

THE QUICK AND DIRTY ON HYPERTENSION/CHOLESTEROL COUNSELING

Brought to you by 2007-08 Coordinators

Hypertension = high blood pressure

Basic Information:

- HTN is a “silent killer” because people do not usually present with symptoms, which is dangerous if undetected or untreated
- The top number measures systolic blood pressure (when your heart is pumping blood), and the bottom number measures diastolic blood pressure (when your heart is at rest)

	Blood Pressure
Normal	≤ 120/80
Pre-HTN	120-139/80-89
HTN	> 140/90

Counseling points to cover:

- Blood pressure is very variable; some factors that can alter blood pressure at any given time include:
 - Emotional stress
 - Fatigue, tiredness
 - Recent eating or exercise
- Only your doctor can diagnose you as having hypertension; a high blood pressure measurement does not necessarily mean you have hypertension
- If you are worried about your blood pressure or believe your medications are not working make an appointment to speak with your doctor

Diet/Lifestyle Modifications:

- Reduce sodium intake
 - Avoid canned/pre-packaged foods
 - Baking soda, baking powder and soy sauce contain high levels of sodium
 - Read food labels and keep sodium to <3 grams per day
 - Use herbs, other spices for taste
- Reduce dietary fat
 - Avoid animal trans fats like margarine and butter
 - Use cooking spray
- Increase physical activity
 - Aerobic exercise for at least 30 mins 3-4x/week (walking, bicycling, swimming, etc)
 - Muscle building is not an aerobic exercise

Hypercholesterolemia = high cholesterol

Basic Information:

- Cholesterol is a “waxy substance” that is a normal part of all cells, but can lead to cardiovascular diseases at high levels
- Cholesterol is only found in animal products
- Total cholesterol is a measure of LDL (bad cholesterol), HDL (good cholesterol) and triglycerides

	High Risk	Borderline	Desirable
Total cholesterol	> 239	200-239	< 200
LDL	> 190	130-159	< 100
HDL	< 40	40-60	> 40
Triglycerides	> 200	150-199	< 150

Counseling points to cover:

- Healthy lifestyle choices and exercise is the best way to lower cholesterol
- Only your doctor can diagnose you as having high cholesterol; a high total cholesterol measurement does not necessarily mean you have hypertension
- If you are worried about your cholesterol levels or believe your medications are not working make an appointment to speak with your doctor

Diet/Lifestyle Modifications:

- Limit cholesterol-rich foods; no more than 300 mg/day
 - Egg yolk
 - Dairy products like cheese, whole milk
 - Processed meats like sausage
 - Organ meats
 - Baked goods with egg yolk
- Avoid trans fats and saturated fats found in margarine, butter
- Reduce sodium intake to <2400 mg/day
- Increase leafy green vegetables and whole grain products
- Increase physical activity that will increase your heart rate
 - Aerobic exercise for at least 30 mins 3-4x/week (walking, bicycling, swimming, etc)