



HEART
HEALTH
FOOD BOOK

DR. BLANE SCHILLING M.D.

HEART HEALTH FOOD BOOK

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Introduction

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that nearly one-third of American adults have high blood pressure. As this significant statistic indicates, high blood pressure or hypertension, as it is also known, is an epidemic reaching all corners of the country. In this, the United States is not alone.



Across the globe, nearly 40% of adults suffered from abnormal blood pressure and the World Health Organization estimates that the condition is responsible for 7.5 million deaths. That is 12.8% of all deaths around the world; a significant portion that cannot and should not be ignored by health professionals, medical researchers, and individuals.

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What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure measures the force that is exerted by moving blood pushing outwards on your arterial walls. As our heart pumps faster, harder, and takes rests, blood pressure goes up and down. These minor changes in blood pressure are natural and, even healthy. However, according to the American Heart Association, damage occurs when the blood flow's force is high for an extended period of time.¹ High pressure along the arterial walls for weeks, months, and years will stretch the tissues, which causes the walls of the arteries to expand farther than healthy limits. Eventually, this unhealthy stretching will cause damage to the tissue.

Capturing this arterial pressure is usually recorded as two numbers, and these numbers are written as a ratio. The top number measures the pressure in the arteries when the ventricles contract, known as systolic pressure. This first number will be the higher of the two, and it represents the peak of your blood pressure. The bottom number measures the pressure in the arteries between the heartbeats when the ventricles relax, and this is known as diastolic pressure. Both of these numbers are stated in terms of millimeters of mercury, or mmHg, that is displaced in a blood pressure tool known as a sphygmomanometer.



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What is hypertension?

Healthy adults should have a systolic pressure between 90 and 120 mmHg and a diastolic pressure of 80 mmHg or less. This average blood pressure would be written as 120/80 mmHg. Hypertension is when an individual's blood pressure is higher than 140/90 mmHg. Several factors contribute to hypertension, including lack of exercise, smoking, diet, stress, and genetics. Despite the wide range of causes behind high blood pressure, there are very few outward or readily noticeable symptoms. Because high blood pressure is often without symptoms, it is commonly known as the 'silent killer'; that is why it is important to get your blood pressure checked frequently.²

Having hypertension will increase your risk of suffering from other health problems, for instance:

- Metabolic syndrome
- Vision loss
- Kidney disease
- Heart failure
- Diabetes
- Stroke
- Heart attack

There are several ways of treating hypertension, including medications and/or lifestyle changes. In case you are interested in using traditional treatments for lowering your pressure, you have numerous options. To treat or prevent hypertension, you should always have your blood pressure checked by your doctor.

If you are considering the use of herbs for medical reasons, whether that means using a supplement or the whole herb, you will have to speak to your doctor first.

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Some of the herbs, particularly when consumed in large quantities, can have adverse side effects or even interfere with other medications that you might be using. Therefore, eating whole, natural, and healthy foods is a great alternative to both supplements and the pharmaceutical regimens prescribed by many doctors. In this book, we will look at 77 different types of foods that you can use in fighting high blood pressure.

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77 Foods to Fight Blood Pressure

1. Nuts

Nuts are a source of concentrated vitamins, antioxidants, healthy monounsaturated fat, omega-3 fatty acids, and minerals such as magnesium, including oleic acid, which can also be found in olive oil.

Consuming a handful of unsalted nuts per day, approximately 23 kernels, can significantly eliminate certain coronary heart disease risk factors, such as blood stickiness, blood pressure, and cholesterol balance. The advantageous effect is so powerful that substituting just 28 grams of nut oils each day for the equivalent calories from carbohydrates can reduce your risk of suffering from a heart attack by approximately 30%.³ In case you have type 2 diabetes, the benefits are even better with a 44% reduction in the risk of suffering from a heart attack.



A majority of nuts are rich in monounsaturated fatty acids. Walnuts, nonetheless are distinctly rich in omega-3s, and consuming them regularly can significantly lower the circulating levels of ‘bad’ LDL-cholesterol, which is enough to decrease your risk of coronary heart diseases by about 30 – 50 percent.³ Another consideration is that nuts are moderately high in calories, but trials consistently demonstrate that their high protein and fiber content fills you up, so that you eat less during the day. Individuals who frequently eat nuts lose weight, in the end.

You can add the nuts to your smoothies and shakes, sprinkle them over desserts, salads, and cereals, and use nut oils in salad dressings. Almond nut butter, hazelnut, almond, and brazil are delicious spread on oatcakes. However, avoid any peanut butter that has been heavily salted.

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2. Apple

Apples are rich in antioxidant flavonoids. Researchers have found that there is a direct correlation between the intake of flavonoid and a general reduction in risk of death from all medical causes, particularly from stroke or heart attack. As a matter of fact, those who consume apples have approximately 41% lower risk of getting a stroke than those who do not eat the fruit.⁴

When it comes to hypertension, there have been studies involving over 187,000 health experts that show those who consumed 4 or more apples each week were able to significantly lower their blood pressure better than those who consumed at less than one apple per month, on average.⁴ It is important that you eat the peel of apples, as it has antioxidants, with blood-pressure-lowering actions, which are similar to those found in ACE inhibitor drugs.

The recommendation from a number of nutritionists, and the age-old adage, is to eat an apple a day. Pick up this fruit as an easy to carry snack. You can also grate the flesh, then mix it with lemon juice, so as to prevent browning, and eventually add it to Bircher muesli, coleslaw, or salads. Dried apple crisps and apple rings also make scrumptious snacks.

3. Avocado

Avocados are a perfect way of obtaining healthy monounsaturated oils, potassium, Vitamin E, cholesterol-lowering plant sterols, and essential fatty acids, all of which assist in lowering your blood pressure or have beneficial effects on your cholesterol balance. Enjoying an avocado every day will increase your level of 'good' HDL-cholesterol by about 11% in just one week, and this significantly reduces your risk of having a heart attack.⁵ As well, consuming avocado can boost absorption of essential nutrients from other plants, if eaten at the same meal or within a few hours of each other. For example, having spinach and avocado in a salad could quadruple your intake of antioxidants.

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If you want to easily add avocado to your diet, you are in luck. Avocados should be eaten raw and taste great all on their own. To remove the flesh from the skin, you can use an avocado slicer or cut the avocado in half and remove the edible inside from the skin with a spoon and place in a bowl or onto a plate. Then, simply sprinkle the avocado with olive or walnut oil, and you can enjoy it as a starter or snack. Alternatively, mash and spread avocado onto oatcakes, or add olive oil and garlic to smashed avocado to make guacamole. It is great for any meal, including breakfast with toast. Lastly, add strips of avocado to salads or mix with berries to make a fruit cocktail.

4. Beetroot

This is one of the best foods when it comes to lowering blood pressure because it is packed full of nitrates. When the beetroot is consumed, these nitrates are almost promptly converted into nitrites by bacteria in the mouth. The nitrates will then be rapidly absorbed into your circulation system, and from there they are used in the production of nitric oxide, which is a cell-signaling molecule that dilates your blood vessels. In the end, your pressure is reduced.⁶

You can lower your blood pressure by approximately 7.7/5.2 mmHg just by drinking at least 250ml of beetroot juice every day, for a month. This response to beetroot juice is at least as good as numerous anti-hypertensive prescription drugs. If consuming that high volume of beetroot juice every day is too much for you, it is still beneficial to add a smaller amount to your diet. You can just drink 70ml of beetroot juice a day to reduce your blood pressure by about 2%, which is a small but healthful effect.

Another great aspect of beetroot juice is the benefits kick in rapidly. Within an hour individuals have noticed a drop in blood pressure, and the effects reach their maximum after 4 hours. Lower blood pressure can remain evident up to 24 hours later.⁶ This prolonged effect of beetroot juice can considerably reduce your need for extra medication. In order to maximize the conversion of nitrates into

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nitrites, you can swill the beetroot juice around your mouth.

Eating 200g grated or cooked beetroot gives you a similar level of nitrates, compared to 500ml beetroot juice. However, cooking any plant causes a loss of certain nutrient and benefits, therefore raw or juiced is the best method for eating beetroot. Make sure that you boil the beetroot whole, so as to avoid losing its medicinal benefits in the cooking water. The root can also be roasted, diced, or steamed. Spiralize or grate raw beetroot for salads. Concentrated beetroot juice can be diluted so that you can enjoy your daily glass of goodness. Beetroot crisps can also be taken as a healthy snack. Finally, there are many people who are adverse to the taste of beetroot. Taking a supplement is another alternative to beetroot juice or grated beetroot.

