

## Are You in Control?

**Millions put themselves at risk for heart attack, stroke, and heart disease by not taking steps to control their high blood pressure.**

Did you know that more than 52 million Americans are not taking steps to control their high blood pressure?

High blood pressure is a treatable condition that may be controlled with diet, exercise, and medication prescribed by your doctor.

Unfortunately, many people don't understand that high blood pressure increases the chances of a heart attack, stroke, or heart disease. In fact, many people with high blood pressure don't feel sick and don't take the medication prescribed by their doctor.

According to a study in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 30-50% of all patients in the United States do not take their medication the way their doctor

prescribed it. Taking high blood pressure medication is an important way to prevent heart attack, stroke, and heart disease.

In the last edition we talked about the first step to controlling blood pressure: knowing your blood pressure. In this edition, we'll provide tips for the second step for controlling blood pressure: talking to your doctor.

This edition also contains information about taking your medication, leading a healthy lifestyle and delicious heart healthy treats.

### **Don't Forget »**

Getting your blood pressure checked is only the first step.

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## Can We Chat?

### What do I need to talk to my doctor about if I have high blood pressure?

Hopefully, by now you know your blood pressure and have completed the first step of controlling it.

The second step is talking to your doctor.

Your doctor is your partner in controlling your blood pressure and wants to help

you understand that high blood pressure increases your chances for heart attack, stroke, or other forms of heart disease.

To get the most from the time you spend with your doctor, it's important to prepare for your



**Speak Up** » Even if you don't feel sick, if your blood pressure is higher than 120/80, it's important to see your doctor.

### Things to ask your doctor about

- » Track your blood pressure and keep notes on how you're doing. Bring your notes and blood pressure results to your doctor's appointment so you can ask, "How am I doing?"
- » What kinds of exercise are right for you and how often you should do them.
- » The kinds of heart healthy foods you should eat. For more information on eating healthy, visit <http://pehp.basixwellness.com>.
- » Taking your medicine as instructed. Talk to your doctor if you're having side effects or are unable to afford your medicine. There may be an alternative that's just right for you.
- » How to stop smoking. Smoking is a top causes of heart disease. For help, call the Utah Tobacco Quit Line at 888-567-TRUTH.
- » How and when you should check your blood pressure.
- » What should you do if your blood pressure is higher than the goal he/she has set for you.

### Question suggestions

Writing down your questions will help you get the most out of your next visit.

Questions you may want to ask include:

- » What is my blood pressure today?
- » What should my blood pressure be?
- » What can I do to lower my blood pressure?
- » What is the name of the new medication and how will it help me?
- » How and when should I take the medication?
- » What should I do if I miss a dose?
- » Will vitamins, supplements, or other medicines affect my blood pressure?
- » How will I know if my blood pressure medication is working?
- » What are the side effects? What should I do if they occur?

## Paying Too Much?



### Go generic to cut the cost of medication

Many people need medication to control their blood pressure. Luckily, many high blood pressure medicines are available as a generic and covered by your PEHP plan at the lowest cost to you.

Generics work the same as brand name medications.

If your high blood pressure medicine is too expensive, ask your doctor if a generic medicine from PEHP's Preferred Drug List might work for you. Remember, the medication prescribed by your doctor won't help you if you're not taking it.

## How can I remember to take my medications?

For help remembering to take your high blood pressure medicine, try these tips:

- » **Plan the week's schedule in a pill box.** Using a pillbox makes it easy to find your medication and know if you've taken it. A pillbox may also be handy if you're traveling.
- » **Call your pharmacy several days before you run out.** Most pharmacies are busy. To avoid waiting in line and waiting for your prescription to be filled, order your refill three or four days ahead. Your next refill will likely be waiting for you when you arrive!

- » **Take your medication with you when you travel.** You may be on vacation but your high blood pressure is not! If you forget your blood pressure medication at home, contact a local pharmacy to get enough to get through your trip.
- » **Keep a blood pressure journal.** Record your blood pressure and if you took your blood pressure medication for that day.

**Try These Tips »**  
Make a routine of taking your medicine.





## What's Your BP IQ?

1. A person with high blood pressure should do all of the following except:

- a. Eat a healthy diet like those recommended at <http://pehp.basixwellness.com/>
- b. Avoid exercise
- c. Have regular blood pressure checks
- d. Use medication as prescribed by your doctor

2. Your doctor may change your high blood pressure medicine when:

- a. You experience side effects
- b. The medication is too expensive
- c. You have an allergy to the medication
- d. All of the above

3. Which of the following tips may help me to take my medication every day?

- a. Use a pill box to plan my medicine schedule for the week.
- b. Take my medicine at the same time each day.
- c. Take my medicine with me when I travel.
- d. All of the above.

4. Which of the following is the most desirable blood pressure reading?

- a. Lower than 120/80
- b. 140/90
- c. 180/120
- d. 130/80

5. A good question to ask your doctor at your next appointment might be:

- a. What can I do to lower my blood pressure?
- b. What is the name of my new medication and how will it help me?
- c. How will I know if my blood pressure medicine is working?
- d. All of the above.



## Heart Healthy Recipes

### Try this meat loaf and a cool, fruity treat

#### SCRUMPTIOUS HEART HEALTHY MEAT LOAF

**Prep Time** » 15 minutes

**Baking Time** » 25 minutes

##### Ingredients:

- » 1 pound of lean ground turkey
- » ½ cup regular oats (dry)
- » 1 large egg
- » 1 tbsp onion (dehydrated flakes)
- » ¼ cup ketchup

##### Cooking Instructions:

- » Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- » Mix all ingredients together.
- » Place mixed ingredients in 1 pound loaf pan and bake for 25 minutes or to an internal temperature of 165° F.
- » Cut into 5 slices and serve.

**Serving Size:** » About 3 ounces

##### Nutritional Analysis:

» Calories.....	191
» Total fat .....	7g
» Saturated fat.....	2g
» Cholesterol.....	103mg
» Sodium.....	205mg
» Fiber .....	1g
» Carbohydrate .....	9g
» Potassium.....	268mg
» Protein.....	23g

#### A COOL HEART HEALTHY TREAT

**Prep Time** » 10 minutes

**Yields** » 3 servings (1 cup each)

##### Ingredients:

- » 1 cup fat free, plain yogurt
- » 6 medium strawberries
- » 1 cup pineapple, crushed, canned in juice

- » 1 medium banana
- » 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- » 4 ice cubes

##### Mixing Instructions:

- » Place ingredients in blender. Puree until smooth. Serve in frosted glass.

##### Nutritional Analysis:

» Calories.....	121
» Total fat .....	<1g
» Saturated fat.....	<1g
» Cholesterol.....	1mg
» Sodium.....	64mg
» Fiber .....	2g
» Carbohydrate .....	24g
» Potassium.....	483mg
» Protein.....	2g