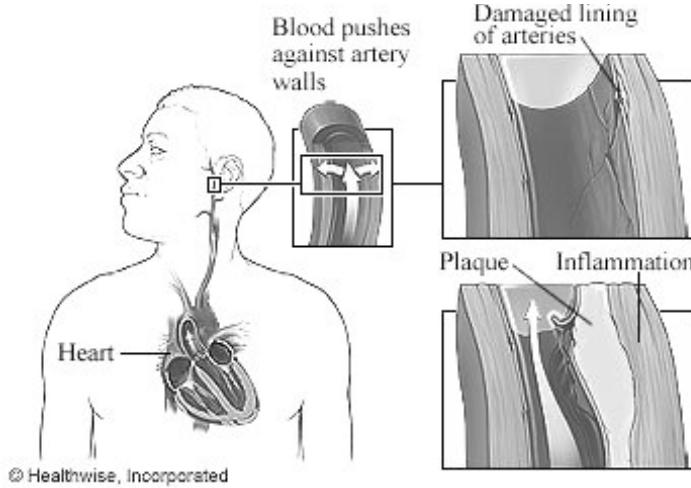




# Blood pressure and your health



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## What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is a measure of how hard the blood pushes against the walls of your arteries.

If it remains high, blood flows through your arteries with too much force, and this damages the walls of your arteries. But you can't feel it. High blood pressure usually doesn't cause symptoms.



## What do blood pressure numbers measure?

Blood pressure is measured with 2 numbers.

**120**

The top number (systolic pressure) measures the force of blood in your arteries when your heart contracts (beats).

**80**

The bottom number (diastolic pressure) measures the force of blood in your arteries while your heart is relaxed.

## Ideal blood pressure and hypertension.

Blood pressure lower than or equal to **120/80** is ideal. It's normal for the numbers to fluctuate throughout the day.

High blood pressure (**hypertension**) is when your blood pressure is usually higher than **140/90**; higher blood pressure levels are normal in older individuals.

It can lead to problems such as coronary artery disease and heart attack, heart failure, stroke, kidney failure, and/or eye damage.

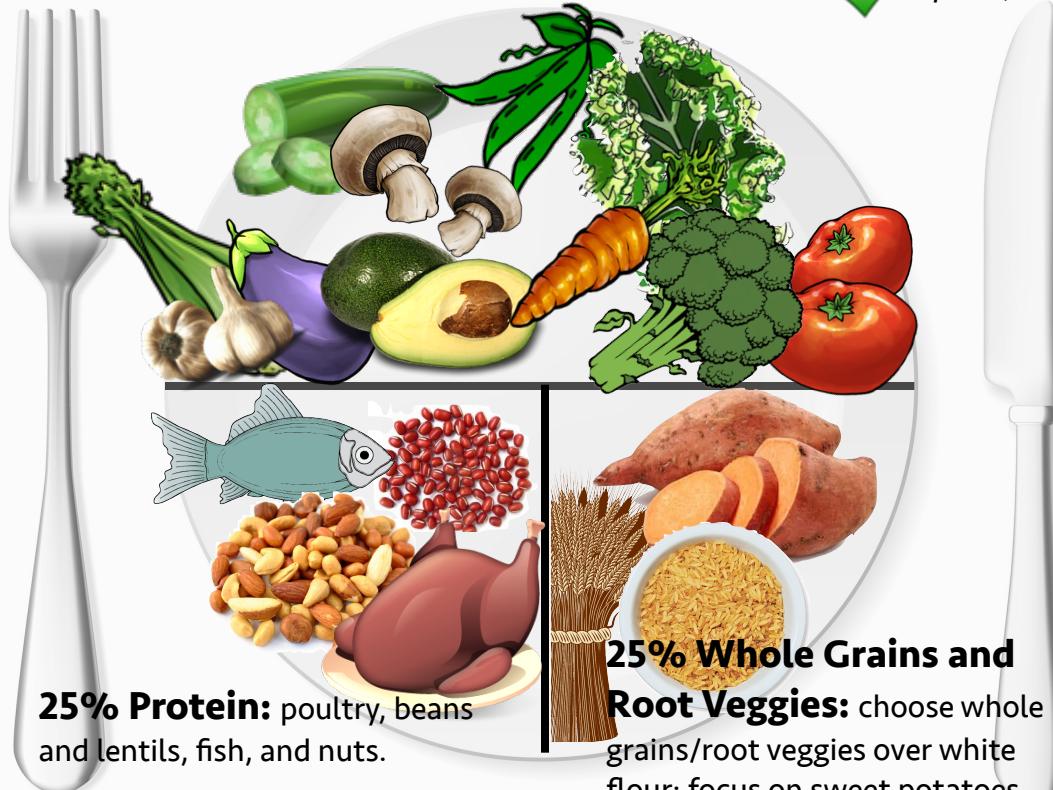
**A healthy lifestyle can help control your blood pressure.**

**Healthy eating habits help to control blood pressure.** Throughout the day, include foods from all food groups: vegetables, fruits, whole grains, healthy fats, and lean protein foods.

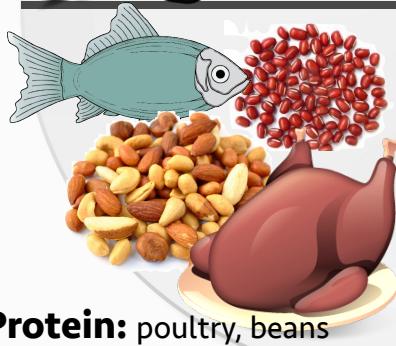
**50% Vegetables:** broccoli, cucumbers, celery, lettuce, spinach, tomatoes avocados, garlic, etc.



**Eat fruit as a snack:** apples, pears, berries, etc.



**25% Protein:** poultry, beans and lentils, fish, and nuts.



### 25% Whole Grains and

**Root Veggies:** choose whole grains/root veggies over white flour: focus on sweet potatoes, brown rice, corn tortillas, oatmeal.



Drink **6-8 glasses of water/day** instead of sweetened drinks.

**Exercise.** Try to be active every day. Walk as much as you can.



#### 1. Reduce dairy products.

- Choose plain yogurt.



#### Avoid eating cheese and cream.



#### 5. Reduce your intake of

corn, potatoes, coffee, white bread, pastries.



**2. Reduce your salt intake.** Read the nutrition labels to be aware of your daily sodium (salt) intake. Try to consume **less than 1500mg** of sodium a day.



**3. Take your medications or herbs according to instructions from your doctor or herbalist**



**4. Quit smoking.** Seek help at a clinic or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).



**6. Avoid eating** red meat, processed meat (lunch meat, etc.), cheese, canned and fast foods, chips and desserts.



**7. Strive for and maintain a healthy weight.** Extra weight increases blood pressure.

