



We provide trusted, compassionate and expert health care to our community members to improve their health, independence and dignity.

Cornerstone VNA is an independent nonprofit organization. Our programs include:

## HOME CARE

Advanced care by an interdisciplinary team for patients with complex medical issues

## HOSPICE CARE

End-of-life care including physical, emotional and spiritual comfort

## PALLIATIVE CARE

Specialized care and symptom management for people with chronic illnesses

## LIFE CARE

Private duty program to help people “age in place”

## COMMUNITY CARE

Community outreach, wellness clinics, educational programs, and caregiver support

To learn more about our health care programs call 800-691-1133 or visit our website, [cornerstonevna.org](http://cornerstonevna.org).

Main Office: 178 Farmington Road, Rochester, NH 03867



## LEARN HOW TO MANAGE YOUR CONDITION

Disease Process and Risk Factors

The Role of Medication, Diet, and Exercise

Steps YOU Can Take to Improve Your Health

# 603-332-1133



## Managing Your Condition

### My Personal Plan:

I would like to work on the following areas to manage my mood:

- Strive for a healthy BMI
- Taking my medications
- Eating a heart healthy diet
- Regular exercise 30 mins per day
- Limit alcohol
- Decrease dietary sodium to 2300mg or less per day
- Record my blood pressures
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### My Personal Plan:

My GOAL for the next month is:

Possible problems in meeting my goal:

## Zone Tool: Blood Pressure Management

<b>G R E E N  Z O N E</b>	<p><b>ALL CLEAR (GOAL)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normal blood pressure usually does <b>NOT</b> have any symptoms</li> <li>• No headaches or lightheadedness or nose bleeds, etc.</li> <li>• Blood pressure is within goal                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systolic parameter (top number) range _____</li> <li>• Diastolic parameter (bottom number) range _____</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Doing Great!</b> Your symptoms are under control</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take medicines as ordered</li> <li>• Check blood pressure, if able</li> <li>• Keep all doctor appointments</li> <li>• Exercise</li> <li>• Follow health eating habits</li> <li>• Keep exercising</li> </ul>
<b>Y E L L O W  Z O N E</b>	<p><b>WARNING</b> If you have <u>any</u> of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated blood pressures outside of your normal range low or high</li> <li>• Ringing in the ears</li> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Lightheadedness/dizziness when you change positions lying to sitting to standing</li> <li>• Sudden loss of balance when you stand or start walking</li> </ul>	<p><b>Act Today!</b> You may need your medicines changed</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stop vigorous exercise</li> <li>• Change positions slowly. Stand for 1 minute before walking</li> <li>• <b>Call your home health nurse:</b> _____</li> <li>• <b>Or call your doctor:</b> _____</li> </ul>
<b>R E D  Z O N E</b>	<p><b>EMERGENCY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severe headache or nosebleed</li> <li>• Heart racing and dizziness</li> <li>• Severe anxiety</li> <li>• Severe trouble breathing</li> <li>• Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg</li> <li>• Sudden confusion, trouble speaking, or understanding</li> <li>• Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes</li> <li>• Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination</li> <li>• Fall</li> </ul>	<p><b>Act NOW!</b> You need to be seen by a doctor <u>right away!</u></p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p><b>Call your doctor:</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Or call 911 or go to the Emergency Department.</b></p>





## Understanding Low Blood Pressure

Chronic low blood pressure with no symptoms is almost never serious. But health problems can occur when blood pressure drops suddenly and the brain is deprived of an adequate blood supply. This can lead to dizziness or lightheadedness.

### Types of hypotension

- Hypotension is divided into several different classifications according to when your blood pressure drops.

### Orthostatic or Postural

- Orthostatic hypotension is the drop in blood pressure that occurs when you transition from sitting or lying down to standing.
- As the body adjusts to the position change there may be a brief period of dizziness. This is what some people refer to as “seeing stars” when they get up.

### Postprandial

- Postprandial hypotension is a drop in blood pressure that occurs right after eating. It is a type of orthostatic hypotension. Older adults, especially those with Parkinson’s disease, are more likely to develop postprandial hypotension.

### Neurally mediated

- Neurally mediated hypotension happens after you stand for a long time. Children experience this form of hypotension more often than adults. Emotionally upsetting events can also cause this drop in blood pressure.

### Severe

- Severe hypotension is related to shock. Shock occurs when your organs do not get the blood and oxygen they need to function properly. Severe hypotension can be life-threatening if not treated promptly.

