



## May Wellness News

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# Pressure perfect

6 things that can help lower your blood pressure without medication



### 1. Aim for at least 30 minutes of daily exercise.

Regular aerobic activity can help reduce mildly elevated blood pressure 5 to 10 points.

### 2. Eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables.

They're packed with potassium, a mineral that can help control blood pressure. Avoid canned, frozen, and packaged foods with added sodium, a major contributor to high blood pressure.

### **3. Drink two 8-oz. glasses of low- or nonfat milk every day.**

The calcium in milk and other dairy products may also help control blood pressure.

### **4. Take the salt shaker off the table.**

One teaspoon of salt contains 2,300 mg of sodium. Experts now encourage us to limit dietary sodium intake to less than 1,500 mg per day.

### **5. Step on the scale.**

If you're overweight, losing as little as 10 pounds may help.

### **6. Avoid tobacco products of all kinds, and if you drink alcohol,**

limit it to two drinks per day for men, and one drink for women.

Normal blood pressure is less than 120/80 mm Hg. Get yours checked regularly. If you're already taking medication for high blood pressure, don't stop.

*Sources: American Heart Association; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute*



## **Update on aspirin**

The most recent guidelines for taking aspirin to prevent disease advise low-dose aspirin for men ages 45 to 79 to prevent heart disease and for women ages 55 to 79 to prevent the most common type of stroke. Generally, a low-dose aspirin tablet-81 mg-is recommended daily. Before taking aspirin talk to your doctor. Aspirin may cause stomach bleeding and other complications in adults with certain conditions or those who are taking blood thinners or other medications.

*Sources: Annals of Internal Medicine, Vol. 150, pg. 396; U.S. Preventive Services Task Force*



ON YOUR BIRTHDAY...

## check out your birthday suit

**Picking specific days (like your birthday) can help you remember to do regular skin checks for signs of skin cancer.**

The American Academy of Dermatology publishes a "Mole Map," a tool that you can use to keep track of changes in moles over time. See your doctor if you notice any of these signs of skin cancer: moles that are asymmetrical (one half unlike the other); have irregular borders; are an odd color; are bigger than a pencil eraser; have noticeably changed. One more reminder: Protect against skin cancer by wearing sunscreen with an SPF of 15 whenever you're in the sun longer than 15 minutes.

*Source: American Academy of Dermatology*

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