It is important to note that beetroot's red, antioxidant pigment, called betanin, can result in a temporary, harmless, red discoloration of urine. Therefore, you should not worry if your increased consumption of beetroot causes this surprising change.

5. Blueberries

If these splendid, dark berries are not featured on your daily menu, it is likely they should be to lower blood pressure. Blueberries are rich in polyphenol antioxidants and can lower your blood pressure in the same way ACE inhibitor drugs do. Both polyphenol antioxidants and ACE inhibitors work by blocking the angiotensin-converting enzyme. Blueberries can also increase the level of nitric oxide in the blood, which dilates arteries. This has an even bigger effect on lowering blood pressure.⁷

A recent study that involved 48 post-menopausal women with stage 1 hypertension or higher than normal blood pressure found that consuming 22g of freeze-dried blueberry powder daily for 8 weeks reduced blood pressure by about 7/5mmHg as compared with placebo. This result is as good as some of the antihypertensive drugs in use today.⁷ Plus, blueberries are much more pleasant to work into your

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diet. You can add blueberries to shakes, smoothies, fruit salads, fromage-frais, muesli, and yoghurt or consume them by the handful as a snack.

6. Broccoli

This is a good source of magnesium, potassium, calcium, Vitamin C, phytoestrogens, and folate, all of which are extremely beneficial for controlling blood pressure. There were studies that involved over 187,000 health professionals, the data from these studies has shows that those who consumed 4 or more servings of broccoli each week have considerably lower blood pressures than those individuals who consume less than 1 serving in a month.⁸

In particular, it is believed that adequate intake of calcium is associated with lower blood pressure, and for some reason the calcium in broccoli is put to better use than from other foods. Approximately 61% of the calcium that is found in broccoli is absorbed from the gut, as compared with only 32% that is absorbed from milk.⁸ You can eat broccoli while raw in salads, or only lightly stir-fried or steamed. It also makes a great soup.

7. Spinach

Spinach is one of the best sources of natural Vitamin B, antioxidant carotenoids, and folate, which all help to reduce furring and hardening of the arteries. It is also rich in nitrates and at least 4 peptides, with the capability to prevent angiotensin converting enzymes (ACE) for a powerful blood pressure lowering effect.⁹

The DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) trials shows that one can considerably reduce blood pressure in just 8 weeks by consuming more vegetables and fruits. One key to this popular diet is spinach, which provides many of the benefits and few calories. Plus, it is useful for eliminating breads and other carbohydrates from your diet because it encourages eating salads and other low calorie foods.

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You can consume the leaves of spinach raw or lightly steamed. It is a great accompaniment to any of your daily meals, including on top of poached eggs or toast in the morning. The baby leaves are good in salads, and you can also add them to homemade smoothies and juices. When added to juices you will not even taste the spinach, but you will receive its benefits.

8. Cherries

Cherries provide antioxidant polyphenols, with the largest quantities found in the sour cherries, and also in black cherries. These small, easy to carry and pack fruits are a great source of potassium and Vitamin C. Research published in the British Journal of Nutrition shows that just by drinking 500ml of polyphenol-rich juice, based on bilberries, chokeberries, red grapes, and cherries, can significantly lower systolic blood pressure by approximately 7mmHg. The best results in this study were for the people who suffered from hypertension. Those with an abnormal blood pressure saw a greater drop in their systolic pressure, compared to individuals who already had a normal blood pressure.¹⁰



You can consume fresh cherries as a snack or add them to fruit salads, muesli, yoghurt or any other desserts. You can use the flesh of cherries when you are making mixed smoothies or fruit juices.

9. Dark Chocolate

Cocoa and chocolate are rich sources of flavonoids. In fact, dark chocolate contains 5 times more antioxidant potential than some other foods that are high in flavonoids, such as blueberries. Data that was extracted from 20 studies, which involved a total 856 individuals, showed that drinking flavanols-rich cocoa for 2 to

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18 weeks can reduce blood pressure by 2.8/2.2mmHg. This result was compared to those who drank a flavanols-free equivalent throughout the weeks of the study. Other studies showed that cocoa drinkers were half as likely to succumb to cardiovascular, or any other type of illnesses, during a 15-year follow-up.¹¹

Consuming dark chocolate will give you the same benefits as these studies involving cocoa. There is clear evidence that when consuming 100 grams of dark chocolate, at least 70% polyphenols daily can reduce systolic blood pressure by 5.1mmHg and reduce diastolic blood pressure by 1.8mmHg. This amount of a reduction in blood pressure is enough lower the risk of having a stroke or heart attack by approximately 21%. This is pretty impressive for something that tastes this delicious and is generally considered a treat. Fascinatingly, flavanols-rich chocolate does not appear to lower blood pressure significantly as soon as the blood pressure reaches the normal level of 140 mmHg or below for systolic and 80 mmHg or below for diastolic pressure.¹¹

You can consume between 50g and 100g daily of very dark chocolate, unless you want to lose weight, in which case you will need to take your calories intake into consideration. Drinking unsweetened cocoa is also very beneficial.

10. Coconut water

Coconut water extracted from immature green coconuts offers you a good concentration of potassium. It also contains medium chain fatty acids that aid in the absorption of magnesium and calcium, and coconuts have beneficial effects on liver function. In terms of improving liver functionality, coconut water can cut the production of inflammatory chemicals, which would otherwise cause your blood pressure to increase.

When individuals with high blood pressure were asked to drink coconut water for a period of 2 weeks for a specific study, their blood pressure lowered considerably more than a similar group who only drank plain bottled water. The

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biggest reduction in blood pressure among the participants in this particular study was 24 mmHg in systolic blood pressure and 15 mmHg in diastolic pressure.¹²

Coconut water is readily available at grocery and convenience stores. However, you will need to check the labels before you purchase coconut water, as you want to make sure that you only choose the varieties and brands that are 100% coconut water, without added sugars.

11. Figs

Figs are an essential element of the Mediterranean diet and are popular in certain Asian countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia. They are traditionally added to a diet to regulate cholesterol, balance blood pressure, and stabilize blood sugar. Gram for gram, dried figs have more calcium than milk, and are a good source of polyphenol antioxidants, carotenoids, fiber, magnesium, and potassium, all of which are beneficial for blood pressure control.¹³ You should eat dried or fresh figs as a healthy, energy-rich snack.

12. Grapefruit

Grapefruit is an excellent source of Vitamin C, antioxidants, and flavonoids, such as narirutin and naringin. Red grapefruit has a significantly higher antioxidant content than blonde or pink grapefruit, and also lowers blood pressure and regulate cholesterol better than other varieties.

In a study that involved 74 overweight individuals, it was found that consuming just half a fresh Rio-Red grapefruit with every meal, for a total 3 times in a day, was associated with modest weight loss of about 0.61kg, a considerable reduction in waist circumference, and also a big reduction in systolic blood pressure, of about 3.21 mmHg. The control group in this study consumed no grapefruit at all, and otherwise continued their normal diet. The study lasted for 6 weeks to obtain these results.¹⁴

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Drinking 500 ml of juice daily from a Sweetie, which is a cross between pumelo and grapefruit, was found to reduce blood pressure by an average of 142/89 mmHg to 136/81 mmHg after only 5 weeks. Typically, a drop of 6/8 mmHg in blood pressure is a result as that can be achieved with some prescribed drugs.¹⁴

You can eat grapefruit as a starter, add it to fruit salads, or use it to make freshly squeezed juice. However, grapefruit may interfere with the metabolism of some drugs, including some antihypertensives medicines and statins. This particular effect can last for approximately 3 days, or even more. Make sure that you check the patient information leaflet that is supplied with the medications or ask your pharmacist about drug interactions before you add grapefruit or its juice in your normal diet.

13. Grapes

Grapes, particularly those with black or dark red skins, provide antioxidant polyphenols, magnesium, and potassium with blood-pressure reducing effects. In certain studies, researchers have found that drinking red grape juice daily can reduce blood pressure by about 7.2/6.2 mmHg. This drop in blood pressure can happen in just 8 weeks.

