

# UNDER PRESSURE

February 2011

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE NEWS YOU CAN USE



## Improving Control of Your Blood Pressure – Step Two

In January we introduced the first step toward improving your blood pressure control: exercise. Are you maintaining your physical activity and achieving your goals? Being active each day should start to become a healthy habit.

The second step toward improving blood pressure control is food choices. The DASH plan – Dietary Approach to Stop Hypertension – lowers blood pressure. The DASH way of eating focuses on:

- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Whole grains
- Lean meats and less red meat
- Low-fat or fat-free milk and dairy products
- Less sodium or salt



On average, Americans consume 3,436 mg of sodium or 1½ teaspoons of salt a day! While the American Heart Association recommends we eat less than 1,500 mg of sodium, or a little more than ½ teaspoon of salt per day, the DASH plan suggests no more than 2,300 mg of sodium, or one teaspoon a day. Slowly decrease the amount of salt you use and you won't miss it!

Be aware of hidden sources of sodium found in fast foods, soups, canned foods, deli meats, snack foods, condiments, dressings and prepared mixes. Reading food labels is the best way to know how much sodium is in the foods you eat regularly.

The following are common terms found on food labels and what they mean:

- Sodium-free = less than 5 mg of sodium per serving
- Very low sodium = 35 mg or less of sodium per serving
- Reduced sodium = usual sodium in the product is reduced by 25 percent
- Unsalted, no salt added or without added salt = no added salt but still contains the sodium that occurs naturally in the food

You can do this! Remember – you're worth it! Learn more from the National Institutes of Health about the DASH eating plan and high blood pressure at: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp/index.html>



## Important Information for Women

Did you know heart disease is the #1 killer of women? Learn more about women's heart health from Go Red for Women: <http://www.goredforwomen.org/HeartHealthyTools.aspx>

## Question for Your Health Care Team

- What is the recommended daily salt intake for me?



## On the Menu: No Salt Spice Mix

- |                          |                                  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2 teaspoons onion powder | 1 teaspoon thyme                 |
| 1 teaspoon garlic powder | 1 teaspoon marjoram              |
| 2 teaspoons basil        | 1 teaspoon black or white pepper |
| 1 teaspoon oregano       | ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper        |

Mix and store the above ingredients in an airtight container (a snack size zip storage bag works well) and use freely in cooking to enhance flavor without salt. For chicken or turkey, use rosemary in place of cayenne pepper.

When roasting meat or poultry, apply a layer of finely minced onions, carrots, green pepper and celery on top of meat before roasting. The layer of minced vegetables provides flavor and keeps the meat/poultry moist.

## Exercise Your Way to Spring

With mountains of snow piling up outside, it may be time to continue your exercise routine indoors. Several Central Massachusetts malls have walking hours for those extreme weather days:

- **Auburn Mall** – 385 Southbridge Street, Auburn, MA  
Doors open for mall walkers at 7:30 am, Monday through Saturday, and at 10 am on Sunday.
- **Greendale Mall** – 7 Neponset Street, Worcester, MA  
To assist early walkers, two mall entrances open Monday through Saturday at 8 am and Sunday at 10 am.
- **Natick Collection** – 1245 Worcester Street, Natick, MA  
Walkers may enter through any mall entrance door after 7 am, Monday through Saturday, and after 8:30 am on Sunday. Walkers need to stop by the Customer Service Center on the Lower Level near Nordstrom's to complete a mall walker waiver form.
- **Solomon Pond Mall** – 601 Donald Lynch Boulevard, Marlborough, MA  
To make it easy for early walkers, two mall entrances open Monday through Saturday at 8 am and Sunday at 9 am.



## Web Sources for Hypertension Information

National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute  
[www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp/](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp/)

MedlinePlus, US National Library of Medicine  
[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/highbloodpressure.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/highbloodpressure.html)

American Heart Association  
[www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)

American Society of Hypertension  
[www.ash-us.org/patient\\_edu/bp\\_booklet.html](http://www.ash-us.org/patient_edu/bp_booklet.html)

## Emergency Food Programs

**Worcester County Food Bank**

508-842-3663

[www.foodbank.org](http://www.foodbank.org)

**Project Bread**

800-645-8333

[www.projectbread.org](http://www.projectbread.org)

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