

# DASH

## DIETARY APPROACHES TO STOP HYPERTENSION

As part of the Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Program, your primary care provider (PCP) and PCMH Care Coordinator will provide you with information to help you manage your health. Below are general guidelines for your condition. Please work with your PCP or Care Coordinator for your specific health needs.

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### What is the DASH Diet?

DASH—short for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension— was developed to help individuals lower blood pressure through diet. This eating plan has also been shown to reduce the risk of stroke and heart disease. The DASH diet emphasizes overall low-sodium and low-saturated fat consumption while increasing your intake of protein and fiber and the minerals potassium, calcium and magnesium.

### Guidelines to Get You Started

The DASH Diet recommends a 2,000 calorie diet with an eating plan that includes:

- Grains for energy and fiber. Aim for 6-8 servings a day (1 slice of bread, 1 oz. dry cereal, 1/2 cup cooked rice, pasta or cereal).
- Vegetables for potassium, magnesium and fiber. Shoot for 4-5 servings a day (1 cup raw, leafy vegetable, 1/2 cup cooked vegetable, 1/2 cup vegetable juice).
- Fruits for potassium, magnesium and fiber. Try for 4-5 servings a day (1 medium fruit, 1/4 cup dried fruit, 1/2 cup fresh, frozen or canned fruit, 1/2 cup fruit juice). If you are on medication, some citrus fruits can interact with your medication. Check with your PCP or pharmacist to see if these fruits are ok for you.
- Dairy for calcium and protein. Eat 2-3 servings a day (1 cup milk or yogurt, 1 1/2 oz. cheese).
- Lean meat, skinless poultry and fish for protein and magnesium. Aim for 6 or less 1-ounce servings a day.



- Nuts, seeds, legumes for energy, magnesium, protein and fiber. Enjoy 4-5 servings a week (1/3 cup or 1 1/2 oz. nuts, 2 Tbsp. or 1/2 oz. seeds, 1/2 cup cooked dry beans).
- Avoid saturated fats and trans fats. (1 tsp. soft margarine, vegetable oil, 1 Tbsp. mayonnaise, 2 Tbsp. salad dressing).
- Sweets. Limit to 5 or fewer servings per week. (1 Tbsp. sugar, jelly, or jam, 1/2 cup sorbet, 1 cup lemonade).

### **Skip the Salt**

Reducing your sodium intake while following the DASH plan may also help lower your blood pressure. The Standard DASH Diet allows you to consume up to 2,300 milligrams (mg) of sodium/day. The Lower Sodium DASH Diet limits you to 1,500 mg sodium/day.

### **Tips to Reduce Your Salt Intake**

- Read food labels. Aim for foods that have less than 5 percent of daily value of sodium.
- Choose low, reduced-sodium or no-salt added versions of foods when available.
- Use fresh skinless poultry, fish and lean meat instead of canned, smoked or processed.
- Rinse canned foods (tuna, beans, etc.) to remove some of the sodium.
- Use spices instead of salt to flavor your foods.

### **Making Changes**

Changing your lifestyle is a long-term process. Start by taking these small steps:

- Add another serving of vegetables and/or fruit to your lunch and dinner.
- Gradually increase your use of fat-free and low-fat milk.
- Slowly swap one or two of your grain servings for whole grains.
- Cut your meat portions back by a third at each meal until you reach the desired 3 ounces per meal (total of 6 ounces/day).
- Step-up your physical activity gradually.