

Editorial

Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension, Diabetes, Obesity and Beneficial for Heart Health

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Editor

Heart disease is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide, and one of the major risk factors for heart disease is high blood pressure, also known as hypertension. In an effort to combat this health issue, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) developed the DASH diet, which stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension. This evidence-based dietary plan has been shown to lower blood pressure and reduce the risk of heart disease. According to study reveals the DASH diet is best for Healthy Heart¹.

The Basics of the DASH Diet: The DASH diet is a balanced and flexible eating plan that emphasizes nutrient-rich foods while reducing sodium intake. Its core principles include:

Fruits and Vegetables: The DASH diet encourages a generous intake of fruits and vegetables. Aim for 4-5 servings of each per day. These foods are rich in vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and fiber, which contribute to overall cardiovascular health.

Whole Grains: Opt for whole grains like brown rice, whole wheat bread, quinoa, and oats instead of refined grains. They provide more nutrients and fiber, helping to maintain steady blood sugar levels and lower blood pressure.

Lean Protein: Incorporate lean protein sources, such as poultry, fish, beans, lentils, and tofu, into your diet. These foods are lower in saturated fat compared to red meat and processed meats, making them heart-healthy choices.

Dairy: Include low-fat or fat-free dairy products, such as milk, yogurt, and cheese. Dairy is an excellent source of calcium and vitamin D, which are important for bone health.

Nuts, Seeds, and Legumes: These foods provide healthy fats, fiber, and protein. They can be used as snacks or added to meals for extra nutrition.

Fats: Choose healthy fats like those found in nuts, seeds, and olive oil. Limit saturated and trans fats, which can raise cholesterol levels and increase heart disease risk.

Sweets: Minimize the consumption of sweets and sugary beverages. These items are often high in empty calories and can contribute to weight gain and heart disease.

Sodium: Strictly limit sodium intake to around 2,300 milligrams per day, or even lower if you have high blood pressure. Reducing sodium helps prevent fluid retention and lower blood pressure.

Health Benefits of the DASH Diet: The DASH diet offers numerous health benefits beyond blood pressure control. Study suggests Dash diet may improve mental

well-being in addition to lowering BP. Researchers explore the effect of Dash diet.²

Blood Pressure Management: Numerous studies have demonstrated that the DASH diet effectively lowers blood pressure, making it a valuable tool for individuals with hypertension.

Heart Disease Prevention: By promoting a heart-healthy eating pattern, the DASH diet reduces the risk of heart disease, heart attacks, and strokes.

Improved Lipid Profile: The DASH diet can lower "bad" LDL cholesterol levels, further reducing heart disease risk. Dash diet reduces the uric acid levels. Researchers evaluate the effects of Ketogenic diet intervention.³

Weight Management: The emphasis on whole, nutrient-dense foods and portion control can help with weight loss and maintenance. Study compares very low Carbohydrate VS Dash diet for obese adults with hypertension and diabetes.⁴

Diabetes Management: The DASH diet's focus on whole grains and limiting added sugars can aid in blood sugar control for individuals with diabetes or those at risk of developing it.

Improved Overall Diet Quality: Following the DASH diet encourages a higher intake of essential nutrients, promoting overall health and well-being.

Foods that help lower BP: Following foods help to lower Blood Pressure;

1. Berries, Blue Berries & Strawberries contain antioxidant compounds called anthocyanin, a type of flavonoid.
2. Bananas contain potassium which can help maintaining hypertension. Other potassium rich foods include; apricots, lentils, prunes, potatoes.
3. Beets; Drinking beets juice may reduce BP because it contains nitrate.
4. Dark Chocolate; contains flavonoids may reduce BP.
5. Kiwis; can reduce systolic BP.
6. Watermelon; Contain amino acids called citrulline.
7. Oats; Contain beta glucan, which may benefit for Heart Health, including BP.
8. Leafy green vegetables; are rich in nitrates, which can manage BP and reduce cardiovascular diseases.
9. Garlics; has antibiotic and antifungal properties, many of which may be due to its main active ingredient, Allicin can reduce BP, arterial stiffness and cholesterol.

10. Fermented Foods; Rich in Probiotics and help to reduce BP.
11. Lentils & other Pulses; provide protein & fiber and may benefit the blood vessels of people with hypertension.
12. Natural Yogurt; Reduce hypertension.
13. Pomegranates; Contain antioxidants & other ingredients may help to prevent High BP & atherosclerosis.
14. Cinnamon; May reduce BP.
15. Nuts; Several studies have found that eating Nuts of various types can help the manage of Hypertension.
16. Citrus Fruits; Contain hesperidin, an antioxidant that may benefit for Heart Health.
17. Oily Fish; It may lower the risk of cardiovascular disease.
18. Tomato extract; Contain lycopene, an antioxidant that may be beneficial for Heart Health.

Some practical tips to help you implement the DASH diet into your daily life;

- Eat Potassium rich foods
- Eat calcium rich foods
- Eat Magnesium rich foods
- Reduce sodium intake
- Reduce intake of caffeine
- Avoid smoking or other addiction

- Manage stress
- Exercise regularly

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