

The DASH Diet: A Common Sense Approach to Healthy Eating

The DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet is a heart-healthy, easy to follow and nutritious diet plan – recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Heart Association. According to the CDC, the DASH eating plan, (published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)) is a simple, heart-healthy diet that can help prevent or lower high blood pressure, reduce your risk of heart attack, heart disease, stroke and other diseases.

The DASH diet is low in sodium, cholesterol, saturated and total fat, and high in fruits and vegetables, fiber, potassium, and low-fat dairy products, and a variety of foods rich in nutrients that help lower blood pressure, such as potassium, calcium and magnesium.

By following the DASH diet, you may be able to reduce your blood pressure by a few points in just two weeks. Over time, your blood pressure could drop by eight to 14 points, which can make a significant difference in your health risks.

Because the DASH diet is a healthy way of eating, it offers health benefits besides just lowering blood pressure. The DASH diet may offer protection against osteoporosis, cancer, heart disease, stroke and diabetes. And while the DASH diet is not a weight-loss program, you may lose unwanted pounds because it can help guide you toward healthier meals and snacks. The DASH Eating Plan (the link below) outlines the diet, including an eating plan and recipes.

http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/dash/dash_brief.pdf