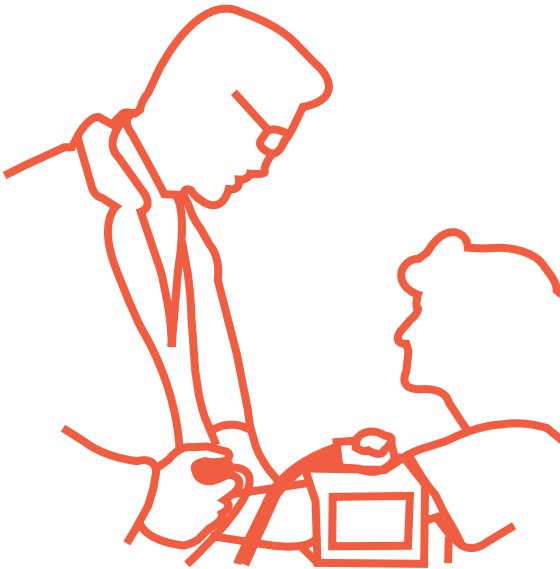


PATIENT INFORMATION

Medicine To Treat: _____

Hypertension

Patient Awareness and Self-Care



WHAT IS BLOOD PRESSURE AND HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE?

Blood pressure is the force generated as your heart pumps blood and moves it through the blood vessels in your body. It is made up of two numbers called the systolic and diastolic blood pressure.

Systolic blood pressure represents the pressure while the heart is beating. A normal systolic blood pressure is 140 mmHg or below.

Diastolic blood pressure represents the pressure when the heart is resting between beats. A normal diastolic blood pressure is 90 mm Hg or below.

Blood pressure that stays persistently above this level is considered high and the person is said to have high blood pressure or hypertension.

WHAT CAUSES HYPERTENSION?

In most patients, the cause for high blood pressure is not clear. However, we know that you are at risk of getting high blood pressure if you:

- are overweight
- eat too much salt
- regularly consume large quantities of alcohol
- do not have enough exercise
- are constantly under stress
- have a family history of high blood pressure
- are 40 years or older
- have certain medical problems such as kidney diseases

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF HYPERTENSION?

People with high blood pressure usually do not feel unwell. Many people are found to have high blood pressure during routine medical examination. So if you have not had it checked in a while, make an appointment now.

Keep all medication out of reach of children.

WHAT CAN HYPERTENSION CAUSE?

High blood pressure can be dangerous and can hurt your body in many ways. These include:

- heart attack
- heart failure
- stroke
- kidney failure

SELF CARE

High blood pressure is a lifelong disease. It can be controlled but not cured. You can help your blood pressure control by:

- eating sensibly
- reducing your salt and fat intake
- reducing your calorie and sugar intake
- reducing your alcohol intake
- exercising regularly and losing weight
- quitting your smoking habit
- keeping stress under control
- taking your medicines regularly
- keeping up with your doctor's appointment
- monitoring your blood pressure regularly

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO KEEP UP WITH MY APPOINTMENTS?

High blood pressure is a silent killer. It is important for you to follow the plan that your doctor has drawn up for you. Remember to keep up with your appointments so that your doctor can assess and monitor your condition and recommend any other actions when necessary.

Discard all medication that is outdated or no longer required.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO TAKE MY HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE MEDICATIONS REGULARLY?

High blood pressure medication only works when it is taken regularly as directed. Therefore, you have to follow the instructions and take your medication at the same time of the day. Never stop taking your medications without your doctor's consent. Stopping your medication can cause a sudden, life-threatening increase in your blood pressure.

BLOOD PRESSURE MONITORING

Blood pressure monitoring can be easily learnt and done conveniently at home. There are several home blood pressure monitoring devices available on the market. These devices are battery-operated and are relatively easy to use. Your pharmacist can help you choose a device that best suit your needs and advise you on the appropriate techniques for taking your blood pressure at home.

How to Measure My Blood Pressure

1. Be seated comfortably in a chair with your elbow and forearm resting on a flat surface.
2. Attach the blood pressure monitor cuff to your upper arm. Be careful that there is no difference in height between the cuff and your heart. Place a cushion or pillow to adjust to the correct height should there be a difference.
3. Switch on the power to the blood pressure monitor.
4. Inflate the monitor cuff manually or by pressing the "ON" button on the blood pressure monitor.
5. Read the blood pressure reading from the monitor screen and

record the readings in your blood pressure monitoring diary. Make sure you enter the dates when the readings are taken.

6. Show your doctor your blood pressure readings at your next appointment.

POINTS TO NOTE WHILE TAKING MY BLOOD PRESSURE:

- Your blood pressure readings may be higher than normal under the following conditions:
 - After an exercise or after performing a physically strenuous activity
 - After a heavy meal, after drinking coffee or cigarette smoking
 - When you are anxious, nervous or upset about something
 - When you are in a hurry

Therefore, always try to take your blood pressure when you are relaxed or when you have rested for approximately 15 minutes after any strenuous physical activities. Be sure to note down any reason which you think may affect your blood pressure reading.

- Try to take your blood pressure at around the same time everyday as blood pressure readings may be slightly different at different times of the day.
- Blood pressure readings are lower when taken in an upright position compared to when you are lying down. So, be sure that you measure your blood pressure in the correct posture.
- Different blood pressure monitors may give slightly different readings. They may not be the same as those taken by your doctor.



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