However, it requires consuming a certain amount of grape juice. Based on the research, it seems the right “dose” is approximately 5.5ml per kg body weight. For example, if you weigh 70kgs then you should drink about 385ml in a day.¹⁵ When you are buying your healthful grape juice ensure that it gives you these benefits without sneaky negatives, such as added sugar. Also, consuming a handful of grapes with the skin can also help lower blood pressure.

14. Black or Green Tea

Approximately 30% of the dry weight of tea contains powerful flavonoid antioxidants, with advantageous effects on cholesterol balance, blood stickiness,

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and blood pressure. As a result, the risk of high blood pressure is 46% lower among those who are drinking between 120 and 599ml of green tea daily and 65% lower among those who are drinking 600 ml or more on a daily basis.

When compared with non-tea drinkers, having 4 cups of tea daily also cuts in half the risk of suffering from heart attack. Similarly, the occurrence of a stroke is far less among those people who drink at least 5 cups of green tea in a day, as compared to individuals who drink none.¹⁶ Therefore, it is clear that the more green tea you have in a single day, the better for your blood pressure health. Best of all there is no maximum recommendation for this delicious beverage, although many people will want to limit the caffeine that accompanies drinking a lot of green tea.

15. Guava

Guava is often overlooked as an aid in lowering blood pressure, although it has some of the richest dietary sources of Vitamin C of any fruit. A single guava can provide nearly 230 mg of Vitamin C, per 100g fruit. Guava is also an excellent source of soluble fiber, potassium, and antioxidant carotenoids. All of these nutrients are shown to relax arterial walls and lower blood pressure. When working in combination, there is no telling this fruit's ability to assist with regulating blood pressure.

A study that involved 145 individuals with high blood pressure found that consuming between 0.5 to 1.0kg of guava in a day for a period of 4 weeks would lower blood pressure by 7.5/8.5 mmHg, as compared with another group of people who did not consume any guava. Improvements in blood fat levels were also experienced, with total triglycerides and cholesterol dropping by 7% or more, and the 'good' HDL-cholesterol increasing by 4.6%.¹⁷ Other researchers found that consuming 5 or more guavas in a day for a period of 3 months lowered blood pressure by 9.0/8.0 mmHg.¹⁷

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You can eat guava for breakfast, add it to fruit salads, add to smoothies, or put it through the food processor and drink its juice. If you decide to purchase guava juice from the grocery store, ensure that you confirm it is unsweetened. The added sugar in some juices can compromise or limit the blood pressure benefits of the fruit.

16. Mango

A fruit that is common to Southeast Asia, mangoes are sweet and flavorful. They are an excellent source of Vitamin C, potassium, Vitamin E, and antioxidant carotenoids, with some of its varieties offering as much as 3g carotenoid pigments per 100g of flesh.¹⁸ Mango extracts lower blood pressure by blocking the effects of the stress hormone- noradrenaline, which is what causes arteries to constrict. This makes mangoes very useful when you are feeling a bit stressed out or worked up about a certain situation.¹⁸

You can consume a mango on its own, in salsas, or in fruit salads. You can also just drink mango juice. However, you should check it and make sure the juice is unsweetened. Dried mango is also a delicious, healthy snack.

17. Papaya

Papaya, which is also commonly known as paw-paw, is a tropical tree fruit whose orange-red flesh is bursting with lycopene. Lycopene is an antioxidant carotenoid pigment. This lycopene in papaya is up to 6 times more readily absorbed by the blood stream, as compared to the lycopene that is found in raw tomatoes. This is because in papaya the pigments are kept within liquid, crystal-like configurations that can be more easily absorbed by the human body.¹⁹

Paw-paw also provides Vitamin B, Vitamin C, and minerals, such as magnesium and calcium. It is perhaps the best-known source of papain, which is a protease enzyme that breaks down proteins to add in its digestion and absorption.¹⁹

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Research shows that papaya extracts have substances and an effect consistent with ACE inhibitor, a known blood pressure medication type, and alpha-blocker activity, which are still under study as potential new antihypertensive drugs. Early results seem to suggest that it is potentially more effective when compared to the antihypertensive drug- hydralazine.¹⁹

You can consume fresh paw-paw on its own, in salsas, or fruit salads. Papaya seeds taste like peppercorns, and they can be dried and grounded in a peppermill to make a strong and spicy seasoning.

18. Live bio yogurt

Live bio yogurt is filled with potassium, magnesium, and calcium, which is one of the main reason why regular consumption of dairy products is linked to a reduced risk of stroke and hypertension. The probiotic bacteria in yogurts are also advantageous, as they can inhibit ACE (angiotensin converting enzyme), with the effect of lowering blood pressure. When consuming soy isoflavones, certain kinds of intestinal bacteria can change them to a stronger version, called equol, which provides, even more, benefits.²⁰ You can add live bio yogurt to your breakfast cereals, stir into smoothies or cool soups, or use it in salad dressings. The aim is to consume a small carton of live bio yogurt each day.

19. Soybeans

Soybeans contain isoflavones, a class of plant hormones, that when consumed, are converted into weak oestrogens by intestinal bacteria. They interact with the oestrogens receptors in the circulation system to dilate coronary arteries and reduce blood stickiness, lower blood pressure, reduce arterial stiffness, lower 'bad' LDL-cholesterol, and prevent platelet clumping.²¹ Among individuals with high blood pressure, eating 40g of soybean protein daily can lower blood pressure by approximately 7.88/5.27 mmHg in a period of 12 weeks. With individuals who have high to normal blood pressure, it can lower the readings at

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your doctor's office by 2.34/1.28 mmHg. This reduction can help in preventing progression to a diagnosis of high blood pressure.²¹

You can use soybeans in a stir-fry, stew, or soup. You can also try some products that are rich in soybean protein, for instance vegetarian and tofu meals. However, when consuming these alternative versions of a soybean, you will need to pay attention to the salt content of the products. You can add soybean protein powder to your shakes, and include soy yogurts and milk in your daily diet.

Edamame is a Japanese term that is used to refer to 'stem beans', which are green and immature soybeans, handpicked before they ripen, and are consumed steamed, boiled, or raw. If you are choosing to eat edamame in an Asian restaurant, request that the dish is served with no salt added.

20. Pumpkin Seeds

Pumpkin seeds are an excellent source of zinc, beta-Sitosterol, and Vitamin E. Pumpkin seed oil and pumpkin seeds research shows that this food is good for boosting the effects of two different groups of antihypertensive medications, ACE-inhibitors and calcium channel blockers.²² Another great benefit is pumpkin seeds have been shown to slow the age-related progression or development of high blood pressure.



Age is a contributing factor for high blood pressure. After the age of 65, the risk of high blood pressure climbs substantially. Foods that can keep blood pressure low at an older age are doubly helpful. Pumpkin seeds appear to be one of these impressive foods.

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You can enjoy a handful of pumpkin seeds as a snack or simply sprinkle them onto muesli mixes, cereals, and salads. Grind them and then add them to smoothies and shakes. Alternatively, you can roast the seeds and combine them with nuts.

21. Pomegranates

Pomegranates are an excellent source of antioxidant polyphenols. There are over 4,000 antioxidant polyphenols, but all are great for improving cellular communication. For the most part antioxidant polyphenols are found in dairy products, but pomegranates contain a unique form that is known as punicalagin. Punicalagin helps reduce arterial blockage and plaque in the arteries; this allows blood to flow more easily through these blood vessels. Pomegranates are also a source of beneficial carotenoids, Vitamin C, and Vitamin E.

In a group of individuals with high blood pressure, drinking just 50 ml of pomegranate juice twice in a day, lowered systolic blood pressure by approximately 5%, which is roughly 8 mmHg if your systolic blood pressure is at 160 mmHg. It achieved this significant reduction by blocking angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE) activity. By merely drinking a glass of pomegranate juice daily you can improve your arterial stiffness and also lower LDL-cholesterol.²³

You can make your own pomegranate juice or look for some at your local store. Pomegranate seeds can also be added to salads. Also, there is a meditative aspect of eating pomegranate. As you slice the fruit into two halves and pick up the seeds with the blunt pin it can be relaxing and therapeutic.

