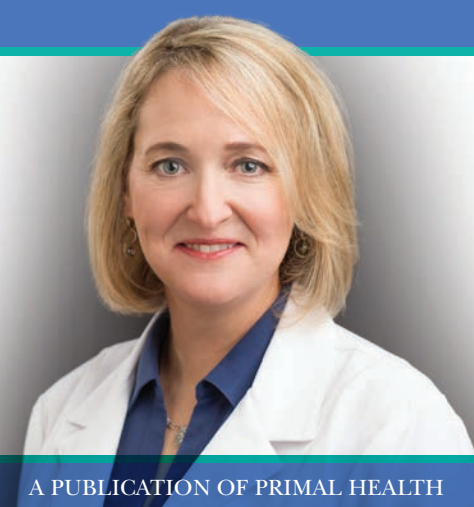


Dr. Marlene's NATURAL HEALTH CONNECTIONS



VOLUME 2 | ISSUE 9

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CONTENTS

Drugs That Raise Blood Pressure	2
Blood Pressure Numbers: The Latest Science	3
How to Transform Your Diet	3
Supplements for Pain and Inflammation	4
How Celery Lowers Blood Pressure	5
Take the Nitric Oxide Test	5
Supplements for Your Heart	6
Is Salt Raising Your Blood Pressure?	7
How to Develop a Taste for Broccoli	9
How Fruit Juice Is Like Soda	10
Is the Keto Diet Good for You or Harmful?	12



4 Steps to Healthy Blood Pressure



If you've been told there is no known cause for your elevated blood pressure, don't despair. These simple steps will lower it — without drugs.

Many of my patients come to see me specifically to lower their blood pressure. Most often, they seek out my help for one of two reasons: Either they don't want to take drugs for the rest of their lives, or the drugs have stopped working.

They typically have what medicine today calls "primary hypertension," or "essential hypertension." This is the most common kind. It means that there is no known cause for blood pressure to be high. I beg to differ, but I'll get into that in a moment.

The other kind of high blood pressure, "secondary hypertension," means that there is a diagnosed disease or condition that is raising blood pressure as one of its symptoms. Kidney disease, adrenal diseases, thyroid disease, sleep apnea, pregnancy, use of birth control pills, and alcohol addiction are some examples. It's estimated that about 10 percent of hypertension is "secondary."

The idea that there is no apparent cause for the other 90 percent

of cases is false. Elevated blood pressure always has a root cause, but most of the time, the causes are not recognized, investigated, or addressed in today's conventional medical system. Instead, prescription drugs have become the go-to medical fix.

Drugs manipulate various processes in your body to drive down blood pressure, but they don't address the root cause. They produce side effects and deplete various nutrients. After a while, they stop working or don't work well enough, and more drugs are prescribed. Meanwhile, underlying causes continue to be ignored.

The Real Solution

You probably know that high blood pressure increases risks for stroke, heart disease, kidney disease, dementia, vision loss, and sexual dysfunction. The good news is that most cases can be corrected without drugs, if you know what to do. In some situations, there is one glaring thing that is causing blood pressure

to rise, but in others, there's a combination of seemingly small things. Either way, healthy levels of blood pressure can be restored.

I'm a big believer in giving practical advice that is realistic to follow. I'm not going to tell you to live on juices, to count every calorie that goes into your mouth, or to run marathons. But there are some specific things you really must do to succeed.

The steps I'm going to describe will help you discover what causes

your blood pressure to go up or down, and they will give you practical ways to take control. They address four major things: Common foods and drinks that drive up blood pressure; physical and mental stress; nutritional deficiencies; and the right type of exercise. I'll also cover some supplements that help to get and keep blood pressure at healthy levels.

If your blood pressure is currently in a healthy range without medications, these same steps will help you to maintain that range. This is important because blood pressure tends to rise as we get older. And in case you're wondering, the steps I recommend won't drive your blood pressure too low — something

drugs can do, causing lightheadedness and other dangerous symptoms.

What to Expect

How quickly you notice changes will mostly depend upon how thoroughly and precisely you follow the program. I've had patients who started feeling much better after a few weeks, their blood pressure readings started to significantly drop, and they quickly started losing weight. However, I recommend giving it about three months to really experience benefits and to see significant changes when you pump up a blood-pressure cuff on your arm.

In working with many patients over the years, I've found two

Dr. Marlene's

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Drugs That Raise Blood Pressure

If you take over-the-counter or prescription drugs, one or more of these could be causing elevated blood pressure. This fact is often overlooked in medical practice.¹ If you're unsure that this could be happening, check with your pharmacist or doctor to see if hypertension could be a drug side effect. If it is, talk to your doctor about other options.

These are some common types of drugs that are known to raise blood pressure as a possible side effect:

Over-the-Counter Drugs

Decongestants: These include some asthma medicines. They narrow blood vessels.

Pain medicines: These can lead to water retention. Examples include acetaminophen (Tylenol), aspirin, naproxen (Aleve), and ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin). These are non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).

Cold and flu medicines: These contain a combination of decongestants and NSAIDs for pain.

