

TO YOUR HEALTH

Volume 28, Number 5



May 2023

Under Pressure

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Most of us are familiar with the blood pressure cuff that ceremoniously comes out at every visit we make to the doctor. It was not until 1855 when Karl Vierordt, a German physician, introduced a non-invasive device known as the sphygmograph. This was an inflatable cuff that constricted the arteries. It was a large cumbersome device. Monitoring blood pressure has evolved slowly and it was not until 1974 when Panasonic came out with a digital device. Interestingly, in 1911 the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company noted that blood pressure monitoring would become an integral part of their life insurance examination and considered this a risk factor.

Blood pressure is often referred to as “the silent killer” and according to the CDC affects half of all adults in the US. Hypertension or high blood pressure is preventable, and it is worth developing a better understanding about the subject.

Blood pressure is based on two numbers. The systolic blood pressure is the first number and is caused by the heart contracting and pushing blood out of the heart. The second number, known as the diastolic blood pressure, indicates the heart relaxing and filling up with blood. Blood pressure is measured in millimeters of mercury (mm HG) and is always given in pairs. The measurement for blood pressure in mm HG was used as the first instruments utilized mercury.

Normal blood pressure has a systolic rate of 120 or less and a diastolic reading of 80 or less.

Elevated blood pressure has a systolic rate of 120 –129 and a diastolic rate of less than 80.

High blood pressure is defined as a systolic pressure over 130 and a diastolic pressure over 80.

Isolated systolic hypertension is age-related and is mainly due to the stiffening of the arteries. The systolic rate is usually over 130 while the diastolic rate is usually less than 80.

The target blood pressure for each individual depends on age and medical history. In general, for adults over 60, medication should be initiated when the systolic pressure is 150 mm Hg or higher, or when the diastolic pressure is 90 mm Hg or higher on multiple readings over time.

There are certain factors that have an impact on high blood pressure.



- Blood pressure increases with age.
- Women are more likely to develop high blood pressure after menopause.
- Family history may determine high blood pressure.
- Race plays a part increasing the risk of high blood pressure. African Americans are more susceptible to having high blood pressure.
- Maintaining a healthy weight reduces the risk of high blood pressure.
- Exercise, a healthy diet and cutting back on salt all reduce blood pressure.
- Not smoking is a major benefit to reducing your risk of high blood pressure.

Sometimes changes in lifestyle are not adequate to control or lower blood pressure. There are a variety of medications that your doctor can prescribe to help alleviate the condition. Many individuals may need two medications to manage blood pressure. Here are a few medications that are widely used:

- Angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors and Angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs) help the blood vessels from narrowing.
- Calcium channel blockers prevent calcium from entering your heart muscles and blood vessels.
- Diuretics are used to remove sodium and higher levels of water to reduce the fluids in your body.
- Beta blockers help slow the heartbeat and reduce the force. Beta blockers are used as a back up option.

Do you DASH?

In 1997 the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) published research now commonly known as the DASH study. DASH stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension. The research involved 459 adults with and without high blood pressure. Three different dietary plans were used to conduct the research. It transpired that diets rich in Magnesium, Potassium and Calcium played an integral part in lowering blood pressure. Besides reducing sodium, the DASH study illustrated there were other dietary factors that contributed to reducing blood pressure. Clinical studies have shown that by using the DASH plan the benefits can be seen within in two weeks.

If you want to follow the DASH plan, eat the following:



Vegetables, fruit, whole grains, fat free and low fat dairy, fish, poultry, beans, nuts, seeds and vegetable oil.



Avoid fatty meats, full fat dairy products, sugar sweetened beverages, sweets and sodium intake.

To better help better understand your situation the Clinic runs a weekly Blood Pressure Clinic on Monday afternoons between 1:30 pm and 2:30pm. Stop by to get your pressure checked. There is no Clinic on holidays that fall on Mondays.

Though there have been numerous advances in understanding high blood pressure, hypertension is projected to increase mainly because a large part of the population is getting older. Cardiovascular disease is a leading cause of mortality in the US. As individuals we all need to take steps to bring about changes in our daily lifestyle and monitoring blood pressure is one of the many tools we have available to us.

Sources:

<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/education/dash-eating-plan>
<https://www.healthinaging.org/a-z-topic/high-blood-pressure-hypertension/basic-facts>
<https://www.bloodpressurehistory.com/blood-pressure-history>
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 cdc.gov



WORLD
HYPERTENSION
DAY
MAY 17

May 17th has been designated **World Hypertension Day**. The theme this year is *Measure Your Blood Pressure Accurately, Control it, Live Longer.*



New Chiropractor at CWV **Dr. Robert Astapoveh**

We are pleased to announce that Chiropractic services will be offered in the Clinic again!

Dr. Astapoveh has been in practice for 28 years as owner of Lexington Family Chiropractic. He is originally from Framingham, MA. He received his Doctorate degree from Logan University of Chiropractic in St. Louis, MO, followed by 3 years of Post Doctoral study in Occupational Health and Repetitive Stress Injuries from Northwestern Health Sciences University in Bloomington, MN.

Dr. Astapoveh uses a variety of Chiropractic treatment techniques and therapies that are well suited for Seniors and patients of all ages.

His personal interests include sports, fitness, travel and reading.

Appointments are available on Tuesday afternoons from 1:30-4:30pm starting May 2. Please call the Clinic to schedule.