



HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

Compliments of Michelle Townsend, Naturopath, Nutritionalist, Iridologist, Wellness Consultant at Lake Spa

Blood Pressure is the measurable force of blood as the heart contracts to force blood through blood vessels. Systolic blood pressure is the 'top' reading given in a blood pressure test. This is a reading of the force of the hearts' contraction of its ventricles forcing blood through the blood vessels. (when pressure is at it's highest) Diastolic blood pressure is the 'bottom' reading given in a blood pressure test and is a reading of the resting stage of the heart's rhythm. (the pressure remaining in between heart beats). Systolic blood pressure is more important for determining cardiovascular disease risk than Diastolic blood pressure.

Normal average systolic/diastolic blood pressure in a healthy adult of average size and weight is 120/70 mm Hg.

WHAT INFLUENCES BLOOD PRESSURE?

- Heart action (rate of heartbeat, force per beat and volume per beat) influences blood pressure.
- Peripheral resistance to blood flow in the capillary beds, caused by friction.
- Viscosity of the blood. (thicker blood creates more pressure)
- The kidneys are partially responsible for the regulation of blood pressure.
- The Brain Stem contains centers that help to regulate blood pressure.
- Stress through the release of adrenalin will increase blood pressure
- Some medications or reactions to combinations of medications & some supplements/herbs can cause blood pressure problems
- Elasticity of the blood vessels (the more elastic/pliable your vessels, the less resistance & pressure)
- Total blood volume. (more volume = more pressure)
- Idiopathic blood pressure or essential hypertension is the term given to an 'unknown' cause of blood pressure & accounts for around 90% of reported cases. Secondary hypertension is often a consequence of another disease.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP REDUCE OR KEEP YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE HEALTHY?

If you know what causes blood pressure & how the body regulates blood pressure then you are already one step closer to knowing what you can do to help yourself. So if you have high blood pressure try to find out which of the factors above might be involved in influencing your blood pressure problems (this list is not an exhaustive list of the causes of blood pressure, just a basic list on how blood pressure *regulation* can become unbalanced). Ask your doctor, have a full nutritional analysis done, iridology can also provide some insight. Then you are able to start to re-balance yourself more naturally. If you have high blood pressure it is not wise to 'self prescribe' supplements or herbs, even more so if you are on medication. You should seek professional guidance with a proper assessment.

Some very simple nutritional & lifestyle changes can make enough of a positive change to blood pressure to enable a regularly normal reading. Reducing excess weight is important, normalizing electrolytes (sodium, potassium, calcium & magnesium) where levels are out of balance, can have an enormous positive impact alone.

Reducing caffeine intake (coffee/tea/some soft drinks/chocolate), reducing alcohol intake, increasing exercise and stopping smoking all can help. A diet high in sugar, low in fibre has been shown to adversely affect blood pressure.

Stress reduction techniques – meditation, deep breathing, massage, counseling, involve yourself in a hobby that you enjoy, muscle stretches, ensuring adequate deep sleep all play an important role. Stress does not go away if you try to ignore it! You must learn how to deal with stress to reduce the very real physiological impact it has on your health before it turns your health into another stressor!

High blood pressure can be seen as a predictor of your health & if left untreated can have serious consequences. Do not ignore warning signs. Many people have found that through normalizing nutritional imbalances & making certain lifestyle changes that their blood pressure has normalized. To help you find your 'healthy balance', I welcome your visit as there are many things a Naturopathic treatment can offer to help you. **Appointments can be made on 43931 200.** Bye for now, Best wishes, Michelle.