Some antacids: Many are high in sodium, which raises blood pressure in salt-sensitive people. You can check sodium content on labels.

Prescription Drugs

In addition to prescription versions of the types of drugs above, these can also raise blood pressure:

- Antidepressants
- Cancer drugs
- Corticosteroids
- Cyclosporine
- Erythropoietin
- Immunosuppressants
- Migraine medicines
- Stimulants such as Ritalin

Other Substances

Alcohol, caffeine (in energy drinks or coffee), and nicotine are other substances that are known to raise blood pressure.

possible pitfalls. One is simply not following my program for long enough. The other is partially doing each of the steps — what some of my patients describe as doing the program “their way.” I’ll give you an example.

One of my patients, an older gentleman with hypertension, strongly resisted my recommendations for reducing carbohydrates in his diet because he didn’t believe it would make a difference. Finally, after everything else had failed, he noticed that

Blood Pressure Numbers: The Latest Science

Doctors have typically paid most attention to the top number in blood-pressure readings as a sign of increased risk for heart disease and stroke. Some experts have even considered that elevation in only the bottom number is not cause for alarm. But that’s changing.

A large study, published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, looked at 36 million blood-pressure readings from 1.3 million American adults. It found that an elevated bottom number — even if the top number is normal — increases health risks.²

What Is Normal Blood Pressure?

The top number — systolic pressure — measures pressure on arteries when the heart beats. The bottom number — diastolic pressure — measures pressure on arteries when the heart relaxes in between beats.

Normal blood pressure is under 120/80 mm Hg (millimeters of mercury). If either of those numbers is higher, it indicates increased risk for heart disease and stroke.

his blood pressure would rise two hours after he’d eaten a big pasta meal. Once he saw that direct connection with his own eyes, he reduced his carbs and guess what? His blood pressure finally dropped.

Not everyone’s blood pressure will be noticeably higher exactly two hours after a high-carb meal. However, a high-carb diet is the top reason for elevated blood pressure.

STEP 1: Learn to Eat Fewer Carbs

I say “learn to eat” for a reason. Most popular foods and drinks around us are excessively high in carbohydrates, by which I mean sugar and starch, and most of us have become numb to carb overload. Eating fewer carbs will take some adjustment.

I cover this in more detail in earlier newsletters (see *Related to This Topic*), but the main thing you need to know is that sugary and starchy foods raise levels of blood sugar and insulin in your body. And this drives up blood pressure.

Some of my patients find this hard to believe because they’ve been convinced that salt is the problem. It can be for some people (more on salt below), but the prime triggers of hypertension are sugar and starch.

The Carb Rules

Don’t bother counting carbs in everything you eat, but definitely do count and limit carbs from only these foods: grains (including breads and buns, pasta, rice, oatmeal, nutrition bars); candy and desserts; drinks with natural or added sugar (including milk, fruit juice, soda, and alcoholic drinks); fruit; beans; all types of potatoes; and corn (including popcorn and

anything else made from corn).

From only these foods, limit your daily total of carbs to 60 grams. And, eat no more than 30 grams of carbs from these foods in any single meal or snack.

How to Transform Your Diet

It takes a bit of practice to transform the way you eat but it’s very doable. The key is to learn to eyeball the main sources of carb overload in your own diet and work out what to eat instead, which means you will have to do some carb counting at first. But then it will become second nature.

Using a smartphone or computer, you can track your carbs with an app, a website, or a combination of the two. One free service that offers both is www.myfitnesspal.com.

To help you work out new meals and snacks, I suggest looking at Volume 1, Issue 8, of this newsletter: *The Guide to Healthy Eating*.

Once your blood pressure is stably at a healthy level, you can try adding slightly more carbs from my list of foods to monitor, and see what quantity you can tolerate. And then, continue to eat that way.

STEP 2: Reduce Physical and Mental Stress

When you hear about stress, you might immediately think of mental or emotional stress. While these can certainly trigger elevated blood pressure and other ills, and need to be addressed, physical stress can also be a major cause. And it can be aggravated with a high-carb diet.

One of my new patients suffered from knee pain, which is an all-too-common source of physical stress. Her high-carb diet led to

excess weight that put extra strain on her knees, and because of those carbs, she was in a state of chronic inflammation. The combination of pain, diet, and inflammation was driving up her blood pressure.

She followed my diet faithfully and took supplements for the knee pain and inflammation. And within a month, her knees became less irritated, she lost over 10 pounds, and her blood pressure dramatically dropped.

Supplements for Pain and Inflammation

Joint problems are extremely common, and stress from the pain or discomfort raises blood pressure. At the same time, inflammation is continually raging. In this situation, three supplements are very helpful: fish oil, turmeric, and boswellia.

Fish oil: It has very good anti-inflammatory effects if you take enough. In this situation, I recommend a daily dose that gives you 2.4 grams (2,400 milligrams) of EPA and 1.8 grams (1,800 milligrams) of DHA.

EPA and DHA are the two key beneficial fats that are naturally present in fish oil. The front of a product label usually lists the total quantity of fish oil per serving. To see the amounts of EPA and DHA, you need to look at the Supplement Facts section of the label.

