

Mind Your Risks[®]

The Connection Between High Blood Pressure, Stroke, and Dementia



Keep blood pressure in the normal range — this is the single most important way to Mind Your Risks[®]



If you smoke — quit



Keep cholesterol in a healthy range



If you have diabetes, control your blood sugar



Keep a healthy weight



Eat healthy foods



Exercise regularly



Ask your doctor if daily low-dose aspirin is right for you



Why is controlling my blood pressure so important?

- High blood pressure can lead to stroke, heart attack, and even dementia.
- Keeping your blood pressure in a safe range can reduce your risk for all three.

How does high blood pressure lead to dementia?

- If your blood pressure stays high, over time it can damage blood vessels in the brain.
- These damaged blood vessels can cause strokes which reduce oxygen to the brain and may lead to dementia.

How do I keep my blood pressure normal?

- Talk to your doctor about your risk for stroke, heart disease, and dementia.
- Make a plan with your doctor to control your blood pressure and other risk factors.
- Take high blood pressure medicine as prescribed by your doctor. Do not stop the medication even if you feel well.

For more information about the connection between high blood pressure, stroke, and dementia, visit the Mind Your Risks[®] website at www.mindyourrisks.nih.gov.



National Institute of
Neurological Disorders
and Stroke

