

## Add a DASH of Good Health to Your Diet

Not sure where to begin? Try the DASH diet! The DASH diet is high in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy. It's low in salt, fat, and calories.

Medical research finds that the DASH diet really works. It can lower your blood pressure and cholesterol levels. It also can cut your risk of heart disease by more than 20%.<sup>5</sup>

### Smart Eating Tips

Here are a few simple tips to help you eat healthier:<sup>4</sup>

- **Eat smaller portions.** A serving size of meat should be just 3 ounces. Fill the rest of your plate with vegetables. Serve your meals on a salad plate instead of a dinner plate so you'll eat less.
- **Never eat straight from the box.** Portion out crackers, chips, dried fruit and other snacks into small bags.
- **Read the labels.** Look for products that are low in salt, fat and calories. Be careful—some products labeled “low-sodium” or “low-fat” aren't much lighter than the original version.
- **Watch the salt.** Don't eat more than 1,500 milligrams of salt daily. Limit salty foods like lunchmeat, hot dogs, canned and prepared foods and potato chips or pretzels.
- **Cut back on sugar.** Limit foods with a lot of added sugar. These include cookies, cakes and pies, candy, sugary sodas and fruit drinks.

## Changing Your Diet—One Step at a Time

You can't change your diet overnight. Take small steps to better eating. Add a serving of vegetables to lunch or dinner. Grill your chicken instead of frying it. Eat a piece of fruit, carrot sticks or low-fat popcorn as a snack.

Losing weight, feeling better, and lowering your blood pressure are all signs you're on the right track. Reward yourself for the progress you've made. Just don't reward yourself with food!

### Sources:

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*The DASH diet can lower your blood pressure, but it might take some time to get used to. If you haven't been eating many fruits and vegetables, start slowly. Add in one new fruit or vegetable each day to avoid gas or other stomach problems. Also add a little bit of whole grains—such as whole wheat bread or oatmeal—to slowly increase your fiber.<sup>4</sup>*



Lower blood pressure is the **goal**.