Turmeric: The curry ingredient that has a telltale bright yellow color, turmeric is an herb with very strong anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving properties. Look for turmeric rhizome, meaning the underground part of the plant's stalk.

Boswellia: Also known as Indian frankincense, boswellia has a long history of use to treat arthritis and other inflammatory conditions. In recent years, studies have supported its efficacy.

Combination formulas:

Turmeric and boswellia are often combined in formulas to enhance joint health, sometimes with additional therapeutic ingredients.³ The dosages will vary, depending on the formula.

Managing Life Stress

We all face stressful situations. There are obvious things you can do to reduce stress, such as managing your schedule so as not to overbook your time and getting enough sleep to help you deal with daily events.

In addition, make it a habit to spend time with people whose company you enjoy, at least once

a week. This is a very basic way to help yourself relax and withstand stressful events when they arise. Your innate resilience to stress will also be enhanced if you make time to do things you enjoy, whether that means going for a challenging hike or a leisurely stroll, reading a novel, playing or watching sports, or taking yoga or pottery classes.

I also recommend meditation, in whatever way suits you. And, I've found that some apps that help you control your own stress response, such as HeartMath (www.heart-math.com), can be very helpful.

STEP 3: Eat Foods that Heal Blood Vessels

This is a step to correct nutritional deficiencies that predispose artery walls to injury. Like any other part of your body, your arteries need certain building blocks and protective substances from your diet to maintain healthy function.

Related to This Topic

These are some earlier issues of this newsletter that address related topics:

RELATED TOPIC	VOLUME	ISSUE	TITLE
Blood Pressure	1	2	The Top 3 Killer Myths about Blood Pressure
A Healthy Diet	1	8	The Guide to Healthy Eating
Sleep	2	2	The 10-Minute Sleep Solution
Arthritis	2	5	The 90-Day Program to Relieve Arthritis
Weight	2	1	10 Reasons Why You Gain Weight and Can't Lose It
Exercise	1	7	The Secret to Effective Aerobic Exercise (page 7)
Diabetes	2	4	Type 2 Diabetes: The Roadmap to Recovery

Access these online by logging in to www.NaturalHealthConnections.com.

If these are missing, it's like inviting the wolf into the barn.

The key foods to eat are celery, collagen, blueberries, and garlic. Most diets don't contain enough of these, and if your blood pressure is elevated, you likely fall short in one or more of these foods.

How Celery Lowers Blood Pressure

Celery is one of the richest sources of nitrates, nutrients that raise levels of nitric oxide. An odorless, colorless gas that's made by your body, nitric oxide helps to control

Take the Nitric Oxide Test

Low levels of nitric oxide lead to constricted arteries and elevated blood pressure. To test your levels, buy some nitric oxide test strips at a drugstore or online. And then:

- Wash your hands.
- Gather some saliva onto a fingertip.
- Put the saliva onto a test strip (don't put the strip in your mouth).
- Compare the color of the strip to a chart that comes with the strips.

The color will indicate if your nitric oxide levels are depleted, low, or optimal. If yours are depleted or low, eat more celery or drink celery juice, test again, and consume sufficient celery to achieve an optimal level.

If your levels are already optimal, continue to eat vegetables as usual to maintain good levels. All leafy greens, as well as beets, are sources of nitrates, but celery or fresh celery juice is a good way to get a quick boost.

blood pressure by relaxing the inner lining of your arteries — the endothelium — and keeping your arteries dilated. It also reduces the odds of harmful blood clots.

Our bodies become less efficient at making nitric oxide as we get older, so levels are likely to be low at the time when we need it most. To check your own levels, I recommend a simple test described in *Take the Nitric Oxide Test*.

You can't put nitric oxide into a supplement, but you can eat vegetables that are naturally high in nitrates, the nutrients that increase your internal production of nitric oxide. Although all leafy green vegetables contain nitrates, celery and beets are the richest sources. My top choice is celery because, unlike beets, it's low in carbs.

Although I usually favor eating whole vegetables, if your nitric oxide levels are very low, fresh-squeezed celery juice — not bottled juice from a store — can be a good alternative for concentrated nitrates. You can cut the bitterness of the juice by adding a slice of apple or half a small tomato to the juicer along with the celery.

Why You Need Collagen

Collagen is a protein with a gelatinous quality you see in gristly cuts of meat. In our bodies, collagen is necessary to maintain the structure of our skin, other organs, and — most important for blood pressure — blood vessels.

As we get older, levels of collagen decline. On the outside, this shows up as wrinkles and sags in your skin. Inside, declining collagen makes blood vessels less flexible, which makes it more difficult for blood to flow through

and raises blood pressure.

Lack of collagen can also lead to inflammation in the digestive system, which triggers higher stress hormones and more water retention. This leads to higher blood pressure along another path.

On the flipside, getting more collagen is a good way to help lower blood pressure. One or two daily cups of bone broth are an excellent source. The broth should be made from scratch; if you buy a ready-made version, choose a liquid that was made the traditional way. Powdered bone broth mixes won't contain the collagen you need for healthy blood vessels.

