

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

A Common Health Problem that Effects 1 in 3 Adults



What is High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)?

High blood pressure occurs when the pressure in the blood vessels (arteries) is always elevated. This increased pressure causes changes to the blood vessels in many important organs including the heart, kidneys, brain and can lead to heart and kidney problems and stroke.

How common is High Blood Pressure?

High blood pressure is very common affecting one in every 3 Americans. Many people who have high blood pressure do not know it. It is called “the silent killer” because there are few symptoms, even though the blood pressure is causing damage to the body.

What should I do if I have high blood pressure?

There are many ways to treat high blood pressure, including lifestyle changes, diet changes and medications. First, get educated. Know your numbers and your blood pressure (BP) goal. Take your BP at home and record your readings for your doctor. When taking your BP, use the same arm each time, make sure you are relaxed for several minutes prior to taking the reading and have been without caffeine for at least 2 hours. See your doctor regularly and take your medications as prescribed. If you have problems with your medications (too expensive, side effects), let your doctor know. Second, if you smoke, stop. If you struggle with stopping, then ask for help. There are many ways to help you overcome this habit. There are other changes that may be recommended as well, such as eating a low salt diet (limit of 2000 mg of sodium a day). Exercise and if you are overweight, lose weight. Additional recommendations might include limiting alcohol use and managing stress. It is important to manage stress by learning stress management techniques, such as meditation, prayer, yoga or other interventions.

Learn more about high blood pressure through DNA's Patient Education Programs

www.dneph.com/education/

or other websites such as American Heart Association www.heart.org



DALLAS NEPHROLOGY ASSOCIATES
Comprehensive Kidney Care

214.358.2300 | 877.654.3639

dneph.com

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