22. Olive Oil

Olive oil is a good source of monounsaturated fats like oleic acid, polyphenols like oleocanthal, carotenoid, and also vitamin E. Each of these beneficial vitamins and nutrients are usually more concentrated in extra virgin olive oil. The

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refinement process used for most olive oils strips away some of the vitamins and nutrients found in whole olives, but extra virgin olive oil is unrefined. This makes it slightly better at lowering blood pressure.

If you are a woman with stage 1 hypertension or high-normal blood pressure, then just adding 30 mg, which is approximately 2 tablespoons, of extra virgin olive oil to your daily diet can reduce your blood pressure by 7.91/6.65 mmHg. This is based on 8 weeks of this olive oil consumption. This is a greater drop in blood pressure than found when individuals consumed olive oil with antioxidant polyphenols extracted.²⁴

Other studies indicate that consuming between 30g and 40g of olive oil in a day almost halves the need for antihypertensive medications, after a period of 6 months. When the effects of cholesterol balance are also taken into account, there are more benefits from olive oil. A diet that is rich in olive oil will reduce the risk of coronary heart disease by 25% and the risk of a second heart attack by 56%, according to the research.²⁴

You can use plain olive oil for preparing meals. The extra virgin olive oil should be used for drizzling on food, cooking, and in salad dressings.

It is important for you to remember that the antioxidants in olive oil are reduced when the oil is stored in glass bottles exposed to light. A bottle of olive oil can easily lose 40% of its antioxidant oleocanthal in a period of 10 months due to light exposure. To avoid this unfortunate loss of power antioxidants, make sure that you only choose olive oil in dark tins or colored glass designed to prolong its health benefits.

23. Oily fish

Oily fish contains rich quantities of Vitamin A, Vitamin D, Vitamin E, and omega-3 fatty acids. In particular, the omega-3 fatty acids found in fish oil assist in

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reducing blood stickiness, help with an irregular heartbeat, and also play an essential role in the regulation of triglyceride, cholesterol, and blood pressure levels. Just eating fish once a week can significantly lower your risk of suffering from a stroke or heart attack. A high intake, considered more than 3g of fish oil, can reduce blood pressure by approximately 2/2 mmHg. However, the exact effect of omega-3 fatty acids on your blood consistency and overall blood pressure is dependent on minor side effects, for instance, belching. Most people choose to consume higher amounts of fish oil through supplements.²⁵

The oily fish that you consume to get these awesome omega-3 fatty acids include: whitebait, tuna (fresh, not from a canned), trout, swordfish, sprats, sardines, salmon, pilchards, pangas, orange roughy, mackerel, kipper, katla, jack fish, hilsa, herring, eel, carp, cacha, bloater, and anchovies (unsalted).²⁵ Of course, some of these fish are higher in omega-3 content than others with mackerel, herring, and sardines being a few at the top of the list. For the most benefits, consume fresh fish raw (Japanese sashimi, sushi), baked or grilled.

There are certain risks with consuming a lot of fresh fish, such as mercury and dioxins. If you want to reduce your exposure to these possible deep-sea pollutants, the recommended intake is limited to eating oily fish just four times in a week and only one or two times a week if you are trying to become pregnant.

24. Whole Oats

Whole oats are a good source of cholesterol-lowering beta glucans, soluble fiber and Vitamin B, and it does not take a huge amount of whole oats to make a difference in your blood pressure and overall health. Consuming one bowl of oatmeal daily can lower LDL-cholesterol by an average 8%, and as much as 23%. This drop in cholesterol is helpful for people who have high blood pressure.

Individuals with high blood pressure who eat oat cereal every day can lower their blood pressure by 7.5/5.5 mmHg. This drop in blood pressure requires 6 weeks

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of including cereal, or other whole oats, as part of your daily diet.²⁶ You can add rolled oats to yogurt, have porridge for breakfast, make home-made muesli, or consume oatcakes as a snack with seed or nut butter.

25. Mushrooms

Mushroom contain selenium, potassium, and Vitamin D. While selenium and potassium can aid in lowering high blood pressure, it is the Vitamin D in mushrooms that provides the most benefit. Mushrooms contain Vitamin D in a form known as Vitamin D2. Vitamin D2 is actually manufactured by mushrooms when they are exposed to sunlight. Human who are lacking in Vitamin D2 are far more likely to have high blood pressure. This caused researchers to consider a link between Vitamin D deficiency and hypertension.

In addition to providing a good dose of Vitamin D, mushrooms are high in antioxidants. Certain edible mushrooms, such as maitake, reishi, porcini, enoki, and oyster mushrooms, have been found to reduce blood pressure by blocking ACE's activity in the same way a prescribed ACE inhibitor does.²⁷ Of course, the cost of mushrooms is significantly lower than the cost of these medications.

Plus, mushrooms are a healthy choice for lowering blood pressure. They are extremely filling because of their fiber content. The result is that people who consume mushrooms have had success with weight loss. Replacing a high fat and high cholesterol food, such as beef, with white button mushrooms in common dishes like lasagna can reduce your calorie intake, while providing the same satisfaction. Making this simple substitution just 10 times can help you in losing 1 pound of fat. Making this change once in a week for a period of 12 months can help you shred 5 pounds of weight.²⁷

If you are looking for interesting ways to eat mushrooms, do not look far. These fungi are tasty raw and cooked. Slice raw mushrooms and make them into salads, turn them into soups, parboil in bouillon, sauté in olive oil with garlic,

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or simply stuff and bake them in the oven. Maitake and Reishi mushroom are available as supplements in your supermarket or any store that sells natural supplements.

26. Bananas

They are the most popular fruit in the United States, and given their health benefits for the cost, it is easy to see why. They are inexpensive, portable, delectable, and filled with fiber. A single banana has at least 450 mg of potassium, which is nature's most powerful blood pressure-lowering remedy.



To reduce your blood pressure, you will need to do more than just ingest additional potassium and also need to cut your intake of salt. Sodium from salt is a major cause of high blood pressure, and when it is concentrated in the blood stream, it limits the benefits of potassium. Research has proven that the shortage of this electrolyte plays a central role in the progression of hypertension, and by restricting potassium intake. When you don't get enough it can cause a blood pressure spike. A low intake of potassium also increases your risk of suffering from a stroke.²⁸

In practice, potassium counterbalances sodium's harmful effects. To reduce your blood pressure via dietary means, you will need to shift your body balance of potassium and sodium by reducing your sodium intake to less than 1500 mg a day and increase your intake of potassium to approximately 4700 mg in a day. Today, the average American consumes only approximately a half of this potassium. Individuals taking blood thinner medications such as warfarin, diabetics, and those individuals with chronic kidney disease should check first with their doctor before they increase their intake of potassium. Potassium is a natural diuretic; therefore the more you consume, the more water and sodium you will expel through urine.²⁸

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27. Red Wine

Excessive alcohol intake will increase your risk of suffering from hypertension, and several other health issues. However, when red wine is drunk in moderation, it can soothe your arteries, lessen your diabetes' risk, and reduce blood sugar. The Department of Agriculture describes the moderate consumption of red wine as a single 5-ounce glass daily for women and 2 glasses in a day for men. This little amount of red wine each day, with food, is a part of an evolving lifestyle prescription that can be used in preventing hypertension's onset and also in addressing already high blood pressure.²⁹

The vital part of drinking more red wine as part an overall lifestyle is the presence of substances that are believed to reduce blood pressure when they are combined. These vitamins, nutrients, and minerals are antioxidant polyphenols, including procyanidins and resveratrol, and ethanol (ethyl alcohol). Red wine has a lot of polyphenols. To maximize the benefits you will need to stick to the red varieties of wine, which have 10 times polyphenol content as compared to white wines, as they are fermented with seeds and skins of the grape.²⁹

28. Tart Juice

British researchers discovered that people who suffered from high blood pressure but drank 2 ounces of tart juice daily were able to reduce their blood pressure by approximately 7%. While these results were obtained in a placebo-controlled study, the conclusions are applicable to real life and other individuals. The researchers believed that the phenolic acids, which are found in the cherries used to make tart juices, were essential in enhancing vascular function and flexibility.³⁰

29. Flaxseed

In a 6-month, double-blind, place-controlled trial, systolic blood pressure reduced

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by 10 mmHG among individuals who consumed a 1/4 cup of grounded flaxseed daily. Diastolic blood pressure also reduced by 7 mmHG. From these impressive results, the researchers concluded that flaxseed induced one of the most powerful antihypertensive effects that can be achieved through dietary means.³¹

30. Celery

Mark Houston, a doctor and a medical director of the Hypertension Institute of Nashville at St. Thomas Hospital, advises patients to use celery as a natural remedy for reducing their blood pressure. This endorsement is something that is not new. Doctors of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) have been suggesting celery or celery roots to patients with high blood pressure for more than a century now.³²

The reason celery remains a popular potential remedy to high blood pressure is because it has phytochemicals that are referred to as phthalides. These phytochemicals relax the muscle tissue in the arterial walls, thus enabling increased blood flow. In turn this reduces blood pressure.