Collagen supplements are a simple alternative. You can buy powdered collagen and add it to virtually any food, as it's tasteless. Stir it into soups, sauces, smoothies, and even coffee. If you like coffee with a creamer, there's one made with coconut milk and collagen (www.vitalproteins.com).

Aim to get 20 grams of collagen protein daily, an amount usually found in 2 tablespoons of a powdered collagen supplement.

The Power of Blueberries

You've probably heard a lot about the benefits of blueberries over the years and may be wondering if it's hype. It isn't. Blueberries alone won't solve all health problems and eating too many will give you too much sugar. However, eating ¼ cup daily can help to lower your blood pressure.

Blueberries contain anthocyanins, a category of nutrients found in all berries and many other plant foods. Over the years, scientists have analyzed these and have found that certain anthocyanins in

blueberries are especially effective in dilating blood vessels and lowering blood pressure.⁴

Other nutrients in blueberries bond with collagen to improve elasticity and flexibility in arteries, joints, and other tissues. By strengthening blood vessels, they also improve circulation.

The Goodness of Garlic

Garlic contains a combination of substances that dilate blood vessels and lower blood pressure. One is a natural ACE inhibitor (gamma-glutamylcysteine). Some blood-pressure drugs are ACE inhibitors, but they cause unpleasant side effects, whereas the natural version in garlic does not.

Another key garlic ingredient is alliin, which gives garlic its hallmark smell. When garlic is crushed or chopped, alliin is converted into allicin, another therapeutic substance that lowers blood pressure. Studies have found that in addition to dilating arteries, the ingredients in garlic lower blood pressure by helping to regulate nitric oxide levels.⁵

I recommend eating a clove of garlic daily. The best way is to crush or chop it and eat it in your food, but if you really don't want to do that, garlic supplements are an alternative. Supplement doses vary, depending upon the formulation.

STEP 4: Do the Right Type of Exercise

When I bring up the subject of exercise, patients often tell me they're already doing it: "I walk every day." While that's a good thing, it generally isn't enough to lower your blood pressure. Interval training is much more effective.

The basic idea applies to any type of exercise, but I'll use walking as an example. Most people walk at a steady pace that's comfortable, and a half-hour a day is a common recommendation. Interval training means you don't walk at a steady pace. Instead, you walk as fast as you possibly can for a short distance, and then you walk at a relaxed pace for a while. And you repeat this pattern.

With intervals, you're exerting yourself much more in the short spurts — more than you could sustain for a longer period. But that spurt of activity gives your body an added challenge and more benefits than the slower, consistent pace.

There are various studies that prove this point. One compared steady-state walking and interval walking among older people with elevated blood pressure. It found that the interval approach lowered blood pressure and improved lower-body strength much more

than walking at a steady pace.⁶

One way to do this is alternate between walking fast for 3 minutes and walking slowly for 3 minutes. I cover this in more detail on page 7 of Volume 1, Issue 7, of this newsletter.

Other Heart-Healthy Supplements

In addition to the four steps I've described for lowering or maintaining healthy levels of blood pressure, there are supplements that work in multiple ways to keep your heart healthy. These are available as individual ingredients and in formulas for heart health.

CoQ10: An antioxidant, CoQ10 is important for energy production in the mitochondria, the energy-generating components of all cells. Heart cells have more mitochondria than others, so CoQ10 is especially beneficial for healthy heart function.

About Dr. Marlene

Dr. Marlene Merritt's passion for natural medicine is fueled by her drive to help others, and her own experience of overcoming a debilitating heart condition, diagnosed at the age of 20. A competitive cross-country cyclist at the time, she suddenly began experiencing severe chest pains. Forced to quit the sport, she suffered from extreme fatigue and constant pain for another 15 years, despite doing everything that conventional, Western medical doctors told her to do.

And then, the tide turned. A physician trained in naturopathic healing recommended a whole-food vitamin E supplement. A week after starting the supplement regimen, her energy began to return, and the pain began to disappear.

Dr. Marlene is a Doctor of Oriental Medicine, has a Master's in Nutrition, and is an Applied Clinical Nutritionist. She is Board Certified in Bariatric Counseling, and certified in the Bredesen MEND Protocol,[™] a groundbreaking method of reversing Alzheimer's disease. She sees patients at the Merritt Wellness Centers in Austin, Texas, and Santa Fe, New Mexico, trains health practitioners nationwide, and is the author of *Smart Blood Sugar* and *The Blood Pressure Solution*.



Green Tea Leaf Extract: It increases antioxidant production in the body and helps to protect against damage, especially as we get older.

Beet Root: Extracts of red beets provide nitrates for nitric oxide production, to help lower blood pressure.

BioPerine: Another name for black pepper extract, it is included in formulas to increase absorption of other ingredients.

Vitamin D and Vitamin K2: Each of these works in a different and complementary way to move calcium into bones while keeping it out of arteries. This reduces the odds of hardened arteries.

Folate and Vitamins B6 and B12: These B vitamins lower levels of homocysteine. When elevated, homocysteine contributes to heart disease by generating inflammation in the circulatory system.

