



# MAINTAINING A Healthy Blood Pressure (B/P)



## My part in adopting or maintaining a healthy lifestyle will include:

- Increased physical activity/exercise, such as brisk walking 30 minutes daily. Rigorous activity should be approved by my physician.
- Eating a low salt, low fat, nourishing diet which includes fruits, vegetables, nuts and whole grains.
- Controlling my weight by maintaining a BMI of 18.5–24.9.
- Not smoking or using chewing tobacco.
- Drinking alcohol in moderation.
- Reducing stress.
- Taking my blood pressure medication.

## What can lead to high blood pressure?

### Lifestyle Choices

- Not being active.
- Eating a lot of food high in sugar, fat and salt.
- Drinking too much alcohol.
- Smoking and chewing tobacco. This can raise your blood pressure and can hurt your blood vessels.
- Being stressed. This makes your blood pressure high and can cause you to overeat or smoke.

### Genetics

- Family history. High blood pressure can run in families. If your parents or grandparents had high blood pressure, you may be at risk too.
- Sex. Men and women can be at risk for high blood pressure.
- Age. Men 55 and older and women 65 and older have a bigger risk.
- Race. African Americans are more likely to have high blood pressure.



***High blood pressure is called the “silent killer.” You can have high blood pressure and feel fine. High blood pressure that is not controlled can lead to damage of arteries throughout the body.***

### This damage can lead to:

- Heart attacks, congestive heart failure and other heart diseases
- Stroke
- Kidney disease
- Vision loss
- Peripheral vascular disease: Damage to other body arteries, especially in the legs.
- Erectile dysfunction