Many things can affect your blood pressure (BP). It is critical to understand what medications and substances you should avoid to support a healthy BP.

**SMALL CHANGES CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE**
Be your own health advocate by following a healthy lifestyle, such as reducing sodium and checking your blood pressure as part of your daily routine.

High blood pressure – a systolic blood pressure reading of 130 mmHg and above or a diastolic reading of 80 mmHg and above – is a serious health condition that can increase your risk of heart disease and stroke. Take these steps to control your risk.

**AVOID:**
- Illicit and recreational drugs
- Herbal supplements
- Foods that contain tyramine when taking antidepressants, such as MAOIs (monoamine-oxidase inhibitors)
- NSAIDs, such as aspirin and ibuprofen (drugs like acetaminophen—are less likely to increase BP)
- Amphetamines
- Certain medications to treat mental health
- Corticosteroids, such as prednisone
- Immunosuppressants
- Oral birth control (consider alternative forms such as barrier, IUD, abstinence)
- Certain cancer medications (such as angiogenesis inhibitors)

**NOTE:** Do you suffer from chronic pain? Certain medicines can raise your BP or make your BP medication less effective. Talk to your healthcare provider for guidance if you have any questions.

**LIMIT:**
- Alcohol to less than 1 drink a day for women and less than 2 drinks a day for men
- Caffeine to less than 300 mg per day (about 2-3 cups of coffee); avoid with hypertension
- Decongestants and some cold medicines; avoid with severe or uncontrolled hypertension

**TALK TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER ABOUT STARTING, STOPPING OR CHANGING:**
- NSAIDs, such as aspirin and ibuprofen (drugs like acetaminophen—are less likely to increase BP)
- Amphetamines
- Certain medications to treat mental health
- Corticosteroids, such as prednisone
- Immunosuppressants
- Oral birth control (consider alternative forms such as barrier, IUD, abstinence)
- Certain cancer medications (such as angiogenesis inhibitors)

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