



# Health care tips

## Tips for people with diabetes and high blood pressure

### What is high blood pressure?<sup>1</sup>

Blood pressure is the force of blood against your blood vessels. High blood pressure can increase your chances of having a heart attack or stroke. If you have both diabetes and high blood pressure, your risk of heart disease and stroke doubles. You may not know that you have high blood pressure until you get it checked. It's important to talk to your doctor to understand what you can do to control your blood pressure.

### An important first step: Talk to your doctor.<sup>2</sup>

Ask your doctor about how to control your blood pressure. Be prepared to share any family history of high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, stroke or diabetes. Bring a list of your medications to your doctor's appointment and ask if any of them may raise your blood pressure. Make sure to tell your doctor if you have had any recent chest pain or shortness of breath.

### Medications can help lower your blood pressure.<sup>3</sup>

Several types of medications can help lower your blood pressure. These include angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors (ACEIs), angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs), thiazide diuretics, and calcium-channel blockers (CCB). These medications work in different ways to control your blood pressure. To achieve your blood pressure goal, you may need to start taking one or more of these types of medications. Talk to your doctor to see if this is right for you.

### Questions to ask your doctor:<sup>2</sup>

- Should I take medication for my blood pressure? If so, which medication is right for me?
- What's my blood pressure goal?
- How can I check my blood pressure regularly?
- Are there certain foods I should eat or avoid?
- What do I need to know about my blood pressure medication?

## Ways to keep your diabetes and blood pressure in check.<sup>4, 5</sup>

- Check your blood pressure regularly using a home blood pressure machine.
- Choose foods like whole grains, fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy products.
- Cut down on foods that are high in saturated fat and cholesterol.
- Use less than 1,500mg of salt (less than 3/4 teaspoon) a day if you have diabetes and high blood pressure.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Increase your physical activity. But first, talk to your doctor.
- Stop smoking.

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National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute | [nhlbi.nih.gov](http://nhlbi.nih.gov)

American College of Cardiology | [cardiosmart.org/Heart-Conditions/Guidelines/Lifestyle](http://cardiosmart.org/Heart-Conditions/Guidelines/Lifestyle)

American Heart Association | [heart.org](http://heart.org)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention | [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov)

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[optumrx.com](http://optumrx.com)

<sup>1</sup> American Diabetes Association. High Blood Pressure. [diabetes.org/diabetes-risk/prevention/high-blood-pressure](http://diabetes.org/diabetes-risk/prevention/high-blood-pressure) Accessed January 23, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Mayo Clinic. High Blood Pressure (Hypertension). [mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/high-blood-pressure/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20373417](http://mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/high-blood-pressure/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20373417) Accessed January 23, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Stone, NJ, Robinson J, Lichtenstein AH, et al. 2013 ACC/AHA Guideline on the Treatment of Blood Cholesterol to Reduce Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Risk in Adults: A Report of the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association Task Force on Practice Guidelines. *J Am Coll Cardiol.* 2013;doi:10.1016/j.jacc.2013.11.002.

<sup>4</sup> American Diabetes Association. Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes—2015. *Diabetes Care.* 2015;38 (Suppl 1):S4-S85.

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Sodium: The Facts. [cdc.gov/salt/pdfs/Sodium\\_Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](http://cdc.gov/salt/pdfs/Sodium_Fact_Sheet.pdf). Accessed November 10, 2017.

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