Magnesium and Potassium: Both minerals have a relaxing effect, reducing stress response and enhancing both blood pressure and overall heart health.

A Final Word

There's one typical strategy for lowering blood pressure that I haven't mentioned, and I'm sure you've heard it for years: Lose weight. It's valid and necessary, but I know that simply saying "lose weight" is not going to help you.

If you're overweight and you do the steps I've outlined, you will lose weight. Just the first step of reducing carbs in the way I describe is going to make the biggest difference. To be practical,

you will need to look at *The Guide to Healthy Eating* in Volume 1, Issue 8, of this newsletter, for more specific information on how to do that step. Once you begin eating this way, your weight should start dropping within the first few weeks.

If this doesn't happen, take an inventory of what you're eating and drinking and eliminate any hidden sugars or starches. You can also look at Volume 2, Issue 1, of this newsletter: *10 Reasons Why You Gain Weight and Can't Lose It*.

Otherwise, if you aren't taking medications that raise blood pressure and have been told that there is no known cause of your

elevated blood pressure, my four steps should put you on a path to recovery.

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2 Flint, A.C., et al. "Effect of Systolic and Diastolic Blood Pressure on Cardiovascular Outcomes." *N Engl J Med.* 2019 Jul 18;381(3):243-251.

3 Di Lorenzo, C., et al. "Plant food supplements with anti-inflammatory properties: a systematic review (II)." *Crit Rev Food Sci Nutr.* 2013;53(5):507-16.

4 Rodriguez-Mateos, A., et al. "Circulating Anthocyanin Metabolites Mediate Vascular Benefits of Blueberries: Insights From Randomized Controlled Trials, Metabolomics, and Nutrigenomics." *J Gerontol A Biol Sci Med Sci.* 2019 Jun 18;74(7):967-976.

5 Ried, K., et al. "Potential of garlic (*Allium sativum*) in lowering high blood pressure: mechanisms of action and clinical relevance." *Integr Blood Press Control.* 2014 Dec 9;7:71-82.

6 Nemoto, K., et al. "Effects of high-intensity interval walking training on physical fitness and blood pressure in middle-aged and older people." *Mayo Clin Proc.* 2007 Jul;82(7):803-11.

Test Yourself: Is Salt a Problem for You?

The science shows that sodium is not the reason most people have high blood pressure — only a minority are sensitive to it. For more details about how salt works and the underlying science, check out an earlier issue of this newsletter: *The Top 3 Killer Myths about Blood Pressure*.

If you do the four steps of my program and don't see your blood pressure coming down, you can do a test to see if salt is raising your blood pressure.

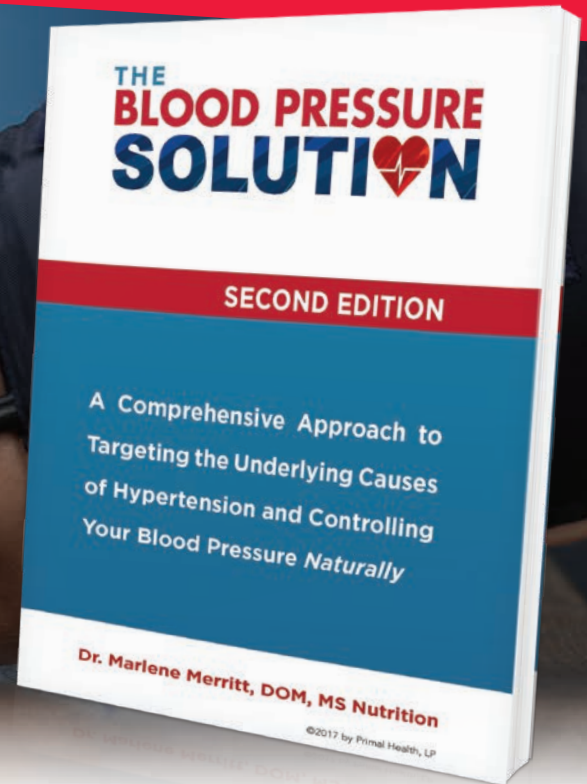
Keep in mind that most salt in the American diet does not come from your kitchen or the salt shaker on the table. Most of our salt is in processed food: everything in packages, cans, and inexpensive restaurant or take-out food. It's listed as sodium on ingredient labels.

This is how to do the test:

1. You will need to have a pattern of blood-pressure readings, so that you know what your usual levels are in the morning.
2. For a whole day, eat no salt — and I mean literally zero salt, or sodium. If you're thinking of eating anything that isn't fresh food such as fresh vegetables, meat, fish, eggs, and such, you must look at all the ingredients on the label. If a food contains anything with the word "sodium" in the ingredients, don't eat that food. Do the same with beverages.
3. The next morning, check your blood pressure.
4. During this day, eat lots of salty food.
5. The next morning, check your blood pressure.

If your blood pressure is significantly lower than normal on the morning after your salt-free day and significantly higher on the morning after your high-salt day, you are salt-sensitive, and reducing your salt intake will help to lower your blood pressure. But if you don't see significant differences, salt is not your problem.