According to the doctor Mark Houston, consuming 4 stalks of celery daily can significantly lower your blood pressure. If you want a boost of protein, you can add a tablespoon of almond butter or unsalted peanut butter; as both are rich in mono-unsaturated fat, which is a type that is good for the heart.³²

31. Dandelion

For more than a century now, dandelion has been used in treating several ailments and conditions. Cultures around the globe have utilized the plant with good results to overall health and healing, especially in native Europe and Asia. Surprisingly to most people, the whole plant is edible from roots to leaves. And in addition to reducing blood pressure, it is also good for the skin, eyes, and the liver.³³

Dandelion is a natural diuretic, and therefore it lowers blood pressure by

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eliminating excess sodium in the body, without releasing any potassium. This is very important as the excess sodium increases blood pressure by constricting blood vessels, while potassium helps in regulating its levels. This plant is also loaded with magnesium, which is a mineral essential for proper functioning of the muscles and the heart.³³

You can consume fresh dandelion greens in a salad, drink dried dandelion in tea, or sauté the roots of dandelion for a savory dish. You can also incorporate dandelion into your normal diet as often as you wish.

32. Black beans

Legumes have a high fiber-to-protein ratio that you will not find in any other kind of food. This combination will assist you in maintaining low cholesterol and blood sugar levels, both of which help to keep your artery walls healthy and lower your blood pressure overall.³⁴

As well, black beans are good sources of magnesium, in addition to fiber, which is vital for healthy blood pressure levels. What makes them better than other foods is the folate that you will find in black beans. Folate, which is also referred to as folic acid in its synthetic form, is a B-complex vitamin that appears to reduce blood pressure, particularly systolic blood pressure, by relaxing the blood vessels and enhancing blood flow.³⁴

The recommended daily allowance of folate is a minimum of 400 micrograms. According to several studies, consuming twice that amount each day has exhibited considerable benefits in lowering blood pressure. A single cup of cooked black beans can provide you with approximately 256 micrograms of folate.³⁴

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33. Low-fat dairy

In a Dutch study of high blood pressure in adults aged 55 and older, researchers found that low-fat dairy products like yogurt, and milk can help in preventing hypertension. The modest quantity of fat in low-fat dairy is essential, as it increases the bioavailability of calcium. This process makes it easier for the body to absorb calcium and utilize it throughout different systems. Additionally, dairy products provide the body with two of the most important nutrients for lowering blood pressure, potassium and magnesium.³⁵ These nutrients come up time and again within the best foods for blood pressure, and it is because they truly are some of the best, natural remedies to high blood pressure.

A 2006 study from Harvard Medical School showed that individuals who consumed more than 3 servings a day of low-fat dairy gave a systolic blood pressure reading that was 2.6 points less than those who ate less than a half serving in a day.³⁵

34. Baked Potato

Potassium and magnesium are the two minerals, which assist in the fight against hypertension, and baked potatoes are good source of both. However, make sure that you do not add excessive salt or butter, which can add unnecessary sodium and unhealthy fats to your diet.³⁶

35. Garlic

Fresh garlic has been used for years to fight several heart-related conditions, including hypertension because it produces allicin. Allicin is an organosulphur compound that has antifungal and antibacterial applications. Allicin is also the chemical, which gives garlic its unique smell.³⁷



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In certain studies allicin has lowered blood pressure by up to 10%; for people suffering from high blood pressure this can bring them within healthy standards.

36. Whole grain

Numerous studies, including one that was published by the National Institutes of Health, indicates that blood pressure can be lowered when more whole grains such as oatmeal, are introduced into your daily diet.³⁸ Whole grains are packed with fiber, and could reduce blood pressure enough that individuals no longer need medications. Whole grains are also an important part of a heart-healthy diet.

37. Peas

Peas can help you in lowering your blood pressure because of the vegetable protein found in their skin. As well, peas have a lot of folic acid and other vitamins, which provide cardiovascular support to your body. The best thing about them is that they taste amazing, particularly if you buy fresh and organic peas. You can also purchase the frozen varieties, but they will cost more and typically have a higher sodium level than fresh ones.³⁹ Canned peas are another option, however it is very important to avoid canned varieties that are soaked in brine or other salty waters for the purpose of preserving the peas.

38. Green beans

Green beans can reduce your blood pressure, as they are rich in fiber, Vitamin C, and potassium. All of these nutrients will work to keep your blood pressure in check. Additionally, green beans have nitrates, which are great for promoting the creation of nitrate oxide in your body. Nitrite oxide, in turn, provides a signal to your blood vessels that they should relax and become more flexible. This allows blood to pass more smoothly through the arteries, and yes, lowers your blood pressure.

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You can add green beans to your normal diet as a raw, healthy snack or part of a balanced meal. You can also add slivered almonds to the top of cooked or raw green beans make them even healthier for your heart health.⁴⁰

39. Tomatoes

Tomatoes provide a wide range of healthy vitamins and nutrients. Nutritionists have recommended the rich, ripe fruit for all types of health issues and for the improvement of overall wellness. Among these, is the ability to lower blood pressure.

How do tomatoes provide this important benefit? They contain lycopene, which assists in reducing your blood pressure. Lycopene actually hardens the arteries, which is the inverse of how many minerals effectively lower blood pressure. However, the more resilient arteries are not necessarily less flexible, and this means the tissue in the arterial walls is stronger and more resilient to stretching and increased pressure. Therefore, many doctors have theories that lycopene does not actually lower blood pressure, but allows the body to better handle higher arterial pressure. More research on this topic will provide a better view of exactly how the lycopene in tomatoes can affect blood pressure.

When preparing and eating them, it is best to consume tomatoes without cooking, or processing them. Also, many nutritionists recommend eating them with other ingredients such as fatty meats on a pizza or cheese.⁴¹

40. Kiwis

These fuzzy little green fruits are not just sweet and yummy; they may also assist in lowering blood pressure. For kiwis to be effective in fighting hypertension, you will have to consume at least 3 of these fruits a day. This might not be very practical for many people, as you can get bored of them quickly. However, adding them to your grocery list and eating them along with other foods that are

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rich in antioxidants is recommended to fight off the harmful effects of high blood pressure.⁴²

41. Cantaloupe

To get the same amount of potassium that one gets from consuming a banana, you will need to eat a half a cantaloupe. However, many people love this sweet fruit and have no problem eating a lot of this fruit on a regular basis. It is a good alternative to the fibrous banana and can be mixed with many of the same foods and meals. Put cantaloupe on top of your oatmeal, in a smoothie, or on top of a summer salad.

The potassium you get from eating this amount of cantaloupe can also incentivize you to mix it into your diet; it helps in lowering your blood pressure. Cantaloupe also has antioxidants, which assist the body in healing by eliminating free radicals from your blood stream and at the cellular level.⁴³

42. Prunes

Clinical tests have shown that prunes are good for lowering blood pressure. This makes sense because prunes are dried plums, and a number of studies have looked at how plums affect blood pressure. The conclusion? Both plums and the dried prunes are going to give you benefits, in terms of lower blood pressure and heart health.

These small fruits have a lot of potassium, which as we have said is one of the top nutrients for lowering blood pressure. They help in reducing the levels of bad cholesterol in the body. Prunes are also known for their laxative properties, which assist in relieving cases of constipation.⁴⁴

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43. Carrots

Most people associate carrots with their ability to improve eyesight because of the beta-carotenes that are in this vegetable. It is probably the most common feature of the orange vegetable. However, they also have potassium and antioxidants that can help lower blood pressure. As a natural remedy for hypertension, or simply keeping you blood pressure in check as you age, it would be a mistake to overlook carrots in your diet.⁴⁵

44. Skim Milk

From skim milk, you will get a healthy combination of potassium, magnesium, and calcium. Also, skim milk, like other low-fat dairy products, is known for having a lot of Vitamin D. Vitamin D and calcium are known as a particularly good team for battling high blood pressure. To reap the benefits of this duo, you do not need to overindulge in skim milk. Simply drinking a glass of milk every day is an effective way of lowering your blood pressure.