## Nutrition General Guidelines

Heart Healthy Diet 8 Steps:

1. Control your portion sizes
2. Eat more fruits and vegetables: fresh or frozen, low-sodium, canned fruit packed in juice or water
3. Select whole grains
4. Limit unhealthy fats and choose healthy fats: olive oil, canola oil, vegetable & nut oils, nuts, seeds, avocados
5. Choose low-fat protein sources: lean meat, poultry & fish, eggs, low fat dairy, legumes
6. Reduce the sodium in your food: Health adults have no more than 2,300mg per day (1tsp of salt), most adults ideally should have no more than 1500mg per day
7. Plan ahead: Create daily menus
8. Allow yourself an occasional treat



## Medication Options High Blood Pressure

- ❑ Central agonists: Decrease the blood vessels ability to tense up or contract
  - ◆ Aldomet, catapres, Wytensin, Tenex
  - ⇒ Noted side effects: Aldomet may produce a greater drop in blood pressure when you're standing or walking, drowsiness or sluggishness or dryness of mouth
  - ⇒ Noted side effects: Catapres, Wytensin or Tenex may produce severe dryness of the mouth, constipation or drowsiness. **DON'T** stop any of these drugs suddenly because your blood pressure may rise quickly to dangerously high levels
- ❑ Vasodilators: Blood vessel dilators, or vasodilators, can cause the muscle in the walls of the blood vessels (especially the arterioles) to relax, allowing the vessel to dilate (widen). This allows blood to flow through better.
  - ◆ Apresoline, Loniten
  - ⇒ **Special Instructions:** Check blood pressure prior to taking vasodilators. Hold if systolic is less than 100 (contact your health care provider)
  - ⇒ Noted side effects: Hydralazine (Apresoline)\* may cause headaches, swelling around the eyes, heart palpitations or aches and pains in the joints. Usually none of these symptoms are severe, and most will go away after a few weeks of treatment. This drug isn't usually used by itself.
  - ⇒ Minoxidil (Loniten)\* is a potent drug that's usually used only in resistant cases of severe high blood pressure. It may cause fluid retention (marked weight gain) or excessive hair growth.

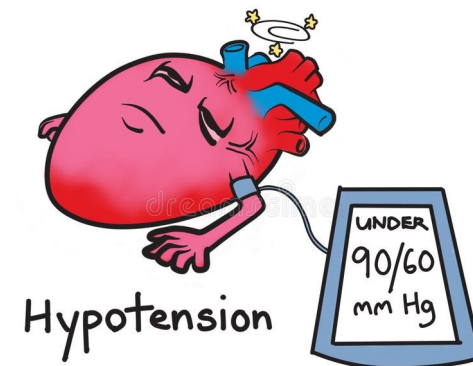
## Understanding Low Blood Pressure

### Other Underlying Causes:

- Prolonged bed rest
- Decrease in blood volume
- Certain medications: diuretics (water pills) and other drugs that treat hypertension, heart medications such as beta blockers; drugs for Parkinson's disease; tricyclic antidepressants; narcotics and alcohol. Other over-the counter drugs
- Heart problems: Abnormally low hear rate (bradycardia), problems with heart valves, heart attack and heart failure
- Nutritional deficiencies: A lack of vitamins B-12 and folic acid can cause anemia which can lead to low blood pressure

### Symptoms I have are:

- dizziness
- lightheadedness
- nausea
- fainting
- blurred or fading vision
- cold/clammy/pale skin
- lack of concentration
- Fatigue
- Other:**



## Low Blood Pressure Continued

### What to do:

- Take your time when changing position, like getting up out of a chair or up off the floor
- Hold onto something when you stand up
- Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water
- Exercise gently before getting up, by moving feet up and down or marching in place after standing
- Consider modifying workouts to group together standing exercises, seated exercises and supine (laying down) exercises
- Allow sufficient time between exercises for careful movement from seated to standing or standing to laying down
- Work out in supine or seated positions, like swimming or recumbent bicycling
- Maintain a good salt intake, either through sodium supplements or drinks containing electrolytes as recommended by your Provider
- Stay hydrated
- In some cases, the legs may be fitted for elastic stockings that can help maintain blood pressure when you stand as prescribed by your health care provider

### What makes Orthostatic hypotension worse?

- Getting overheated; in a warm room, after a hot bath or on a sunny day
- Illnesses such as colds or infections, especially if you need to rest in bed
- Anxiety and panic, especially if it changes your breathing pattern
- Medication – some medication can worsen Postural Hypotension, in particular some Parkinson's medications