Get Dr. Marlene's Best-Selling Book... **Blood Pressure Solution!**



Dr. Marlene has been sounding the alarm about dangerous blood pressure drugs for the last 15 years — and offering a safe, natural alternative.

She has worked with hundreds of patients who were suffering high blood pressure—many were taking two, three, even four medications and going through awful side effects...

Just like Kathleen Kelly, whose ankles swelled up from the prescription blood pressure drugs she was taking. She also suffered an awful cough from using Lisinopril. By the time she read Dr. Marlene's best-selling book, **Blood Pressure Solution**, Kathleen's doctor had her on three blood pressure medicines combined—and her blood pressure was still high!

"My patients are always surprised to see how easy it is to use my natural Blood Pressure Solution," said Dr. Marlene. "The diet is not restrictive. Many of the foods you thought were taboo are perfectly ok—like steak is ok, butter is ok, natural sea salt is ok, even several carb foods are good. Part of the solution is to get good fats into your diet."

After reading **Blood Pressure Solution**, Kathleen made simple lifestyle changes found in the book and began to see immediate results...

“*My blood pressure came down right away... I just feel great. I'm ecstatic. I go around telling everybody I found the fountain of youth. I have much more energy now. My concentration and focus are better. I can walk around my block without getting winded anymore. I am 100% off my medication.***”**

Did you see that? Kathleen reports she is 100% off her medications. And so can you!

Yes! You too can be off these anti-hypertensive drugs... maintain blood pressure in the normal range... and feel good again!

Dr. Marlene Merritt's **Blood Pressure Solution** is working for people all across America. And she believes it can work for you, too. Here's how...

Dr. Marlene originally developed her unique solution for her patients at the Merritt Wellness Center in Austin, Texas. And after seeing just how successful it was for people in her own community—she decided to put her entire natural solution, with step-by-step guidance, into an easy-to-use book called, **Blood Pressure Solution**.

This is a comprehensive approach to targeting the underlying causes of hypertension and controlling your blood pressure naturally.

Dr. Marlene's book has been sweeping the country with over 330,000 copies sold in the U.S., and even 32,000 copies shipped overseas.

So, are you ready to bring your blood pressure back to the normal range? Gain more energy? Drop a few unwanted pounds? And feel better than you have in years, just as Kathleen did?

Great! Get your copy of Dr. Marlene's best-selling book, **Blood Pressure Solution** today! Go to the website listed below, and you'll see a complete review of the book, watch videos from people just like Kathleen and order your copy of **Blood Pressure Solution!**

Get Your Copy Today! Go To:
www.PrimalLabs.com/BPS

How to Develop a Taste for Broccoli

Many people resist eating some of our healthiest vegetables, such as broccoli and dark leafy greens, because they have a bitter taste. But there's a simple way to overcome the problem, if you understand what's happening in your mouth when you eat these foods.

Your saliva is the first thing that food comes into contact with after it enters your mouth — before it reaches your taste buds. And saliva is more complex than you might think. Saliva contains about 1,000 different proteins, and these proteins influence how food tastes once it reaches taste receptor cells.

The New Discovery

Researchers at the Center for Ingestive Behavior Research, at the University of Buffalo, have been studying how this works and recently made an interesting discovery: What you habitually eat affects which proteins are active in your saliva. And this, in turn, determines how your taste buds react.¹

If you've been avoiding broccoli for years and suddenly start eating it, the proteins in your saliva aren't ready for it, and any bitter quality of the vegetable will be unappealing. But if you make a habit of eating it, the proteins in your saliva will change and broccoli won't taste as bitter. In fact, you should develop a taste for it.

Why Broccoli?

The same principle can apply to any healthy food you find unappealing,

as it seems that you can change the way your taste buds react. I picked broccoli as an example because it's so often viewed as a good-for-you but unappealing food.

Broccoli is a particularly good source of nutrients that your body turns into sulforaphane. This substance plays a pivotal role in helping your body get rid of toxins. Broccoli is also a top source of vitamin C and other nutrients.

Other cruciferous vegetables have similar qualities and include Brussels sprouts, cabbage, kale, radishes, and arugula. And they all deliver beneficial fiber.

Reality Check

This helps to explain why the tastes of fast foods and other processed foods have become



so popular, and why it's hard for many people to transition to healthy, fresh foods. But it doesn't change the fact that it does require some effort to upgrade your diet.

Check out local stores and buy the freshest vegetables you can find. And when preparing vegetables, you don't need to be a gourmet chef, but you do need to season them and add some healthy fat. Grass-fed butter, extra virgin olive oil, or coconut oil are good choices of fat.

Xylitol: Good Sweetener for You but Dangerous for Dogs

If you have a dog, you probably know that chocolate is harmful for your pooch. But xylitol is another substance to keep away from your pet. In fact, the FDA has warned that this sweetener is dangerous for dogs.²

Xylitol is one of the natural sugar-free sweeteners I recommend, but only for humans. In addition to being a sugar replacement, it's good for dental health because it reduces levels of harmful bacteria in your mouth. It's in many sugar-free foods and other products, such as these:

- chewing gum
- breath mints
- cough syrup
- chewable vitamins
- other dietary supplements
- mouthwash
- toothpaste
- over-the-counter medicines

For humans, the only downside is that if you eat large quantities of xylitol, it can cause gas, bloating, or diarrhea. But it's always a bad idea to overindulge in sweet foods, even if they don't contain sugar.