The one concern for individuals who are increasing the amount of ski milk, and other low-fat dairy products is consuming bad for you antibiotics that are added to cheese, milk, yogurt, and sour cream by dairy producers. So, make sure that you buy organic milk so that you do not fill your body with antibiotics.⁴⁶

45. Watermelon

Watermelon contains L-citrulline. This is an organic compound that helps in relaxing your arteries. The more relaxed and expansive your arterial walls are, the lower your blood pressure levels.⁴⁷ L-citrulline in watermelon works by increasing the production of nitric oxide in your body. As discussed, nitric oxide is the actual



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active ingredient that will cause your blood vessels to relax.

While watermelon is commonly thought of as a sweet fruit for backyard cookouts and after dinner snacks, there are savory uses of this fruit as well. Many people top it with feta and greens as part of a salad or even pair it with savory sauces. The more chef and at-home cooks experiment with the possibilities of watermelon, the more uses that are becoming popular.

46. Raisins

Raisins are rich in potassium. Like other foods that contain a lot of this fantastic mineral, that makes raisins the perfect for reducing blood pressure. In a general sense, potassium helps control the sodium content of your blood. When it comes to specifics, potassium performs this important function by keeping the kidneys functioning at full capacity. As the kidneys function properly they will remove sodium and fluid from your body and send it to your bladder. Without potassium edging your kidneys along, sodium and fluid would build up the body, as retained water. This makes you bloated and causes blood pressure to rise. Keep it all in balance by snacking on some raisins.⁴⁸

Of course, raisins are just dried grapes. Therefore, these delicious treats have other properties good for your circulatory system, just as found in grapes and red wine. Tannins are found in the skin of grapes and remain as the fruit dries and becomes a raisin. Tannins are an antioxidant good for lowering systolic pressure in people and animals that have hypertension.⁴⁸

47. Oregano

Not all foods that lower high blood pressure are fruits and vegetables. While those food groups do dominate our list because they are typically high in potassium and low in sodium, there are other foods out there to lower blood pressure. There are also subsets of foods, such as supplements, herbs, and

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even spices that are great for treating hypertension and maintaining blood pressure as you age.

One such spice is oregano. Spices, such as oregano, help to keep your body in a relaxed state. Oregano has this effect because of a compound called carvacrol that is found in the spice. Carvacrol slows the heart rate. While this makes you feel relaxed and even drowsy, at times, the other affect of a slow heart rate is lower blood pressure. When consumed on a regular basis carvacrol can improve the function of your circulatory system, so that it works optimally.⁴⁹

Adding oregano to your diet is quite easy. It goes well with Italian dishes, soups, and in chili. It can also be stored for an extended period of time, which means even if you only incorporate it into your cooking occasionally, it is still a great spice to have on hand.

48. Oranges

It is quite common knowledge that oranges are rich in Vitamin C. What fewer people know is why Vitamin C is incredibly good for your body. First, it works to boost your immune system. Often, people who start to feel sick or are exposed to the common cold will increase their intake of Vitamin C to prevent catching the flu or other illness. Vitamin C can also lower blood pressure. This particular vitamin acts as an antioxidant. As with other antioxidants, Vitamin C helps to relax the blood pressure walls.

However, there is an added benefit to an uptick in your Vitamin C intake. It is also a diuretic. In this capacity Vitamin C supports your kidney health and the removal of fluid and sodium from your system. Fight off scurvy, the common cold, bloating, and unhealthy blood pressure in a single fruit. Plus, you can consume this fruit whole or drink it as juice.⁵⁰

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49. Strawberries

The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition reported that it required only a cup of strawberries (or blueberries) per week to lower blood pressure. The study found that individuals who ate strawberries and blueberries daily were able to lower their blood pressure by up to 8%.

This revelation should leave you scrambling to the fresh fruit aisle at the grocery store because strawberries are sweet, delicious, and great for breakfast or a snack. It is incredibly easy to work this fruit into your weekly diet, and many people will start to consume a cup a day, instead of a cup each week. Where does all of this blood pressure regulating power come from in such a small piece of fruit? It seems to all be in their bright color

Strawberries get their bright, red color from an antioxidant known as anthocyanin. However, this antioxidant is more than skin deep. Once it is consumed anthocyanin encourages your blood vessels to ease up and relax. Not surprisingly, your blood pressure goes down.⁵¹

In addition to anthocyanin, strawberries also have a good amount of Vitamin C and potassium. Both of these compounds are essential in fighting hypertension.⁵¹

50. Cheese

Cheese is rich in calcium, potassium and magnesium. Magnesium and potassium helps in lowering blood pressure.⁵² However, when you are looking to cheese as a food to lower blood pressure, some are definitely better than others. Hard cheeses will be lower in fat, and higher in blood pressure lowering properties.

For example, it only took a few daily tablespoons of Grana Padano, which is similar to parmesan, to lower blood pressure at the same rate as blood pressure

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medications. The study that looked at how Grana Padano found that adding this particular cheese to your diet lowered blood pressure by 6/5 mmHg more than a diet devoid of this cheese.

51. Raspberries

As you read through this list of 77 foods to fight blood pressure, it should be apparent that modifying your diet to be mostly plant-based is a great starting point to fight hypertension and conditions that lead to high blood pressure. These foods tend to be low in sodium, low in calories, low in fat, and high in nutrients that benefit the body. Raspberries have all of these properties and are one more fruit that must be on your shopping list for fighting hypertension.

Like other berries, raspberries are one of the most nutritious foods out there, when you consider what you get for each calorie consumed. These little guys are jam packed with goodness. Raspberries have more fiber than any other berry and you can get 33% of your daily fiber from just a cup of raspberries. Also, raspberries are good sources of potassium, Vitamin C, and antioxidants, which are essential in fighting hypertension.⁵³

52. Sesame Oil

Sesame oil is a plant-based oil that can be used in kitchen in several different capacities. For starters, sesame oil provides a lot of mono- and polysaturated acids, which become good fats processed in the human body. However, the oil is simultaneously low in bad for you saturated fats. Due to the combination of good fats and absence of bad fats, sesame oil is a great food product for keeping cholesterol low and the blood vessels clear of blockage and build up. As the blood flows more smoothly, you should see a drop in blood pressure. In fact, several studies have shown that sesame oil when used can lower one's blood pressure after a period of 15 days.⁵⁴

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53. Chokeberry Juice

There is evidence that chokeberry juice is great for the overall health of the circulatory system. The berry is part of a bigger group of berries known as aronia berries. These berries have more antioxidants than any other type, which is an early sign that they will be great at improving circulatory health and lowering blood pressure. The amount of antioxidants in a particular food is typically represented by the foods ability to neutralize free radicals in the body. This is known as the Oxygen Radical Absorbency Capacity or ORAC. The ORAC for aronia berries is very high. For comparison, blueberries have an ORAC around 6,500, which is very high for a particular food, while the ORAC of aronia berries is more than 16,000.

This indication that aronia berries would be great for fighting hypertension led researchers to look at the chokeberry in particular. Studies have shown that polyphenols in chokeberry juice can lower blood pressure, after a period of 4 weeks.⁵⁵

54. Pistachio Nuts

The Food and Drug Administration in the United States has been saying for quite some time that tree nuts, pistachios in particular, are beneficial for heart health. In a study by Pennsylvania State University, and other clinical studies, have shown that these shelled nuts might also be beneficial for blood pressure levels. The takeaway from the Penn State study was that pistachios are good at limiting and controlling the body's responses to daily stressors. This, of course, would include regulating blood pressure. Trials that involved pistachios have found that the nuts have the strongest effect on reducing diastolic pressure and systolic pressure.⁵⁶



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55. Hibiscus tea

Hibiscus tea is an herbal tea with a number of beneficial properties. Many people recognize the name, but do not know exactly what make this herbal drink. Hibiscus tea comes from the calyces of the roselle flower. These calyces are infused to produce the crimson red color that many people associate with this particular herbal drink. The taste of hibiscus tea is quite bitter, similar to cranberry juice, and this means many people end up adding a bit of sugar or other sweetener before consuming it. People will drink it hot or cold, and in terms of its benefits to blood pressure, both ways are equally beneficial. In fact, hibiscus is so good for you that it is added to most herbal blended teas around the world.⁵⁷

Drinking 2 cups of hibiscus tea daily can significantly reduce your blood pressure, consuming 3 cups in a day is considered even better.⁵⁷ Research has found that people with higher blood pressure actually benefited more from drinking hibiscus, compared to those with already healthy or slightly elevated blood pressure. This makes it a great food for people who already have hypertension or pre-hypertension, as the effect on their blood pressure and cholesterol should be substantial.

