

MCCMH Educational Handout to Promote Awareness and the Early Detection of Hypertension

This information is to be used as educational material only, to inform persons served and their guardians on the importance of maintaining hypertension screenings up to date as published by the most current standard preventive care recommendations. The United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) suggests annual screening for hypertension in adults 40 years or older and for adults at increased risk for hypertension (such as African Americans, persons with high-normal blood pressure, or persons who are overweight or obese). Screening less frequently (i.e., every 3 to 5 years) is appropriate for adults aged 18 to 39 years not at increased risk for hypertension and with a prior normal blood pressure reading. Follow the link for more information on the most recent USPSTF Guidelines <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/hypertension-in-adults-screening>

***It is ultimately to the authority of a health care provider to advise and determine what type of treatment/screening schedule the individual would need to follow based on having a full understanding of their medical history and presentation.

Who is at high risk?

High blood pressure usually develops over time. It can happen because of unhealthy lifestyle choices, such as not getting enough regular physical activity, smoking or drinking. Certain health conditions, such as diabetes and obesity, can also increase the risk for developing high blood pressure. Family history of hypertension or other cardiac illnesses. High blood pressure can also happen during pregnancy.

Per the CDC, other aspects to consider as noted in this link https://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/risk_factors.htm

- Age- the risk for high blood pressure increases with age.
- Sex -women are as likely as men to develop high blood pressure at some point during their lives.
- Race or ethnicity- African Americans tend to develop high blood pressure more often than Caucasian, Hispanics, Asians, Pacific Islanders, American Indians, or Alaska Natives do. It is also noted that African American can develop it earlier in their lives than Caucasians.

In children and adults, many medications can raise blood pressure, among them are oral contraceptives, central nervous system stimulants and corticosteroids, as can some over-the counter nasal decongestants and cold medicines, herbal and nutritional supplements, dietary products and recreational drugs. In addition, environmental exposure to lead, cadmium, mercury or phthalates may raise blood pressure. To learn more follow this link <https://www.chop.edu/conditions-diseases/hypertension>

Refer to <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/140/3/e20171904> for the most up to date guidelines in children published by the American Academy of Pediatrics or talk to your child/.children's pediatrician!

How to reduce my risk?

- Keep up with physical exams as recommended by your Primary Care doctor.
- Improve diet habits by reducing salt intake and fried foods. Add a variety of foods rich in potassium, fiber, and protein and avoid saturated fat.
- Add exercise as part of a weekly routine, at least 150 minutes of physical activity each week has been recommended by the experts (about 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week).
- Keep a healthy weight
- Comply with medication when it has been recommended by a physician.
- Stop Smoking

- Limit amount of alcohol intake
- Get restful sleep and;
- Manage stress

What Are the Symptoms? Be vigilant ...hypertension is called the “silent killer” because in many cases offers no warning signs. However, some possible symptoms you may experience when experiencing high blood pressure include but are not limited to:

- Recurrent headaches
- Seizures
- Vomiting
- Chest pains
- Fast, pounding or fluttering heart beat (palpitations) and/or shortness of breath.

**High blood pressure in younger children is often related to other health conditions such as heart defects, kidney disease, genetic conditions or hormonal disorders. Older children especially those who are overweight are more likely to have primary hypertension. So make sure you follow up consistently with your kid’s pediatrician.
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/high-blood-pressure/symptoms-causes/syc-20373410>

How Is Hypertension Treated?

Treatment can include lifestyle changes, medication/s, or both. Selection of treatment can vary depending on severity of blood pressure elevation, age, and other risk factors.

Talk to your Doctor:

- Do not hesitate to speak to your doctor about your symptoms at any age.
- Talk with your doctor about when to begin gaining control over your blood pressure
- Your doctor may recommend more frequent or earlier screening based on some of your risk factors such as family history.

To learn more go to these helpful educational links:

<https://phgkb.cdc.gov/FHH/html/index.html>

https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/public/heart/new_dash.pdf