

# Understanding hypertension: Causes, symptoms, and treatment.

Yeong Young Lee\*

Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health, Ajou University School of Medicine, Gyeonggi-do, Republic of Korea

## Introduction

Hypertension, commonly known as high blood pressure, is a prevalent and potentially serious 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 consistently too high. If left untreated or unmanaged, hypertension can lead to various complications, including heart disease, stroke, kidney damage, and other organ issues. The exact causes of hypertension can be multifactorial and often interlinked. Some of the most common factors that contribute to high blood pressure include: [1].

**Lifestyle choices:** Unhealthy habits such as a sedentary lifestyle, excessive alcohol consumption, smoking, and a diet high in salt and saturated fats can significantly increase the risk of hypertension. **Genetics:** Family history plays a significant role in determining an individual's susceptibility to hypertension. If your parents or close relatives have high blood pressure, you may be at a higher risk. **Age:** As people age, the risk of hypertension tends to increase. This is primarily due to the natural stiffening and narrowing of arteries over time. **Obesity:** Being overweight or obese puts additional strain on the cardiovascular system, leading to increased blood pressure [2].

Hypertension is often referred to as the "silent killer" because it usually does not cause noticeable symptoms in its early stages. As a result, many individuals may remain unaware of their high blood pressure until they undergo routine medical checkups. However, as the condition progresses or becomes severe, some individuals may experience symptoms such as: **Headaches:** Frequent or severe headaches may be a sign of hypertension, especially if they are accompanied by other symptoms. **Fatigue or confusion:** Insufficient blood flow to the brain due to high blood pressure can cause feelings of fatigue or confusion. **Vision problems:** Blurred or impaired vision may occur due to strain on the blood vessels in the eyes [3].

**Chest pain:** Hypertension can strain the heart, leading to chest discomfort or pain. **Irregular heartbeat:** High blood pressure can disrupt the normal rhythm of the heart. It is essential to remember that these symptoms can be caused by various other health conditions, so a proper diagnosis by a healthcare professional is crucial. Managing hypertension typically involves a combination of lifestyle changes, medications, and regular monitoring. Here are some key components of

hypertension treatment: **Lifestyle modifications:** Adopting a healthy lifestyle can significantly help in controlling blood pressure. This includes regular exercise, maintaining a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins, limiting alcohol consumption, quitting smoking, and reducing salt intake [4].

**Medications:** There are various antihypertensive medications available, including diuretics, ACE inhibitors, beta-blockers, calcium channel blockers, and angiotensin II receptor blockers. The choice of medication depends on the individual's specific health condition and response to treatment. **Regular monitoring:** It is crucial to monitor blood pressure regularly, either at home or during doctor visits, to ensure that it stays within a healthy range. **Stress management:** Adopting stress-reduction techniques such as meditation, yoga, or relaxation exercises can help in managing hypertension. **Weight management:** For individuals who are overweight or obese, losing even a modest amount of weight can have a positive impact on blood pressure [5].

## Conclusion

Hypertension is a widespread condition with severe health implications if not appropriately managed. Understanding the causes, symptoms, and treatment options for hypertension is essential for early detection and proactive care. By adopting a healthy lifestyle, working closely with healthcare professionals, and staying committed to regular monitoring, individuals can take control of their blood pressure and reduce the risk of associated complications. Remember, knowledge is power when it comes to hypertension, and with the right approach, we can make strides towards a healthier and more fulfilling life.

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\*Correspondence to: Yeong Young Lee, Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health, Ajou University School of Medicine, Gyeonggi-do, Republic of Korea, E-mail: solee@ajou.ac.kr

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