HYPERTENSION

Hypertension, also known as high or raised blood pressure, is a condition in which the blood vessels have persistently raised pressure. Blood is carried from the heart to all parts of the body in the vessels.

High blood pressure (BP) is ranked as the third most important risk factor for the burden of disease in south Asian Countries . Hypertension (HTN) is the primary cause for 57% of all stroke deaths and 24% of all coronary heart disease (CHD) deaths in India . Hence it exerts a substantial public health problem on cardiovascular health status of people in India.

Hypertension is serious because people with this condition have a higher risk for heart disease and stroke, renal diseases than people with normal blood pressure. Serious complications can be avoided by getting regular blood pressure checks and treating hypertension as soon as it is diagnosed.

> **Studies have suggested that only about half of Indian patients with hypertension are diagnosed in time. Even when a patient is diagnosed with blood pressure, it has been observed that they do not receive adequate treatment for various reasons.**

Usually hypertension is defined as blood pressure above 140/90, and is considered severe if the pressure is above 180/120. It is diagnosed when measured twice on different days of a week , systolic blood pressure on both readings is ≥140 mmHg and/or diastolic blood pressure on both readings is ≥90 mmHg.

Common Cause of Hypertension

Consuming high salt diet, fat (canned, fried) and/or cholesterol. Other causes like sleep apnea, alcoholism, smoking, addiction to caffeine, improper diet and lack of exercise are some known causes of hypertension.

Chronic conditions such as kidney and hormone problems, diabetes, and high cholesterol.

Family history, especially if your parents or other close relatives have high blood pressure.
If any person experiences following symptom, they should consult the Physician without delay:

• Severe headache
• Shortness of breath
• Nosebleed
• Severe anxiety
• Feeling of pulsations in the neck or head

Risk Factors
AGE, ALCOHOL, SMOKING AND CHEWING TOBACCO, ANXIETY, STRESS
High BMI(>25), Central obesity (defined as waist circumference >90 cm in men and >80 cm in women), consumption of low vegetables/fruits, high consumption of dietary fat and salt. Sedentary life style (IT workers) were the significant risk factors for HTN among Indian patients.

How To Monitor and Keep Track Regularly

You can track your blood pressure daily by measuring it at least twice a day. Make a habit of noting it down so that you can compare your blood pressure levels. Refrain from consuming tea, coffee, food, alcohol and tobacco half an hour before you check the blood pressure level.

Risks of High Blood Pressure
If high blood pressure is left untreated, it can increase the risk of heart disease, strokes, heart attacks, heart failure, kidney disease, vascular dementia, aortic aneurysms and peripheral arterial disease.

 Educating the people to manage blood pressure effectively is an important task. To keep these numbers in check, one should go for medical check-ups on a regular basis

High Blood Pressure Emergency Treatment
Vasodilators like Nitroglycerin and Nitroprusside can help treat blood pressure immediately.

Complications of Hypertension

Hypertension brings out many complications and the problems associated to heart and blood vessels, chest pain, stroke and Transient ischemic attack, mild cognitive impairment, renal diseases, eye problems, type 2 diabetes, sexual dysfunction, bone loss, sleeping trouble.

Conditions related to High blood pressure

Diabetes
Diabetes is a disease in whicha your blood glucose, or blood sugar, levels are too high.

Hypercholesterolaemia
A condition characterised by high cholesterol accumulation in the body.

Heart Failure
A progressive heart disease that affects pumping action of the heart muscles.

Low Blood Pressure
A blood pressure reading below the specified limit (90/60 mmHg).

TEN Lifestyle Changes you can make to lower your blood pressure and keep it down.

1. Lose extra pounds and watch your waistline.
2. Exercise regularly- Exercises reduce the stiffness of blood vessels, lowering high blood pressure. Brisk- walking for a minimum of 10 minutes at least thrice a day,
3. 30 minutes of cycling, pedal pushing, weight training and swimming are some exercises that can reduce high blood pressure.
4. Eat a healthy diet.
5. Reduce salt in your food.
6. Limit the amount of alcohol you drink.
7. Quit smoking.
8. Cut back on caffeine.
9. Reduce your stress.
10. Adequate sleep (8 hrs).

"It is important to know one's blood pressure reading by checking it regularly, adopting a healthy lifestyle and staying on prescribed treatment to reduce hypertension and its complications. Eating a healthier diet with less salt, exercising regularly and taking medication can help lower blood pressure."

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