Smart Goals for Hypertension

Talk to your health care provider about the lifestyle changes that are appropriate for you.

1. **Follow the DASH Diet** “Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension”
   
   The DASH diet has been proved to reduce blood pressure, which can help you live a longer and healthier life. Follow these tips from the DASH diet to lower your blood pressure:
   
   - Eat fewer processed foods (such as snack items, lunch meats, canned soup)
   - Eat foods high in calcium, potassium, and magnesium (such as fruits, vegetables, and dairy)
   - Eat foods with less sodium (salt)
   - Eat 8-10 servings of fruits and vegetables and 3 servings of low-fat dairy products each day.
   - Eat foods low in fat

   For more information on following the DASH diet, check out these webpages:
   
   [www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp/prevent/h_eating/h_eating.htm](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp/prevent/h_eating/h_eating.htm)
   

2. **Get Moving!**
   
   Do 30-45 minutes of exercise each day. Walk, bike, swim, or other exercise for thirty minutes each day. You can do it!

3. **Be a Quitter!**
   
   For help with quitting smoking, contact the Tobacco Consultation Service:
   
   [http://www.med.umich.edu/mfit/tobacco/](http://www.med.umich.edu/mfit/tobacco/)

4. **Reduce salt**
   
   - Do not add salt to food at the table
   - Reduce or get rid of salt used in cooking
   - Limit processed and fast foods
   - Read package labels for amount of salt (sodium) in foods

5. **Reduce alcohol**
   
   Drinking more than one ounce of alcohol a day may increase blood pressure.

   One ounce of alcohol is contained in 2 oz. of 100 proof whiskey, 8 oz. (2 glasses) of wine or 24 oz.(2 bottles) of beer.

6. **Monitor your blood pressure at home**
   
   Your health care provider can show you how to measure and record your blood pressure at home. This worksheet can help you track your blood pressure:
   
   [www.med.umich.edu/1libr.guides/homebp.htm](http://www.med.umich.edu/1libr.guides/homebp.htm)

7. **Lose weight.**
   
   If you are overweight, losing just 10 pounds can reduce your blood pressure.

8. **Take your medications** as prescribed by your health care provider