HUNGER AND HEALTH

COALITION

I was Just Diagnosed with Hypertension, Now What?...

Hypertension can lead to severe health complications and increase the risk of heart disease, stroke, and sometimes death.

What is Hypertension?

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, is a condition where the force of blood against the artery wall is too high. Blood pressure is written as two numbers. The first (systolic) number represents the pressure in blood vessels when the heart contracts or beats. The second (diastolic) number represents the pressure in the vessels when the heart rests between beats. Usually hypertension is defined as a blood pressure above 140/90.

Tips for those Newly Diagnosed with Hypertension:

Reduce Salt Intake

Salt makes your body hold onto water. If you eat too much, the extra water in your blood means there is extra pressure on your blood vessel walls, raising your blood pressure. Watch your salt intake and avoid processed foods, which are usually high in sodium.

Modify your Diet

Consider following the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) eating plan to help control your blood pressure. It emphasizes vegetables, fruits and whole grains. It also includes fat-free or low-fat dairy, fish, poultry, beans, nuts and vegetable oil and other foods in limited amounts.

Exercise Regularly

For those who have hypertension, regular physical activity can bring blood pressure down to safer levels. You should try to get at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity a week. Aim for at least 30 minutes of aerobic activity most days of the week. If you're not used to exercising, work slowly toward this goal.

Limit Alcohol and Caffeine Intake

Drinking too much alcohol can raise blood pressure to unhealthy levels. Try limiting alcohol intake to no more than one to two drinks per day for men and one drink per day for women.
Caffeine should be consumed in moderation as well. Limit coffee consumption to one or two cups per day.