, sea salt, rock salt, pink Himalayan salt, garlic salt and natural salt.
 - Effervescent (fizzy) and soluble tablets contain sodium carbonate or sodium bicarb to make them fizz. For example Berocca + soluble pain killers.



Alcohol

- Excessive alcohol can raise blood pressure.
- Reducing alcohol consumption can reduce blood pressure and has broader health benefits: Good for liver, heart, reducing risk of stroke, improve mood and help you sleep better.
- **Guidelines**
 - Limit to no more than 14 units of alcohol per week.
 - Spread your drinking over three or more days if you drink as much as 14 units a week.
- **Practical tips**
 - Work out how much you drink per week using [Unit calculator | Alcohol Change UK](#)
 - Use a measure if pouring yourself
 - Introduce some alcohol free days
 - Try low alcohol options

Further information:



[Alcohol support – NHS](#)



[Drinkaware Home | Drinkaware](#)



[Advice and support | Drinkaware](#)



Calculating alcohol
intake:

[Unit and Calorie Calculator |
Drinkaware](#)

[Unit calculator | Alcohol Change
UK](#)

Physical Activity

- Regular exercise helps reduce blood pressure by improving heart and blood vessel health, collectively lowering the strain on the cardiovascular system (lowering risk of heart disease and stroke).
Additional benefits: Strengthens bones, improves balance, keeps muscles and joints moving which can help keep you active and independent later in life. More energy, Improve mood and cognitive function.
- **Guidelines**
 - Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week. moderately active for 30 minutes a day, five times a week.
- **Practical tips**
 - ENJOYMENT - Needs to be enjoyable; Find activities you enjoy, find a friend to get involved, look at classes.
 - Incorporate physical activity into your daily routine.
 - **Set goals which aren't about the physical appearance of your body**
 - Increase slowly



Ideas

- [Positive Pressure](#) magazine for six simple exercises you can do at home.
- [Couch to 5K](#)
- [Getting Started | 10,000 Steps](#)
- [Ramblers](#) and [Wellbeing Walks](#) both organise free walks all over the country every week, or find your nearest walking group.
- [One You](#)
- [Exercise – NHS](#)



Further information:

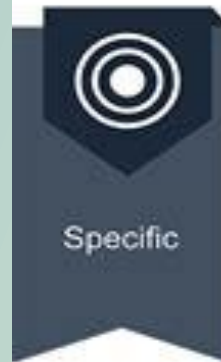
- Physical Activity on referral scheme :
<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/social-care-and-health/health-and-wellbeing/physical-activity-referral-programmes-for-people-with-health-conditions/physical-activity-referral-scheme>
- [Blood Pressure UK](#)

Healthy Weight and Goal setting

- Excess weight can increase blood pressure because your heart has to work harder to pump blood around your body. This is especially true if you carry weight around your waist.
- Losing weight (even as little as 5-10% of your starting weight) will help. Slow and steady weight loss (about 1-2 lbs/0.5-1kg per week) is a healthy way to lose weight and gives you a better chance of keeping the weight off.
- BMI used frequently but Beter measure is waist circumference.
- **Strategies for Weight Loss**
 - Combine healthy eating with regular physical activity.
 - Set realistic goals and track your progress.
 - Seek support from healthcare professionals if needed.

- What mini-goal would you like to set yourself over the next week?
- Using SMART write down how you intent to achieve this goal

SMART



e.g. I will focus on increasing my intake of fruits and vegetables while minimizing processed snacks



e.g. I will aim to consume at least five servings of fruits and vegetables each day and limit processed snacks to no more than two instances during the week.



e.g. I will start by planning and preparing meals in advance, ensuring I have a variety of fruits and vegetables readily available. Additionally, I will identify healthier snack alternatives to replace processed options



e.g. Improving my eating habits aligns with my overall health and wellness goals. It contributes to a more balanced and nutritious diet.



e.g. I will implement these changes over the next week, starting from [start date] to [end date], and assess my progress daily through a food diary



Further information

- [Calculate your body mass index \(BMI\) - NHS – NHS](#)
- [BVM Services](#) website
- [Why your waist size matters - BHF](#)

Stress

- Chronic stress can contribute to high blood pressure.
- Can also lead to unhealthy coping mechanisms that also impact blood pressure: **Withdrawing from physical activity, Overeating, Substance misuse, Poor sleep routines**
- **Practical tips:**
 - Practice relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, or yoga.
 - Ensure adequate sleep and rest.
 - Engage in hobbies and activities that you enjoy. Being active, being out in nature.

Further information




- [Mental health – NHS](#)
- [Home – Mind](#)
- [StepChange Debt Charity. Free Expert Debt Help & Advice](#)



Smoking

- **Smoking and Hypertension**
 - Smoking can raise blood pressure and damage blood vessels.
- **Tips for Quitting**
 - Seek support from healthcare providers.
 - Consider nicotine replacement therapy or medications.
 - Join a support group or counselling programme.

Further information

- **Smoke Free Bristol**
-  Call: 0800 772 3437
-  Text: QUIT to 66777
-  [Visit Smoke Free Bristol](#)
- Offers: One-to-one support, quit aids (NRT, medications, vapes), and the Quit with Bella app
- Referral: Self-referral or via GP/professional



Key Takeaways

- Healthy eating, regular physical activity, weight management, limiting alcohol, reducing stress, quitting smoking, and monitoring blood pressure are crucial.
 - Adherence to medication is important if prescribed.
 - **Next Steps**
 - Implement these lifestyle changes gradually.
 - Regularly consult with your healthcare provider for guidance and support.



References

- [Overview | Hypertension in adults: diagnosis and management | Guidance | NICE](#)
- [Blood pressure lowering for prevention of cardiovascular disease and death: a systematic review and meta-analysis](#)



Further information

- [Blood Pressure UK](#)
- [Better Health – NHS](#)

More ways to kickstart your health

If you want to improve other aspects of your wellbeing, we have more great free tools to support you:



NHS Food Scanner app

Start finding healthier swaps today!



NHS Weight Loss Plan app

A 12-week plan to help you lose weight.



NHS Couch to 5K app

A running app for absolute beginners.



NHS Active 10 app

Track and build up your daily walks – start with 10 minutes every day!



NHS Drink Free Days app

For the days you do not want to drink alcohol.



NHS Quit Smoking app

Daily support to help you quit smoking and start breathing easier.



NHS BMI calculator

Check your body mass index (BMI).

[Check your BMI](#)



How Are You? quiz

Get tips on looking after your health.

[Take the quiz](#)