

A **focus** on managing your **High Blood Pressure**

High blood pressure affects one out of three Americans, and 24% meet the criteria for hypertension which is defined as a blood pressure greater than or equal to 140/90 (read as “140 over 90”) or 135/85 in persons with diabetes. The exact cause of high blood pressure is unknown. Some people are at risk for high blood pressure due to race or genetic factors.

High blood pressure increases your risk of heart disease, stroke, and kidney disease.

You can make several lifestyle changes to lower your blood pressure:

- Stop smoking
- Lose weight (even 10 pounds can make a big difference!)
- Increase physical activity to at least 30 minutes 5 days per week
- Practice relaxation and other stress management techniques
- Modify your diet:
 - Reduce salt intake to less than 1.5 grams per day
 - Limit alcohol intake to no more than 2/day for men; 1/day for women
 - Increase intake of fruits and vegetables; reduce processed foods
 - Limit meat, poultry, and fish to two 3-ounce servings per day
 - Substitute fat-free or low-fat milk products

Additional ways to treat high blood pressure include:

- Prescription medication – the most common types are:
 - Water pills (“diuretics”) that help your body get rid of excess water and salt
 - Beta-blockers that cause your heart to beat more slowly and relax your blood vessels
 - ACE inhibitors
 - Calcium channel blockers
- Monitor your blood pressure at home and record the results; provide this log to your physician who can assess the severity of your high blood pressure and determine need for medication as indicated
- Visit your physician regularly so your medication can be monitored, adjusted, and checked for side-effects



For more information about managing your high blood pressure, contact your health care provider, your Concentra health specialist, or you can visit the American Heart Association's Web site at: www.americanheart.org

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