

Understanding high
blood pressure



Week

1

Week

2

Week

3

HOW TO HAVE A HAPPY HEART

Learn to love your heart and feel better in just three weeks

Week 1: Understanding high blood pressure



IN YOUR WEEK 1 PROGRAMME YOU WILL:

FIND

Your pressure points

TRY

Techniques to read
your blood pressure

SPOT

Tips to control your
blood pressure

KEEP

A diary to monitor your
steps to a healthy heart

<https://www.greateasternlife.com/my/en>

**LIVE
GREAT**
PROGRAMME



WELLNESS TOOLS



HEALTH TIPS



MOBILE APPS




WORKSHOPS & EVENTS



EXCLUSIVE PRIVILEGES

How to keep your blood pressure healthy in 3 easy steps

WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3
 Understanding high blood pressure	Eat your way to a healthy heart	The active way to a healthy heart

Your first steps to a healthy heart – Week 1

Welcome to Week One of your 3-week Blood Pressure Management Programme! High blood pressure is common throughout the world. Around one in four people in Singapore between the ages of 30 and 69 have hypertension, while in Malaysia one in three people over 30 are affected.

Maintaining a healthy BHP (Blood Hydrostatic Pressure) can go a long way to keeping you fit. And just a few simple changes to your lifestyle can make it a whole lot easier for your heart to do its daily job. What could be more important than that?

The causes of high blood pressure are often unknown, but they have been linked to a number of factors, including:

- Being overweight, smoking and too much salt in the diet
- Stress and not getting enough sleep on a regular basis
- A family history of high blood pressure
- Adrenal and thyroid disorders and chronic kidney disease

Why not make a start with these simple steps:

- Eating well, reducing salt and caffeine.
- Limiting or cutting alcohol consumption and smoking
- Increasing physical activity
- Managing stress (click [here](#) to see our 8-week stress management programme)
- Taking medication if your doctor advises.

There are times when you may be tempted to waver from your healthy new regime. It's easier to stick to it if you make a list of some little treats you'd like.

When you reach a weight or exercise target, the prize is all yours. You'll have earned it!

Is this for me?

What is high blood pressure? Blood pressure measures how strongly your blood is pressing against the walls of your arteries (large blood vessels) as it pumps through your body. A simple test with a blood pressure monitor can determine your blood pressure. The device measures two figures: systolic pressure, the pressure of your blood when the heart beats to pump the blood out, and diastolic pressure, which is the blood pressure when your heart is resting between beats. Ideally, your blood pressure should be less than 130 over 80 (130 is the systolic pressure and 80 the diastolic pressure).

Want to know why your blood pressure matters? Download our handy guide [here](#).

FAST FACT



High blood pressure has no symptoms or warning signs, so about 30 per cent of people affected don't know they have it.

Find **your pressure points**

Before you downloaded this programme, you completed a short questionnaire to find out your lifestyle personality type. (If you haven't taken the short quiz yet, do it now [here](#). It takes just a couple of minutes and will really help you to understand your blood pressure profile.)

The best way to control your blood pressure will depend on whether your hypertension has its roots mainly in your diet, your level of physical fitness, or in your genes. Based on your results, we'll show you the best ways to manage your blood pressure according to your lifestyle personality type.



To refresh, here are the lifestyle personality types:

Genetically Modified

You are careful what you eat and try and exercise regularly. But if you have a family history of high blood pressure, or are advancing in years, you could be more prone to high blood pressure. So it's especially important that you get your blood pressure checked regularly and, if possible, start a healthy lifestyle as young as possible to help forestall any inherent risks.

Laid Back

You probably prefer a slower pace of life and leave exercise to those who enjoy getting hot and sticky running around. But keeping the heart pumping doesn't have to mean a major workout. Little, regular and constant movements will keep your blood moving. Try getting up 30 minutes early and going for a walk before the day starts – it can be both physically and mentally uplifting.

Food Fan

Food plays a big part in your life — but you can still have a passion for all that's delicious - and be healthy! Sometimes it's just about being mindful about what you eat and how much you eat so you don't put a strain on your heart — or your waistline. Try making nutritious choices at least 80 per cent of the time and enjoy the health boosting benefits and some new tasty ingredients!

Try these happy heart tips

Whether you want to avoid a family history of high blood pressure repeating itself, need to step up on exercise or want a healthier diet, here are some handy hints.



A Family Affair for The Genetically Modified

You might be generally healthy, but have some concerns about family history of high blood pressure which could put you at risk. Making a few lifestyle changes will stop it in its tracks – and even reverse it. Here are some handy hints for you to get the message across to the whole family:

- Get the whole family on board with a chart. For every kilogramme each member loses why not put money in a pot? At the end of six months enjoy a fun trip out for you and your healthy relations!
- Make family meals healthy. If you need some inspiration download the free Healthy Chef app for dishes that are rated by calories and budget – and include local goodies. Available on [iOS](#).
- Ask each family member for a suggestion – from swapping the salt in the shaker with herbs and spices to taking a Sunday walk in the park.
- If you come from a family with a history of high blood pressure, make managing your blood pressure a household affair. It's never too late to make simple changes for the better!



