

# Hypertension: Importance of early detection and management for a healthy life.

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## Introduction

Hypertension, also known as high blood pressure, is a common medical condition that affects millions of people worldwide. It is a condition in which the force of blood against the walls of the arteries is too high, which can lead to serious health complications. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), hypertension is responsible for approximately 9.4 million deaths each year worldwide. It is a major risk factor for heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, and other health problems [1].

## Causes of hypertension

There are two types of hypertension: primary (essential) hypertension and secondary hypertension. Primary hypertension is the most common type and does not have a specific cause. It develops gradually over time and is usually the result of a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Secondary hypertension is caused by an underlying medical condition, such as kidney disease or thyroid problems [2].

## Risk factors for hypertension

There are several risk factors for hypertension, including:

**Age:** Hypertension is more common in people over the age of 60.

**Family history:** If your parents or other close relatives have hypertension, you may be more likely to develop it.

**Race:** Hypertension is more common in people of African descent.

**Obesity:** Being overweight or obese increases your risk of hypertension.

**Sedentary lifestyle:** Lack of physical activity can lead to hypertension.

**Smoking:** Smoking damages the blood vessels and increases the risk of hypertension.

## Symptoms of hypertension

Hypertension is often called the "silent killer" because it usually does not cause any symptoms. Many people with hypertension are not aware that they have it until it is detected during a routine medical check-up. However, some people

may experience symptoms such as headaches, dizziness, blurred vision, and shortness of breath [3].

## Diagnosis of hypertension

Hypertension is diagnosed by measuring blood pressure. Blood pressure is measured using a device called a sphygmomanometer, which consists of a cuff that is wrapped around the upper arm and a gauge that measures the pressure. Blood pressure is measured in millimeters of mercury (mmHg) and is recorded as two numbers: systolic pressure (the top number) and diastolic pressure (the bottom number). A blood pressure reading of 120/80 mmHg is considered normal. A reading between 120/80 mmHg and 139/89 mmHg is considered prehypertension. A reading of 140/90 mmHg or higher is considered hypertension.

## Treatment of hypertension

The treatment of hypertension usually involves a combination of lifestyle changes and medications. Lifestyle changes include:

1. Eating a healthy diet that is low in salt and saturated fats.
2. Maintaining a healthy weight.
3. Exercising regularly.
4. Quitting smoking.
5. Limiting alcohol consumption.

Medications used to treat hypertension include: Angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors, Angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs), Calcium channel blockers, Diuretics, Beta-blockers. It is important to follow your doctor's advice when taking medication for hypertension, as some medications can have side effects. Hypertension is a serious medical condition that can lead to a range of health problems. It is important to have your blood pressure checked regularly, especially if you have risk factors for hypertension. If you are diagnosed with hypertension, it is important to work with your doctor to develop a treatment plan that includes lifestyle changes and medications. By managing hypertension, you can reduce your risk of serious health problems and improve your overall health and well-being [4].

## Prevention of hypertension

Preventing hypertension is much easier than treating it. Making healthy lifestyle choices can help prevent hypertension or

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reduce its severity. Some tips for preventing hypertension include:

**Eating a healthy diet:** A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products can help prevent hypertension. It is also important to limit salt, saturated fats, and added sugars in your diet.

**Maintaining a healthy weight:** Being overweight or obese increases your risk of hypertension. Losing weight and maintaining a healthy weight can help prevent hypertension.

**Exercising regularly:** Physical activity can help lower your blood pressure and reduce your risk of hypertension. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise most days of the week.

**Limiting alcohol consumption:** Drinking too much alcohol can raise your blood pressure. It is important to limit your alcohol consumption to no more than one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men.

**Quitting smoking:** Smoking damages the blood vessels and increases your risk of hypertension. Quitting smoking can help prevent hypertension and improve your overall health [5].

## Conclusion

Hypertension is a common medical condition that affects millions of people worldwide. It is a serious health problem that can lead to a range of complications, including heart

disease, stroke, kidney disease, and eye damage. Fortunately, hypertension can be prevented and managed through healthy lifestyle choices and medications. It is important to have your blood pressure checked regularly and to work with your doctor to manage hypertension if you are diagnosed with it. By managing hypertension, you can reduce your risk of serious health problems and improve your overall health and well-being.

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