56. Concord grapes

A 2007 Cardiovascular Research study showed that Concord grape juice stimulated nitric oxide production in the cells that line the arteries. This stimulation promoted arterial relaxation and the ability for blood to pass more smoothly through the arteries. Of course, this physical change to the arteries would lower blood pressure. Concord grapes also help in lowering the levels of 'bad' cholesterol in the blood, therefore aiding in lowering blood pressure.⁵⁸

There are juices, canned products, dressings, vinaigrettes, and sauces made from concord grapes, but the best way to consume these grapes for your blood pressure health is eating the whole, uncooked fruit.

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57. Pecans

There are two nutrients found in pecans that are great for lowering blood pressure. The Both are often listed on this list of food for fighting off hypertension, and other similar books on naturally lowering blood pressure. First, pecans are full of healthy fats. The buttery flavor of this North American nut is a sign that each is packed with the beneficial fats, which help your heart, not hurt it.

Second, pecans contain a whole lot of magnesium.⁵⁹ There are many studies that laud the benefits of magnesium for individuals with high blood pressure. Certain research shows that the benefits of magnesium on blood pressure are only apparent in individuals who are hypertensive or have unusually high blood pressure. In studies, it was these individuals who showed a drop in systolic and diastolic pressure, while individuals with normal, healthy blood pressure saw no noticeable or quantifiable change in blood pressure.⁵⁹ Yet, if you do have healthy blood pressure, this is not a reason to ignore adding magnesium to your diet. The mineral could be helping to keep your blood pressure at this healthy level.

58. Gazpacho soup

Gazpacho soup is usually made from olive oil, green peppers, cucumber, garlic, and tomato. A majority of its ingredients help in fighting blood pressure.⁶⁰ A recent study looked at how regularly eating gazpacho soup could affect blood pressure. The results were impressive. The study included 4,000 participants and of those 3,995 experienced positive changes in their cardiovascular health after regularly eating gazpacho.⁶⁰ The researchers, and other nutritionists, have added this study to the list of research that supports the idea that a Mediterranean diet can improve cardiovascular health.

59. Macadamias

Dietary trials show that regulated macadamia consumption can result in a

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considerable reduction in total blood serum cholesterol. This decrease of the unwanted low-density cholesterol within your blood stream, with little or no alteration in the good high-density cholesterol is a winning combination for lowering blood pressure and improving cardiovascular health. When doctors and nutritionists recommend plans to prevent stroke and heart disease, it is this combination of good and bad cholesterol they are trying to achieve. Eating a few macadamias throughout the week can do this naturally.

Consuming macadamias can also reduce blood pressure among hyper-sensitive individuals.⁶¹ Studies have shown that macadamias can reduce blood pressure by 7 to 10% within just 4 weeks. That is better than a lot of the foods on this list, and results consistent with some of the best medications on the market.

60. Cardamom

Cardamom may not be a familiar spice to many Americans. It originates from India, and is widely used in Asian curries and other foods. It is also among the spices proven to lower blood pressure, although the current studies indicate that further research is needed before all of the effects of cardamom are confirmed. It is included in this book because in a recent study, powdered cardamom, when consumed on a daily basis, lowered blood pressure in most participants. In fact, it had a significant effect on blood pressure readings, in terms of both systolic and diastolic pressure. It is a good source of antioxidants that can be used in reducing blood pressure. Cardamom is particularly effective if one is suffering from stage 1 hypertension.⁶²

61. Almonds

These small, brown nuts have become a trendy treat for those on a strict diet. Unlike other small snacks, almonds pack a lot of nutrients and protein into a small size. Plus, just a handful can be incredibly filling, despite being low in calories. These qualities are why the nuts have become a trendy diet food.

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However, almonds are more than weight loss and better abs. Almonds are filled with all around goodness.

The long list of good qualities and active nutrients in almonds is impressive. It has become an essential, healthy nut to add to your diet. On top of that, they assist in lowering blood pressure. Almonds have almost no sodium.⁶³ It is important to keep it this way, so make sure you are choosing unsalted versions of this snack, if you are choosing almonds specifically for fighting high blood pressure.

As the same time, almonds are high in potassium. This is the mineral that keeps coming up on this list of 77 foods to fight blood pressure, and it is for a reason. More than any other vitamin, nutrient, or mineral, potassium seems to have a positive effect on blood pressure. While other nutrients are helpful, in certain studies, potassium has been life changing for individuals that once had hypertension. While the research is still ongoing, it is safe to say that there is a definite connection between a healthy circulatory system and how much potassium a person consumes.

Eating whole, unsalted almonds can really boot your potassium intake. An ounce of almonds has 208 mgs of potassium.⁶³ When eaten as part of a regular diet, that is enough to promote contraction of the heart muscles, which moves more blood more easily, and nerve transmissions strong.

62. Peanuts

Many people are concerned about eating peanuts. The nuts are often salted, high in fat, and, in the past, nutritionists thought unhealthy. However, the perception of peanuts is changing. Many health professionals are recommending peanuts and peanut butter as a good source of protein for vegetarians and vegans, plus the benefits of “good” fats are more well known than 20 years ago. Therefore, it is safe to say that the peanut is back in style.

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A study that was published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition showed that daily peanut consumption lowered blood pressure among all participants after just 2 weeks. These nuts have also been shown, through controlled studies, to lower levels of triglyceride and cholesterol.⁶⁴

63. Sunflower seeds

Along with peanuts, sunflower seeds are the snack of America's past-time, baseball, and whether you are watching a game, sitting in the office, or looking for a healthy option at the end of your day, a great option for cardiovascular health. Sunflower seeds are rich in magnesium, Vitamin E, and fiber. Sunflower seeds also have a lot of heart healthy folic acid. All of these nutrients in one place make it easy to fight off hypertension and keep your blood pressure in check. Studies show that Vitamin E and magnesium assists in lowering blood pressure.⁶⁵

The only concern when choosing sunflower seeds to lower blood pressure is that many varieties come salted. You want to grab a bag that is unsalted or only lightly salted, as the sodium accompanying that extra flavoring could counteract all the goodness in the seeds.

64. Nectarines

There is a lot of evidence that nectarines are great for warding off cancer, improving digestive health, and fighting infections. Now, on the list of health benefits from this stone fruit is lowering blood pressure. Also, nectarines may improve overall heart health. All of these positive aspects indicate that there is little to no reason why nectarines should not be part of your diet.



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There are a number of nutrients and minerals found in nectarines that promote better blood pressure. First, the fruit is low in calories and devoid of sodium. These aspects alone mean better blood pressure and stronger arteries. In addition, nectarines are rich in potassium, magnesium, and antioxidants, such as beta-carotene, Vitamin A, and Vitamin C. Its combination of minerals and antioxidants help in lowering blood pressure.⁶⁶

65. Quinoa

Quinoa is a plant that grows in the Andes Mountains of Bolivia and Peru. The grain has been a staple of diets in this region for a very long time, but has recently become popular around the world. The number of health benefits from quinoa has landed it the nickname “super food,” and it is a designation that seems well deserved.

When it comes to better blood pressure, quinoa is rich in potassium. This is the super mineral for lowering blood pressure and fighting hypertension, and its high quantity in quinoa has the same effect. Potassium is essential in reducing blood pressure, and it assists in counteracting the effects of salt.⁶⁷

66. Red bell pepper

Red bell peppers are rich in antioxidants. The combined effects of Vitamin C and Vitamin A create great antioxidant capacity from this vegetable. When you also consider the lycopene found in the skin of red bell peppers and add its ability to lower blood pressure to the mix, this food becomes a super-food that is very effective for those with hypertension and other cardiovascular diseases.⁶⁸

Red bell peppers, also called capsicum in Australia and New Zealand, are great at any meal. The sweeter peppers can be scrambled into eggs, added to sauces, or dipped raw in humus. There are seemingly endless uses for this vegetable, and it has become popular for these reasons.

