



Blood Pressure Treatments

Quick Overview

Things to Know

- Most people need 2 or more medicines
 - Lifestyle changes can help you take less medicine
 - Medicine + lifestyle changes lower blood pressure more than alone
 - Even lowering your systolic blood pressure (top number) by 5 can protect you
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Lifestyle Only

- Benefits:**
- Lowers blood pressure naturally
 - Better overall health

- Challenges:**
- Takes longer to see results
 - Results vary based on your genes, age, other health conditions, etc.
 - Requires consistent long-term commitment
 - May not lower blood pressure enough

- Risks:**
- Longer time with high blood pressure
 - Continued risk of health problems from high blood pressure:
 - Brain: stroke risk
 - Heart: heart attack risk
 - Kidneys: chronic kidney disease risk
 - Harder to reverse damage once it happens
 - May miss the window for prevention



ACE Inhibitors

Ends in “-pril”

(lisinopril, ramipril, enalapril, perindopril, benazepril, captopril, quinapril)

Benefits:

- Help get rid of extra fluid in your body
- Relaxes your blood vessels
- Protects your heart from damage
- Can help protect your kidneys

Possible Side Effects:

Dry Cough (No mucus)

- Tell your doctor - they can switch you to another medicine
- The cough usually goes away with changing the medicine

Feeling Dizzy

- Tell your doctor - they may want to change the dose
- Stand up slowly
- Make sure to drink enough water (check with your doctor)
- Ask your doctor about taking the medicine at night

Kidney Changes

- Regular blood tests catch changes early
- Changing the medicine will fix most changes

Warnings: Get Emergency Help if You Have:

- Signs of allergic reaction
 - Face or mouth swelling
 - Trouble breathing
 - Bad stomach pain, diarrhea, or throwing up
- Signs of pancreas problems:
 - Bad stomach pain
 - Trouble eating
 - Feeling sick to your stomach



ARBs

Ends in “-sartan”

(losartan, olmesartan, candesartan, valsartan, irbesartan, telmisartan, azilsartan medoxomil)

Benefits:

- Works like ACE inhibitors but in a slightly different way
- Relaxes your blood vessels
- Protects your heart from damage
- Can help protect your kidneys
- Often used when people can't take ACE inhibitors

Possible Side Effects:

Feeling Dizzy

- Tell your doctor - they may want to change the dose
- Stand up slowly
- Make sure to drink enough water (check with your doctor)
- Ask your doctor about taking the medicine at night

Kidney Changes

- Regular blood tests catch changes early
- Changing the medicine will fix most changes



Calcium Channel Blockers

Most end in "-dipine":

(Amlodipine, felopidine, nifedipine, nisoldipine, nimodipine, etc.)

Not ending in "-dipine": verapamil, diltiazem

Benefits:

- Relaxes your blood vessels
- Some help heart rhythm
- Some are safe during pregnancy

Possible Side Effects:

Ankle Swelling

- Elevate feet when resting
- Stay active by walking
- Tell your doctor, they might suggest:
 - Changing your dose or medicine
 - Adding an ACE inhibitor or ARB to stop the swelling

Headache/Flushing

- Tell your doctor, they:
 - Might suggest changing the dose or when you take it
 - Can let you know if it might get better with time

Constipation

- Eat more fiber-rich foods
- Stay active by walking
- Talk to your doctor - they might suggest changing the dose or trying a different medicine

Gum Problems (Gingival Hyperplasia):

- Brush teeth at least twice daily
- Floss at least once a day
- See your dentist regularly
- Tell your dentist about this medicine
- Tell your doctor - they may suggest a different medication



Diuretics (Water Pills)

Usually a thiazide diuretic
(Hydrochlorothizide, chlorthalidone, indapamide, metolazone, etc.)

- Benefits:**
- Removes extra water and salt from your body
 - Lowers the amount of fluid your heart has to pump
 - Often works well with other blood pressure medicines
 - Some types safe in pregnancy

Possible Side Effects:

More Bathroom Trips:

- Take the medicine in the morning
- Eat less salt - Can help the medicine work better, so you need less
- Ask your doctor for tips

Electrolyte or Blood Sugar Changes:

- Regular blood tests catch changes early
- Your doctor might suggest supplements or change your medicine

Feeling Dizzy

- Tell your doctor - they may want to change the dose
- Stand up slowly
- Make sure to drink enough water (check with your doctor)

Feeling thirsty/dehydrated:

- Sip water throughout the day
- Ask your doctor how much water is right for you
- Tell your doctor if it's not getting better

Sleep problems:

- Take medicine in the morning
- Keep a regular sleep schedule
- Talk to your doctor - They might suggest a different medication or timing