¹ Martin, L.E., et al. "Bitter-Induced Salivary Proteins Increase Detection Threshold of Quinine, But Not Sucrose." *Chem Senses*. 2019 Jul 17;44(6):379-388. ² FDA. "Paws Off Xylitol; It's Dangerous for Dogs." <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/paws-xylitol-its-dangerous-dogs>

Symptoms of Xylitol Dog Poisoning

According to the FDA, symptoms of xylitol poisoning in dogs can include vomiting and signs of low blood sugar, such as decreased activity, weakness, staggering, lack of coordination, collapse, and seizures. Because it may take 12 to

24 hours for symptoms to appear, the FDA recommends getting your dog checked by a vet if you suspect it has eaten the sweetener.

Xylitol is also poisonous for cats, with the same types of symptoms. But because cats are picky eaters and are not fans of sweet things, they are much less likely to ingest

food or other products that contain the sweetener.

Since dogs can eat almost anything, it's important to keep any xylitol-sweetened foods or other products out of their reach. If breath mints spill on the floor, for example, pick them all up right away.



How Fruit Juice Is Like Soda

Many of my new patients are surprised to learn that the natural sugar in 100-percent fruit juice has the same effect on your blood sugar as the added sugar in sodas and other sweetened drinks. The sugar in all these types of drinks causes a spike in blood sugar. This leads to elevated insulin, which sets off a chain of events that increases risk for obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and other ills. But don't just take my word for it.

A study of more than 13,000 American men and women, with an average age of 63, looked at the impact of all types of beverages containing sugar. Seven in ten participants were overweight or obese but none had diabetes, coronary heart disease, or had suffered from a stroke at the start of the study.

Researchers tracked these people for 6 to 10 years (some individuals were tracked longer than others). The study found that those who drank the most sugar-sweetened beverages, or 100-percent fruit juice, were more likely to die from any cause. In other words, excessive amounts of both 100-percent fruit juice and drinks with added sugar were harmful.¹

Should You Drink Fruit Juice?

Fruit juice has been touted as a healthy beverage for so long that it's easy to be baffled by this. Unlike soda, fruit juice does contain beneficial nutrients, as does

fruit. But there's a big difference between whole fruit and its juice.

Whole fruit contains fiber as well as natural sugar, and the fiber tempers the effect of the sugar. Fruit juice contains no fiber, so it gives you a concentrated jolt of sugar, just like soda.

I'm not saying that you should never drink fruit juice. But don't be fooled into overlooking its effect on blood sugar. Long before giant sodas, when American diets consisted mainly of meals prepared from scratch, few snacks, and limited desserts, a small glass of juice now and then wasn't a problem. In today's world of oversized portions, fruit juice can be another source of sugar overload.

For a sensible way to include fruit, fruit juice, and other drinks in your diet, check out *The Guide to Healthy Eating* in Volume 1, Issue 8, of this newsletter.

Lies People Tell Their Doctors

Not everyone lies to their doctor — only 23 percent do, according to a survey of 500 people by TermLife2Go. But among that minority, these are the top things they lie about: smoking, exercise, drinking, and sexual partners.

In the survey, people who were 35 years old or older were more likely to lie about their exercise habits, whereas younger people were more likely to lie about smoking. Men were more likely to lie about alcohol consumption, and women were more likely to lie about sexual partners.

Earlier research found that patients withhold relevant information from doctors because they don't want to be judged or lectured to or feel embarrassed.²

¹ Collin, L.J., et al. "Association of Sugary Beverage Consumption With Mortality Risk in US Adults: A Secondary Analysis of Data From the REGARDS Study." *JAMA Netw Open*. 2019 May 3;2(5):e193121. ² Levy, A.G., et al. "Prevalence of and Factors Associated With Patient Nondisclosure of Medically Relevant Information to Clinicians." *JAMA Netw Open*. 2018 Nov 2;1(7):e185293.

Get Back Out There...

STOP LETTING FATIGUE AND LOW-ENERGY ROB YOU OF THE ACTIVITIES YOU ENJOY!



Do you feel drained all the time, unable to do the things you love because you have no energy and no motivation?

Do you feel tired and run down... like you're running on empty, even when you get plenty of sleep?

If you're not living the active, fun-filled life, you were meant to live, please pay close attention: You can now get your energy back, boost your mental clarity, calm your nerves and enjoy all-day endurance that will make your life fun again!

That's why I'm excited to introduce the safe and natural energy booster designed for people just like you...

It's called, **ActivAdapt Energy Drink Mix**.

There's truly nothing else quite like it on the market today because one of its ingredients has been proven in a double-blind study to increase energy by 107% within 60 minutes. And even better, this caffeine-free boost of energy lasted 5 hours WITHOUT increasing heart rate or blood pressure!

