Blood Pressure

High Blood Pressure “The Silent Killer”

Did you know...
In almost all cases high blood pressure has no symptoms or warning signs which is why it’s referred to as the “silent killer”. High blood pressure is the 3rd leading cause of death in Canada and the #1 cause of heart disease and stroke.

Be Aware That...
High blood pressure can cause damage to the blood vessels in your body. This can result in:

▶ stroke
▶ heart attack
▶ heart damage
▶ kidney damage
▶ eye damage
▶ decreased thinking abilities or dementia

The good news is that blood pressure can be controlled

Preventing and Lowering High Blood Pressure

Most people with high blood pressure require a combination of medication and lifestyle changes to reach their recommended blood pressure goals. There are things you can do to control blood pressure:

- Lack of Physical Activity
  - Get regular physical activity. 30 to 60 minutes of moderate activity most days of the week such as walking or any physical activity that is enjoyable.

- Body Weight
  - Maintain a healthy weight. If overweight, losing about 10lb or 4kg will lower blood pressure by about 5 to 6mmHg and decreasing diastolic.

- Waist Circumference
  - Less than 100cm for men
  - Less than 80cm for women

- Food Choices
  - Eat healthy.
  - Follow Canada’s Food Guide.

- Salt (Sodium) Intake
  - Reduce daily sodium intake to 2000 mg or less.
  - Avoid products that are labelled with less than or equal to 5% daily value of sodium.

- Alcohol
  - Men: Limit alcohol intake to 0-2 standard drinks per day & do not exceed 15 drinks per week.
  - Women: Limit alcohol intake to 0-2 standard drinks per day & do not exceed 10 drinks per week.
  - Stop smoking and avoid second-hand smoke.

- Medications
  - Take all medications as prescribed.

- Stress
  - Reduce stress and find healthy ways to cope with the stress that can’t be avoided.

- Blood Pressure Readings
  - Have your blood pressure taken regularly and as directed by your health care provider.

Adapted from CIHI 2015

For more posters and resources on stroke best practices, please contact:
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