

Getting to Goal: Steps That Can Help

These simple steps can help you reduce the stress in your life. Tear off this page and take it to your health care provider. Together, you can find the coping techniques that work best for you.

- ✓ **Learn how to set limits.** Don't be afraid to say "no" to requests for your time and energy. Ask your family or friends for help when you need it.
- ✓ **Do at least one thing you enjoy every day.** Read a book you love. Watch a favorite movie. Soak in the bathtub. Spend time with a friend.
- ✓ **Eat healthy foods and get enough sleep.**
- ✓ **Talk to your doctor about aerobic exercise in your daily schedule,** such as a brisk walk.
- ✓ **Practice prayer or meditation.**
- ✓ **Get involved in a support group for people with high blood pressure.** There may be one in your community. There are also support groups on the Internet.
- ✓ **Talk to your doctor about any questions or concerns you may have** about keeping up with your treatment plan.

African Americans and Blood Pressure:

Books you may find in your local library or bookstore.

- **The Heart of the Matter: The African American's Guide to Heart Disease, Heart Treatment, and Heart Wellness** by Hilton M. Hudson II, MD, FACS
- **High Blood Pressure: The Black Man and Woman's Guide to Living with Hypertension** by Hilton M. Hudson II, MD, FACS, and James W. Reed, MD, FACP, FACE
- **Heart Smart for Black Women and Latinas: A 5 Week Program for Living a Heart Healthy Lifestyle** by Jennifer H. Mieres, MD
- **The Black Man's Guide to Good Health: Essential Advice for African American Men and Their Families** by Charlene Shucker, Neil Shulman, MD, James W. Reed, MD



Feeling the Pressure?

Q: I work two jobs, but there's never enough money to pay the bills. I always worry that I won't be able to provide for my family. Thinking about it gets me so upset. My doctor told me that stressing about money isn't good for my high blood pressure since I start to eat unhealthy and put on extra weight. What can I do when worry is weighing me down?

A: Not having enough money when you need it can be very stressful. Sometimes reaching out to other family members or your church can help you through tough times. You can also take steps to manage your stress. For 10 to 15 minutes each day, sit in a quiet place alone. Take slow, deep breaths while you clear your mind of everything that's worrying you. Meditation or prayer can help calm the stress that you feel.

References: 1. Association of Black Cardiologists. National Survey Results Fact Sheet. African Americans with High Blood Pressure and Their Doctors. Available at: <http://www.abcardio.org/heart/graphics/survey.pdf>. Accessed March 14, 2011. 2. Glen Health Center. The Fight or Flight Response to Stress. Available at Michigan State University Web site <http://ohio.msu.edu/Infightorflightresponsedistress.php>. Accessed March 14, 2011. 3. Mayo Clinic. Stress and high blood pressure: What's the connection? Available at: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/stress-and-high-blood-pressure/1000092>. Accessed February 18, 2011. 4. American Heart Association. Stress and Blood Pressure. Available at: www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/HighBloodPressure/Prevention/treatments/highBloodPressure/Stress-and-Blood-Pressure_UCM_301883_Article.jsp. Accessed February 18, 2011. 5. Mayo Clinic. Stress Management. Available at: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/stress-relievers/14101373/NGSCTKINGROUP+2>. Accessed February 18, 2011. 6. American Society of Hypertension. News Release. Available at: <http://www.newswise.com/articles/view/540765/>. Accessed February 18, 2011. 7. Barrow, Karen. Praying for Lower Blood Pressure? ScienceDaily Web site <http://sciencedaily.healthdays.com/alternative-medicine/articles/3794.htm>. Accessed March 14, 2011.

Getting to Goal

Lowering Your Blood Pressure

Relieve Stress,
Gain Support

Let friends and family help you **Get to Goal**

In one study, 53 percent of African Americans said they were stressed about their personal health.¹ Getting support from others can help you relieve stress and lower your blood pressure.



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