

Work With Your Doctor

When it comes to lowering your blood pressure, your doctor should be your partner. He or she should listen to your concerns. Your doctor will help you find a medicine that works best for you. Talk to your doctor if you have concerns about:

- **Home remedies** – They are not proven to manage high blood pressure.³ You still need to take the medicine your doctor prescribes.
- **Side effects** - Don't stop taking your medicine. This can cause your blood pressure to rise. Call your doctor and ask what to do.
- **Cost** - If you can't afford your high blood pressure medicine, talk to your doctor or pharmacist about programs that can help reduce the cost.

Don't be afraid to ask your doctor questions, such as:³

- How will this medicine lower my blood pressure?
- How much should I take?
- When and how should I take my medicine? Should I take it with food?
- What side effects could this medicine cause?
- What should I do if I have side effects?
- What should I do if I miss a dose or want to change my medicine?

Get Support

Find a friend or family member who can help you stick with your treatment plan. Ask them to remind you to take your medicine every day. You may also find a support group for people with high blood pressure at a local hospital or community center.

After a while, taking your blood pressure medicine will become a normal part of your daily routine. Follow your treatment plan to help you get to goal!

Sources:

1. Fongwa M. Adherence treatment factors in hypertensive African American women. *Vasc Health Risk Manag.* February 2008;4:157-166.
2. Mayo Clinic. High blood pressure (hypertension). Available at: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/high-blood-pressure/H100062>. Accessed April 1, 2011.
3. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. NIH. Controlling High Blood Pressure: A Woman's Guide. Available at: http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/hbp_wmn.pdf. Accessed April 1, 2011.

The medicine your doctor prescribes can help lower your blood pressure - but only if you remember to take it! To help remind you, write a note on your calendar or stick it on your refrigerator. Each time you get a refill, mark your calendar for one week before your medicine is set to run out. Ask your pharmacist about automatic refill programs.

