

Day 3: Blood Pressure and Postural Hypotension

- Have you ever stood up too quickly and felt a little dizzy? This is quite common, and referred to as postural hypotension
- When we stand up quickly, gravity pulls our blood down to our legs and feet. This reduces the amount of blood flow in our brains
 - ◊ When we have a decrease of blood flow in our brains (even if it is a small reduction), we feel dizzy and can faint
 - ◊ It is the body's way of getting us to sit or lay down, in an attempt to increase blood flow to the brain again
- Although this is normal, and part of the body's defence mechanism, it can be problematic if the dizziness or fainting leads to a fall
- Ideally, our blood pressure should be 120/80. Blood pressure lower than 120/80 can lead to more dizzy spells. On the other hand, high blood pressure can lead to a stroke or heart attack
- It is very important to monitor and control your blood pressure

Normal: 120/80 mmHg

High Blood Pressure: 140/90 mmHg

Low Blood Pressure: 90/60 mmHg

- **What you can do to monitor and control your blood pressure:**
 - ◊ Have a health care professional (e.g., doctor, pharmacist, nurse, etc.) check your blood pressure at every appointment
 - ◊ Exercise regularly to keep your heart in good shape
 - ◊ Ensure that your routine includes aerobic exercise
 - ◊ When standing after prolonged sitting, proceed slowly. Wait a minute before walking away from your chair or bed
 - ◊ Drink plenty of clear liquids each day (water is best)

Name:

Date:

Blood Pressure:

**Measured by a Kinesiologist at VON
Canada**



HEALTH STARTS AT HOME

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- Excess sodium or salt interferes with the ability of the blood vessels to relax and expand, increasing blood pressure and increasing chance of stroke and heart attack.
- Potassium encourages the kidneys to excrete sodium.

Different Types of Medications you might recognize.

- Diuretics (water pills) - these work by flushing excess water and sodium from the body, thus lowering blood pressure.
- ACE inhibitors (angiotension-converting enzyme) - these allow blood vessels to widen by preventing the formation of a hormone called angiotensin.
- Beta blockers-these work by blocking certain nerve and hormonal signals to the heart and blood vessels, thus lowering blood pressure.
- Calcium channel blockers - these prevent calcium from going into the heart and blood vessel muscle cells, thus causing the cells to relax, which lowers blood pressure.

Your doctor may prescribe one or more of these medications to help lower your blood pressure.

Make sure you eat a diet low in salt and sugar, exercise daily, and drink water.