ActivAdapt is an easy to use drink mix that contains 6 powerful nutrients to help you regain your energy, strength, and stamina:

EnXtra is a brand-new, patent-pending extract from *Alpinia Galanga*, a plant in the ginger family. It's a safe, natural energy-boosting compound that boosts energy levels by 107% and lasts 5 hours!

Rhodiola Root Extract boosts energy levels by increasing ATP, the "energy molecule" inside your cells. *Rhodiola* has been used by astronauts and military personnel to increase energy levels, boost alertness and sharpen mental focus during long missions.

Schizandra Berry increases endurance and working capacity under stress. Researchers have also found it enhances your reflexes and mental sharpness while calming you down if you're feeling anxious.

Ginseng is well studied for boosting brain function and short-term memory while promoting calmness. A new analysis published last year confirms it also reduces fatigue after exercise and physical activities.

Matcha extract is from a special form of green tea loaded with EGCG, a potent antioxidant that helps flush dangerous toxins from the body—while its amino acids promote a state of relaxation and well-being.

Palatinose is unique because it provides your body with a slow, steady release of energy with no spike in blood sugar—which helps keep insulin levels low. It delivers more energy and increases fat burning.

Here's how **ActivAdapt** works...

Simply add one scoop to water, stir, and it dissolves quickly and easily.

It's caffeine-free and only contains 20 calories. You'll notice a substantial change in your physical and mental energy almost immediately after you drink it... with no jitters, no increased heart rate, no blood sugar spikes, and absolutely no crash.

ActivAdapt is ideal if you want to regain your energy and feel more vibrant and alive than you have in years...

- More physical energy, strength, and stamina
- Increased mental energy and focus
- Greater concentration and better moods
- Deeper, more restorative sleep
- Lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol
- Enhanced weight control, and fewer sugar and carb cravings

It's time to get back out there and start enjoying the activities you've always loved—and with the help of **ActivAdapt**, it's never been easier. Boost your energy levels, bust stress, banish brain fog, and stop fatigue, while increasing your concentration, attention, and mood.

Get Your Bottle of ActivAdapt Today and Start Living the Life You Were Meant to Live!



Get ActivAdapt Today!
www.GetActivAdapt.com/NHC2

Q&A

Q: What do you think of the keto diet? Is it good for most people or can it be harmful? — Hans K.

A: The keto diet is extremely high in fat (like 70%) and extremely low in carbs (about 20 grams per day), with a moderate amount of protein. It changes the fuel your body uses to generate energy.

In a normal diet (and the diet I typically recommend), your body converts carbs into blood sugar, and this is the main fuel that's used to make energy. In a keto diet, the carb content is so low that it forces your body to use fat for fuel, instead of carbs.

When your fuel source changes to fat, your body produces ketones and uses these as its energy source, instead of blood sugar. Studies have found that keto diets can reduce epileptic seizures, diabetes, and dementia, and they can produce weight loss.

Although the diet can be beneficial for many people, some can't tolerate a high-fat diet, especially if they have gallbladder problems. In practical terms, the keto diet is very restrictive and difficult to follow, and can produce unpleasant, flu-like symptoms during the first few days or weeks while your body switches to a new fuel source. After that stage, people generally experience more stable energy and enhanced well-being.

The diet I recommend is not a keto diet. My diet is not extremely high in fat or extremely low in

carbs and is not difficult to follow.

I've worked with many patients who have been following a keto diet, by their own choice. It can produce very good results. But because of its extreme nature, I view it as a diet that is best followed for two or three months, to correct problems that have developed as a result of carb overload for many years. And then, gradually increase carbs and reduce fat to levels that work best long-term for the individual.

One point of confusion is this: There is a dangerous state that can develop among type 1 diabetics, called "ketoacidosis," when the body doesn't have enough insulin. This is a complication of the disease and is not the same thing as a keto diet.

Q: My maternal grandmother had Alzheimer's disease, and I'm wondering if I'm at high risk. Should I get a genetic test?

— Ann P.

A: People have shied away from getting tested because it seemed that nothing could be done if results showed genetic risk. But we now have a better understanding of causes, prevention, and treatment for cognitive decline, so testing can be useful. I'm going to delve into what you can do, once you've been tested, in an upcoming issue of this newsletter.

Meanwhile, research shows that a healthy lifestyle — including a healthy diet, exercise, not smoking, and drinking moderately or not at all — is associated with less Alzheimer's, regardless of genes. That's the conclusion of a recent



study that tracked over 196,000 older adults for 8 years.

Other research has found that years of eating a high-sugar, high-carb diet is directly related to Alzheimer's risk. I cover this and what to do about it in Volume 1, Issue 1, of this newsletter: *The Link Between Diabetes and Alzheimer's*.

Do you have a question for Dr. Marlene?

Send your health-related questions to drmarlene@naturalhealthconnections.com. Please include your first name and the initial of your last name. Although she cannot answer each question directly, Dr. Marlene will select a few in each newsletter and will address other questions and concerns in articles in future issues. Answers are intended for educational purposes only and should not be viewed as medical advice. If you need help with your subscription or have questions about Primal Health supplements, email support@primalhealthlp.com or call 877-300-7849.