



## Taking charge of your health: How do you manage your high blood pressure one day at a time?

### What is high blood pressure, or hypertension?

- As your heart pumps blood throughout your body, a pressure is applied to the walls of your arteries. This is called blood pressure.
- Many factors, such as your physical activity level, your diet, your medical conditions and your genetic makeup can affect your blood pressure.
- A normal blood pressure reading is less than 120/80. High blood pressure occurs when you consistently have a blood pressure higher than 140/90.

### How does my blood pressure affect me?

- Most people with high blood pressure don't have symptoms or may not even know they have high blood pressure.
- If your blood pressure is very high, it is possible to experience symptoms including headaches, blurry vision and chest pain.
- Untreated high blood pressure may put you at risk for severe complications including vision loss, kidney failure, stroke, heart attack, heart failure and other heart problems.

### What medications are used to treat high blood pressure?

There are different types of medications to treat high blood pressure. See the table on the back.

### How do I know if my high blood pressure is under control?

Testing your blood pressure each day is an important part of managing your condition. You can test your blood pressure at home with a blood pressure machine. If you aren't already doing this or if you have questions about how to use your blood pressure machine, talk to your pharmacist or doctor.

This information does not replace the ongoing care and advice of your doctor. You shouldn't make any changes to your established medication or exercise routine without talking with your doctor first.

## Your lifestyle, your choices, your goals

Each day, you make decisions that affect your health. You can control your high blood pressure each day by:

- Eating a heart-healthy diet that includes a mixture of fruits, vegetables, grains, beans, low-fat dairy products and lean meats.
- Knowing your blood pressure goals and checking your blood pressure on a regular basis with an automatic blood pressure cuff.
- Taking medication how and when your doctor prescribes it.
- Being physically active each day (talk with your doctor first).
- Losing weight, if necessary.
- Following the advice of your doctor and pharmacist.

## What drugs are prescribed for high blood pressure and what should I know about them?

If you have any questions or experience any side effects, always talk to your doctor or pharmacist. They're there to help you and they care about your health. To find out what drugs are covered by your plan, go to [bcbsm.com/pharmacy](http://bcbsm.com/pharmacy).

Drug name		How does my medication work?	How should I take my medication?
<p><b>ACE inhibitors</b></p> <p><b>Brand</b></p> <p>Lotensin® Capoten® Prinivil®/Zestril® Univasc® Vasotec® Monopril® Aceon® Accupril® Mavik® Altace®</p>	<p><b>Generic</b></p> <p>benazepril captopril lisinopril moexipril enalapril fosinopril perindopril quinapril trandolapril ramipril</p>	<p>These medications block a pathway that tells your body to tighten or constrict the blood vessels. This helps lower your blood pressure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take your medication daily as prescribed by your doctor.</li> <li>• You can take your medication with or without food.</li> <li>• If you miss a dose, take the missed tablet as soon as you remember, unless it is almost time to take your next dose. Do not double up on doses.</li> </ul>

**Important notes:** The medications above, called ACE inhibitors, can sometimes make you cough. The ARB medications shown below, also work in a similar way, but usually don't cause a cough as a side effect. If you experience a cough from any of the medications above, talk to your doctor about switching to those listed below. Most are equally priced at the same copayment for you.

Some people take aliskiren (Tekturna®) for managing high blood pressure. This medication works in a similar way to ACE inhibitors or ARBs but is usually more expensive because it's only available as a brand-name medication. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist to see if a generic ACE inhibitor or ARB medicine might be right for you.

Drug name		How does my medication work?	How should I take my medication?
<p><b>ARBs</b></p> <p><b>Brand</b></p> <p>Atacand® Avapro® Cozaar® Micardis® Diovan® Teveten® Benicar® Edarbi® Entresto®</p>	<p><b>Generic</b></p> <p>candesartan irbesartan losartan telmisartan valsartan eprosartan olmesartan azilsartan sacubitril/valsartan</p>	<p>These medications block a pathway that tells your body to tighten or constrict the blood vessels. This helps lower your blood pressure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take your medication daily as prescribed by your physician.</li> <li>• You can take your medication with or without food.</li> <li>• If you miss a dose, take the missed dose as soon as you remember, unless it is almost time to take your next dose. Do not double up on doses.</li> </ul>

Last updated May 2017



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