

**What You Should Know About:**

# High Blood Pressure, Prevention, and You



## Be Your Own Health Advocate!

Use your Medicaid benefits to help you stay healthy.

**These Medicaid benefits can help you prevent high blood pressure and help you lower it if it is too high:**

- **Medical visits**, so your health care provider can talk with you about how you are feeling and check your blood pressure and weight.
- **Programs to help smokers stop smoking**, which can help keep your blood pressure at a normal level.
- **A home blood pressure machine**, if it is ordered by your health care provider as part of your treatment plan.

*If you have questions about using your benefits, call the phone number listed on your Medicaid card.*

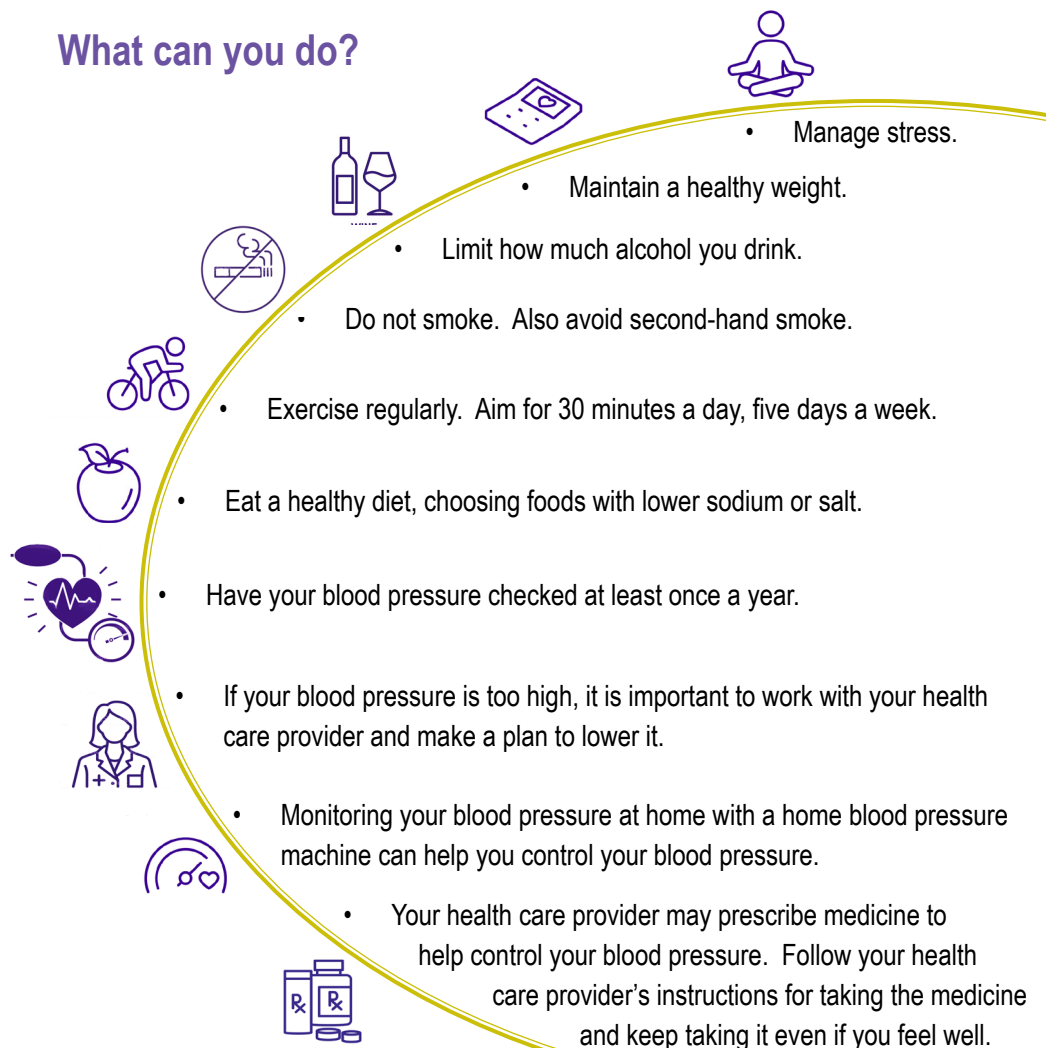
## Understanding High Blood Pressure

### Did you know...?

- Blood pressure is how hard your blood pushes against the walls of your blood vessels, including arteries, as it moves throughout your body.
- High blood pressure, also called hypertension, is when your blood flows through your arteries at a pressure that is higher than normal.
- High blood pressure can cause many serious health problems, including heart disease, heart failure, stroke, kidney damage, vision loss, and dementia.
- High blood pressure is the leading cause of heart attack and stroke in America.<sup>1</sup>
- About 45 percent of adults in this country have high blood pressure - that is 108 million people.<sup>2</sup>
- High blood pressure is called “the silent killer,” because many people do not know they have it until it causes a serious issue.
- Visit your health care provider to find out if you have high blood pressure.

## Preventing and Lowering High Blood Pressure

### What can you do?



- Manage stress.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Limit how much alcohol you drink.
- Do not smoke. Also avoid second-hand smoke.
- Exercise regularly. Aim for 30 minutes a day, five days a week.
- Eat a healthy diet, choosing foods with lower sodium or salt.
- Have your blood pressure checked at least once a year.
- If your blood pressure is too high, it is important to work with your health care provider and make a plan to lower it.
- Monitoring your blood pressure at home with a home blood pressure machine can help you control your blood pressure.
- Your health care provider may prescribe medicine to help control your blood pressure. Follow your health care provider's instructions for taking the medicine and keep taking it even if you feel well.

1. [https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/files/4\\_Steps\\_Forward\\_English.pdf](https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/files/4_Steps_Forward_English.pdf)

2. <https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/data-reports/hypertension-prevalence.html>