



Good Nutrition for Healthy Blood Pressure

Diet is thought to be a major contributor to gestational hypertension, which can lead to pre-eclampsia and eclampsia (seizures). Once a diagnosis of pre-eclampsia is made, the only treatment is to deliver the baby safely before the mother's body reaches an dangerously high blood pressure that may cause seizures. Prevention is our greatest tool in the avoidance of this dangerous condition.

A diet high in protein and water is the place to begin, along with moderate exercise, decreasing stress, and including salt in the diet. A **daily protein intake of 80 to 100 grams** is recommended to all pregnant women. I would like for you to drink close to a **gallon of water a day**. Most women don't get these two important nutritional needs of their body while they're growing a baby.

Look at the ingredient labels of your food, or research on the internet the protein contents of what you eat. You may be surprised by how little protein you are getting. Foods that have a lot of protein include: **beef, pork, turkey, chicken, eggs, nuts, beans, milk, cheese, yogurt and quinoa**. Hemp or whey-based protein powders are good choices to add to a smoothie. Sprinkle toasted pecans on your pasta sauce or cheese and sunflower seeds on a salad. Carry nuts, cheese or hard-boiled eggs with you for easy protein snacks and be sure to **include protein every time you eat**.

Massage, acupuncture and cranio-sacral treatments are appropriate for assistance in decreasing stress. Increasing exercise, relaxation and laughter; and eliminating sources of stress from your life are positive goals during and beyond this pregnancy.

Feel free to **add salt to your diet as you crave it**. Salt is required by our bodies to absorb the water we drink. Swelling can get worse when you aren't absorbing enough water. You can even put a pinch of salt into your water. I recommend you change position from standing to sitting or lying with feet elevated throughout the day, especially if you have swelling.

Teas of nettles, red raspberry leaf and dandelion leaf are excellent tools. Herbal teas are a great way to include additional nutrients and their healing properties into your diet (and they count towards your daily water intake goal). You could add some molasses and a few grains of salt to that for an amazing mineralizing toner. De-stressing is a big part of preventing and treating high blood pressure, so just the action of sitting quietly and enjoying your cup of herbal tea will be a benefit to you and your baby.

If your blood pressure tends to be high or is noticeably rising, a supplement of calcium/magnesium in the evenings or a watered-down mixture of cream of tartar and lemon juice may help. A tea of hops, skullcap and valerian can be used several times a day.

Seek medical attention if you have blood pressure of 140/90 or higher; or if you have an incurable headache, fainting, dizziness, or spots in your vision.