## Medication Options High Blood Pressure

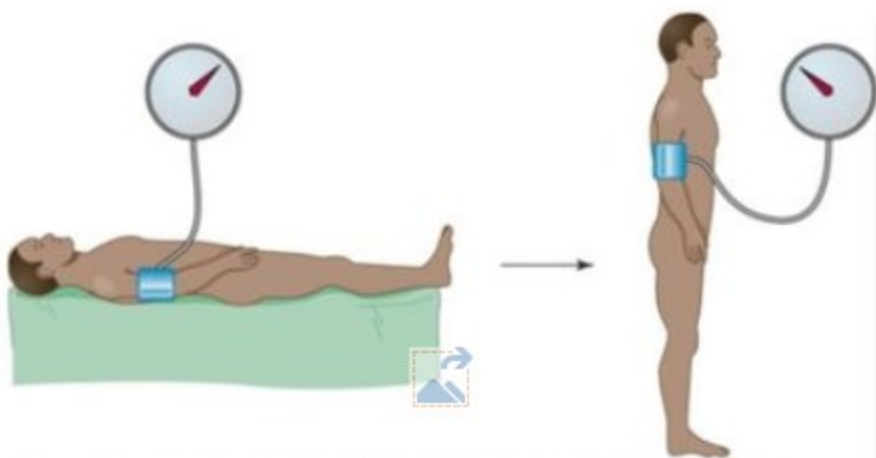
- ❑ Diuretics: help get rid of excess sodium (salt) and water
  - ◆ Lasix, Bumex, Diuril, Hygroton, Aldactone, Midamar
  - ⇒ Noted side effects: May decrease your body's supply of the mineral potassium
- ❑ Beta-blockers: Reduce heart rate, the hearts workload and output
  - ◆ Atenolol, Carrol, Lopressor, Toprol-XL, Inderal, Betapace
  - ⇒ Noted side effects: slow heartbeat, cold hands and feet, insomnia
- ❑ ACE inhibitors: helps relax the blood vessels and open up
  - ◆ Lotensin, Vasotec, Accupril, Altace, Zestril or Prinivel
  - ⇒ Noted side effects: skin rash, loss of taste, chronic dry cough
- ❑ Angiotension II receptor blockers (ARBs): block the receptors so the angiotensin fails to constrict the blood vessel. This means blood vessels stay open and blood pressure is reduced.
  - ◆ Atacand, Avapro, Cozaar, Diovan
  - ⇒ Noted side effects: may cause occasional dizziness
- ❑ Calcium channel blockers: Relaxes and opens up narrowed blood vessels, reduces heart rate and lowers blood pressure
  - ◆ Norvasc or Lotrel, Vasacor, Cardizem, Verelan, Calan SR
  - ⇒ Noted side effects: palpitations, swollen ankles, constipation dizziness
- ❑ Alpha blockers: relax the muscle tone of the vascular walls
  - ◆ Cardura, Minipress, Hytrin
  - ⇒ Noted side effects: fast heart rate, dizziness, a drop in blood pressure when you stand up





## Talking Your Blood Pressure (Orthostatic Guidelines)

- Empty your bladder.
- Don't smoke, exercise, drink caffeinated beverages or alcohol within 30 mins of measurement
- Have the patient rest for 5 minutes in the lying position.
- Obtain your blood pressure and pulse
- Stand upright for a full minute.
  - ◆ If you are not able to stand upright, sit for a full minute.
- Check your blood pressure and pulse, using the same arm and same equipment as you did in the lying position.
- Wait 3 minutes and then check the blood pressure and pulse again (remain standing).
- If you become symptomatic at any point while standing, you need to sit or return back to a lying position.
- Record your readings
- Provider recommends you take orthostatic



readings: \_\_\_\_\_ or if you are symptomatic \_\_\_\_\_

## Taking Your Blood Pressure (General Guidelines)

- Don't smoke, exercise, drink caffeinated beverages or alcohol within 30 mins of measurement
- Rest in a chair for at least 5 minutes with your left arm resting comfortably on a flat surface at heart level, sit calmly and **DON'T** talk
- Make sure you're relaxed, Sit in a chair with your feet flat on the floor with your back straight and supported
- Every time you measure take 3 readings, separated by 1 minute and record all results
- Use properly calibrated and validated instruments, check the cuff size and fit
- Try to take readings early morning and evening

