LIFESTYLE MODIFICATIONS TO REDUCE BLOOD PRESSURE

1. **GET ACTIVE.** Regular aerobic exercise can help you maintain a healthy weight and lower your blood pressure. The American Heart Association recommends exercising 4-5 times a week for 30-40 minutes.

2. **KICK THE SALT HABIT AND LOOK FOR HIDDEN SALT IN FOODS.** Daily sodium intake should be less than 2000 mg. Look at food labels to help avoid foods high in salt. Reducing salt can assist in reducing blood pressure.

3. **EAT A VARIETY OF FOODS TO GET THE MINERALS YOU NEED TO HELP CONTROL BLOOD PRESSURE.** Fruits like bananas, strawberries, grapes, oranges melon and raisins provide potassium. Vegetables like carrots, green peas, squash, broccoli, spinach have other essential vitamins. Nuts, seeds and dried beans will provide magnesium and fiber into your diet. Use fat free and low fat dairy foods to get the calcium needed for muscles and bones.

4. **QUIT TOBACCO USE.** Ask for support and assistance from your healthcare provider, family and friends.

5. **MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT.** Just losing 10 pounds can lower blood pressure.

6. **USE ALCOHOL IN MODERATION.** Men should have no more than 2 drinks per day and women should have no more than 1 drink per day. One drink is 4 ounces of wine, 12 ounces of beer or 1 ounce of distilled liquor.

7. **MANAGE STRESS.** Learn a relaxation or meditation technique. Try Tai Chi or yoga, and find a hobby to reduce stress in your life. Stress causes the release of stress hormones that will raise blood pressure if they continue to circulate.