Moving Tips for The Laid Back

Although you prefer to live life at a relaxed pace, your heart needs regular movement to help it tick and keep blood pressure at a healthy level. It doesn't have to be time consuming or boring, try:

- Cardiovascular (or aerobic) exercise. This promotes the circulation of oxygen in the blood, which lowers blood pressure. Activities such as walking, jogging, swimming, cycling, skating and rowing are all good exercises for the cardiovascular system. Take it slowly at first and then build up from there.
- Alternate cardiovascular exercise with strength training to build strong muscles, joints and bones. Don't forget to stretch in between to improve flexibility and prevent injury.
- If you're struggling to work out alone, try group exercise to keep you motivated. You'll make new friends and are more likely to get involved in regular exercise with more people sharing the experience. Here's our comprehensive fitness guide covering everything from [aerobics](#) through to [zumba](#).



Healthy Hints for The Foodies

You love your food and following a healthy regime doesn't mean you have to skimp on taste, with a few simple changes you can still enjoy your eats! For healthier options try:

- Saying goodbye to sugary treats and salty potato crisps which are unhealthy and don't fill you up! The healthier option of fruit and vegetables take longer to digest which leave your tummy satisfied. It takes 15 to 20 minutes for your brain to register that you're full. So give it some time and you might discover you don't want that second serving, or dessert.
- Keep a list of your food and drink intake to help you find out where you can make adjustments to your diet. Perhaps you could use less sugar in your coffee or have more fruit throughout the day?
- An app that helps you work out what your food contains is a great way to help cut out those that are not as healthy. Try the calorie counter and fitness tracker by MyFitnessPal, with over 3,000,000 foods, available on [iOS](#) and [Android](#).

And remember we'll have more great eating tips in week two and handy exercise hints in week three of this programme – so don't forget to come back for more!

How to take your blood pressure

It's best to get a doctor or nurse to take your blood pressure initially so you can discuss how best to control it. Alternatively, there are easy-to-use blood pressure monitors available at the pharmacy. If possible, measure your blood pressure first thing in the morning (before you take any medication, if applicable) and again in the evening.

Here are some good tips to ensure an accurate reading:



PRESSURE POINTS

- Take the readings at the same time each day
- Empty your bladder before the test
- Don't drink coffee or have a cigarette for at least 30 minutes before the test
- Try to sit quietly for five minutes before the test
- Write down your numbers so that you can track your progress
- Blood pressure tends to rise when you're excited, nervous or active

Keep a blood pressure control diary

Use your diary to monitor what triggers the habits you'd like to change to keep your heart happy.

STEPS	1 EATING HABITS	2 EXERCISE HABITS	3 UNHEALTHY HABITS	4 SLEEPING HABITS	5 STRESS
MONDAY	BORING MORNING OFFICE MEETING – ATE A PACKET OF POTATO CRISPS TO CHEER MYSELF UP ✗				TALKED TO MY BOSS ABOUT WORK AND SHE'S ARRANGED HELP FOR ME ✓
TUESDAY			HAD A PILE OF WORK FROM YESTERDAY'S MEETING – SMOKED MORE THAN USUAL TODAY ✗		
WEDNESDAY					LOST THE CAR KEYS – PANIC ✗ TOOK DEEP BREATHS – AND SOON FOUND THEM ONCE I WAS CALMER ✓
THURSDAY	ANOTHER MEETING SCHEDULED – THIS TIME I'VE BROUGHT AN APPLE FOR MY MID–MORNING SNACK ✓				
FRIDAY			2 CIGGIES FEWER AGAIN! ✓		
SATURDAY				8 HOURS SLEEP – FEEL REFRESHED! ✓	
SUNDAY		WENT FOR A SWIM WITH THE KIDS ✓			

Don't feel too bad about the crosses at this stage – they'll help you work out whether things like boredom, stress, socialising or insufficient exercise are responsible for less-than-healthy habits. As you take more control, you'll find the ticks adding up!

Managing high blood pressure is easy when you know how!

Go to [Live Great Reads](#) for more helpful articles, features and content.



Have you a Happy Heart?

Take our fun quiz and all will be revealed



5 Ways to Lower Blood Pressure Naturally

Nature's way to a healthy heart



Eat your way to a healthy heart?

Take our quiz and find out!



Top 6 Apps to Boost Workout

Creative ways to make workouts fun



Understanding high blood pressure and managing how you deal with it is a key to a happy heart.

Next week...



We hope you found the first week useful.

Remember to keep up the great work and celebrate small triumphs. Next week, we'll look at what type of eater you are and how you can learn to eat healthier – and tasty – food.

How?

- Try ways to make meals heart healthy
- Spot your food stressors
- Keep a healthy heart eating plan



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<https://www.greateasternlife.com/my/en/personal-insurance/live-great/newsletter-subscription.html>

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