

5 ways to lower blood pressure with food

Cooking at home, increasing fiber, reducing sodium, increasing potassium intake and staying hydrated are five simple ways to lower blood pressure through diet.

Dietitian Martha Theran, of the Pritikin Longevity Center, explains to Eat This, Not That! that tweaking your eating habits can make a big difference in normalizing your blood pressure. 'Eating a low-calorie, nutrient-dense, minimally processed diet can bring your blood pressure closer to normal or even within a completely healthy range. You'll start to see a difference in just a few days, usually,' she says. Here are five key habits Martha recommends adopting.



1. Cook at home?

'Cooking at home is an important part of lowering blood pressure, which is why the DASH diet is recommended. This means eating whole foods as much as possible and consuming less packaged foods, avoiding take-out, and limiting fast food,' she says. 'Cooking your own meals at home from fresh, low-calorie, nutrient-dense foods reduces your sodium and sugar intake while increasing your intake of powerful blood pressure-lowering nutrients, such as potassium, antioxidants, and fiber.'

2. Increase your fiber intake ??

"High fiber intake has been shown to help prevent high blood pressure," says Martha. "Fiber is found in most unprocessed plant foods, so eating fresh vegetables not only increases your fiber intake but also lowers blood pressure."

3. Reduce sodium intake ????

According to experts, a low-sodium diet is the recommended approach to controlling high blood pressure because high amounts of sodium, found in most processed and packaged foods, increase blood pressure by affecting fluid retention, a way of dilating arteries.

'Sodium is an electrolyte that is balanced by other beneficial electrolytes like potassium and magnesium to keep blood pressure within a healthy range,' she says.

4. Increase potassium intake

'A low-potassium, high-sodium diet contributes to high blood pressure, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease. Potassium, found in foods like leafy greens, bananas, sweet potatoes, organic dairy products, beans, and avocados, is the third most abundant mineral in the body and is needed to interact with sodium and perform many important functions, including lowering blood pressure. Potassium naturally increases sodium excretion,' says Martha.

5. Stay hydrated ?

Finally, 'drinking enough water every day is important to prevent dehydration and maintain fluid balance,' she says.

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