

DASH Eating Plan

Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension

Having high blood pressure, even if it is only slightly high, increases your risk of health problems. Studies have shown that your diet can lower your blood pressure. Lower blood pressures were seen within two weeks of starting dietary changes.

The DASH eating plan is a diet that:

- is low in saturated fat.
- is low in cholesterol.
- is low in total fat.
- includes fruits and vegetables.
- includes low-fat dairy products.
- includes whole-grain products.
- includes fish, poultry, and nuts.

If you reduce your dietary sodium and salt intake, the impact on lowering your blood pressure is even greater.

The food groups for the DASH eating plan are:



- **Grain and grain products—6 servings a day**

Whole-wheat bread, English muffin, pita bread, bagel, cereals, grits, oatmeal, crackers, unsalted pretzels, and popcorn

One serving is equal to 1 slice of bread, 1 ounce of dry cereal, or ½ cup of cooked rice, pasta, or cereal.

- **Vegetables—3 to 4 servings a day**

Tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, green peas, squash, broccoli, turnip greens, collards, kale, spinach, artichokes, green beans, lima beans, and sweet potatoes

One serving is equal to 1 cup of raw vegetable, ½ cup of cooked vegetable, or 6 ounces of vegetable juice.



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- **Fruits—4 servings a day**

Apricots, bananas, dates, grapes, oranges, orange juice, grapefruit, grapefruit juice, mangoes, melons, peaches, pineapples, prunes, raisins, strawberries, and tangerines

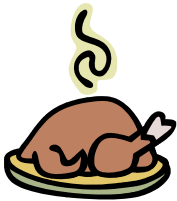
One serving is equal to 6 ounces of juice, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of dried fruit, or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fresh, frozen, or canned fruit.



- **Low-fat or fat-free dairy foods—2 to 3 servings a day**

Fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free or low-fat buttermilk, fat-free or low-fat regular or frozen yogurt, and low-fat or fat-free cheese

One serving is equal to 8 ounces of milk, 1 cup of yogurt, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces of cheese.



- **Meats, poultry, and fish—1 to 2 servings a day**

Select lean meats. Trim away any visible fat. Broil, roast, or boil instead of frying. Remove skin from poultry.

One serving is equal to 3 ounces of cooked meat, poultry, or fish.

- **Nuts, seeds, and dry beans—3 servings a week**

Almonds, filberts, mixed nuts, peanuts, walnuts, sunflower seeds, kidney beans, and lentils

One serving is equal to $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of nuts, 2 tablespoons of seeds, or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of cooked dry beans.

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- **Fats and oils—2 servings a day**

Soft margarine, low-fat mayonnaise, light salad dressing, and vegetable oil (such as olive, corn, canola, or safflower oils)

One serving is equal to 1 teaspoon of soft margarine, 1 tablespoon of low-fat mayonnaise, 2 tablespoons of light salad dressing, or 1 teaspoon of vegetable oil.

The number of servings for each of the foods in the DASH plan varies depending on your needs. The servings listed are based on 1,600 calories a day. Talk to your primary care provider about what your dietary needs are.



Sodium and Salt

Most of the sodium and salt that you eat are in processed foods. The foods in the DASH eating plan are naturally lower in sodium. The DASH eating plan makes it easier for you to consume less salt and sodium. Still, it is important for you to try to limit your sodium.

The steps to control your blood pressure include:

- maintaining a healthy weight.
- being physically active.
- following a healthy eating plan.
- taking prescribed medicines for hypertension as directed.

To learn more, call the Upper Peninsula Health Plan at 1-888-904-7526. Ask for Clinical Services.