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67. Kales

This green leafy vegetable is considered a super-food because of its antioxidant properties. One cup of kale has numerous nutrients, and this includes approximately 9% of your recommended daily intake of calcium and potassium and, also, 6% of your recommended daily intake of magnesium.⁶⁹ All of these nutrients are going to improve your blood pressure, which moves kale far up the list of foods you should be eating if your blood pressure levels are giving you some problems.

68. Curcumin in Turmeric

Turmeric is a spice used in curries, soups, and other foods throughout Southeast Asia. It is distinctly yellow in color, and it is a good indication that someone has cooked with turmeric when the tips of their fingers are dyed this same yellow hue. When added to these foods it adds a warm flavor that can counteract some of the spice and acidity that comes from chili. Many people describe turmeric as the spice that adds depth and richness to a dish, and for these individuals it is an essential spice to keep in the kitchen.

Research shows that that curcumin found in turmeric can lower the circulating levels of triglycerides and cholesterol in the blood. By lowering the blood cholesterol, particularly the harmful LDL type, it significantly reduces the risk of atherosclerosis, which is a common cause of high blood pressure.⁷⁰

69. Brown rice

Brown rice is rich in B Vitamins, fiber, and a compound that is known to hinder angiotensin II. Angiotensin II is a documented culprit in the development of atherosclerosis and hypertension. It has these negative affects on the body because Angiotensin II tightens arteries, increases blood pressure, and makes the heart work harder.⁷¹ Choosing brown rice over white rice, and other whole

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grains over their white flour alternatives, is a great way to set your body up for battle against angiotensin II.

70. Tilapia

For those who have not tried this white fish, tilapia is lean and low in calories. It tastes great baked or grilled, and is perfect on a summer salad or as part of a balanced meal. Many people add tilapia to their diet when mackerel is too expensive and they want an alternative to salmon. There are hundreds of species of tilapia around the world. In fact, it is one of the most diverse types of fish species on the planet. However, tilapia are known to contain higher amounts of mercury and other water toxins, and therefore people should add them to their diet thoughtfully and with this in mind.

Tilapia contains a high amount of omega-3 fatty acids. These fatty acids are common in certain fish, and are known to assist in reducing cholesterol levels in the body. Omega-3 fatty acids actually neutralize the effects of another fatty acid in the body, omega-6 fatty acids. Omega-6 fatty acids will cause cholesterol to increase, therefore exerting more pressure on arterial walls to move blood. As tilapia also contains some omega-6 fatty acids within their flesh, there is some controversy about how beneficial this food is for blood pressure. More research on its effect to overall heart health and the circulatory system will tell us more.

As well, a 4- ounce serving of tilapia has 8% of your recommended daily intake of potassium, which is the super mineral for lowering blood pressure.⁷²

71. Cashew nuts

There are a number of heart healthy nuts out there, such as almonds and walnuts. You can add cashew nuts to the list. As well, these nuts are great for lowering your systolic pressure. In certain studies cashew nuts have lowered systolic pressure by 3 or 4 mm Hg. This isn't an overwhelming change in

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pressure, but when contemplating what healthy snacks to add to your diet, choosing cashews over cake or cookies will certainly provide benefits.

Also, eating a diet that is rich in cashew nuts helps in improving the sensitivity of a vital reflex for maintaining a healthy blood pressure- commonly referred to as baroreflex.⁷³

72. Peaches

All stone fruits seem to have a positive effect on blood pressure, and peaches are no different. In fact, peaches might be one of the best options out there. They are more readily available than certain other stone fruit, such as nectarines and plums, and contain a good amount of potassium. Nutritionists have found that a fresh peach contains approximately 330mg of potassium, which amount can fluctuate based on size and ripeness of the fruit. Dried peaches contain even higher levels of this important mineral, which is essential in controlling blood pressure.⁷⁴

73. White beans

Part of the reason white beans are able to do such a good job at lowering blood pressure is because they are filled with soluble fiber. The other reasons that white beans are so good for your blood pressure? Well, they are also a good source of copper, folate, magnesium, iron, Vitamin B1, potassium, protein, phosphorus, and manganese. Of these many nutrients, magnesium and potassium are very helpful in lowering blood pressure.⁷⁵

74. Pork tenderloin

As you may have noticed, there are very few types of meat on this list of 77 foods to fight high blood pressure. That is because meat tends to be high in protein, which is good for you, but also high in fat and cholesterol, which are bad for

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blood pressure. One of the exceptions to this rule of “no meat” is pork tenderloin.

Unlike other meat products, pork tenderloin has been shown to help in reducing blood pressure. This is because pork tenderloin is exceptionally high in potassium. Just 3 ounces of pork tenderloin contain approximately 15% of your daily potassium intake requirements.⁷⁶ A study by a research team at Purdue University determined that eating pork, over chicken, beef, and other red meat, could reduce your blood pressure. The research team at Purdue attributed their results to the presence of potassium, phosphorus, zinc, and very little sodium in this pork product.

75. Sweet potatoes

Another natural remedy for high blood pressure is the sweet potato. Just like its close cousin, sweet potatoes are starchy and simple to prepare. Whether you throw them on the grill, add them to a soup, or bake them with cinnamon and some brown sugar, this is a great root vegetable to add to your diet.

Sweet potatoes are rich in magnesium and potassium. These are two nutrients essential in maintaining blood pressure and kidney function.⁷⁷ Also, sweet potatoes have a lot of fiber. This is important because fiber is shown to support a healthy heart and increasing your fiber intake may prevent other health risks, such as stroke or heart attack.

76. Kidney beans

Kidney beans are an excellent source of magnesium, potassium, iron, Vitamin B1, protein, phosphorus, and manganese. These minerals and vitamins are essential in lowering blood pressure.⁷⁸ Of course, the same properties in kidney beans that help



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lower blood pressure are found in many different varieties of beans, including black beans, lima beans, and pinto beans. Overall, beans are a great, natural way to consume protein and the nutrients necessary to keep blood pressure low. Even in older adults, eating a balanced amount of beans has been shown to prevent hypertension.

Kidney beans go well in soups, stews, and within different Mexican dishes. It is easy to incorporate kidney beans in your daily diet, as people add them to their choices for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

77. Cinnamon

According to a British study, consuming 2 grams of cinnamon daily, for 12 weeks, can significantly lower your blood pressure.⁷⁹ This result is likely due to cinnamon's ability to limit the amount of insulin circulated throughout the body. A corresponding study in the Journal of the American College of Nutrition determined that people with diabetes and high blood pressure were more likely to see a drop in their blood pressure when consuming cinnamon, than those who simply had high blood pressure.

Despite these promising results from these two studies, and others, researchers are still uncertain exactly why cinnamon reduces blood pressure. Therefore, it is difficult to know exactly how great an effect this spice could have on hypertension. As more studies are conducted, nutritionists and doctors are likely to have a better idea when and how to recommend an increase in cinnamon to fight high blood pressure.

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Conclusion:

There are a lot of theories in the world of nutrition and health regarding what genetic factors, lifestyle choices, health conditions, and even foods affect blood pressure. Research is happening every day to determine if a specific decision in your diet can make a difference in preventing hypertension and other cardiovascular diseases. However, it seems that a few things are settled.

Potassium can have a massive impact on good blood pressure. It seems fairly certain that when you increase potassium, you see a drop in your blood pressure. As well, magnesium is incredibly beneficial. Many Americans are deficient in this mineral, and it is unfortunate because of the cardiovascular benefits it can provide. Also, this common deficiency may partly explain why so many Americans have high blood pressure. Lastly, eliminating sodium will help lower blood pressure.

All of the foregoing conclusions about food and the nutrients these foods provide have been tested by study after study and looked at intensely by nutritionists and doctors. However, it is important to know that every body is different and what works for one individual may not work for another because of a different health condition that interferes with the body's ability to utilize one nutrient or another. For this reason, and to improve your overall health, it is important to eat a balanced and multifaceted diet that includes many different foods. You will likely see the best results from your blood pressure-healthy foods using this method.

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