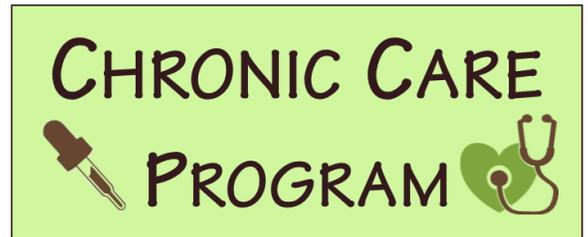


HYPERTENSION

at a glance



What is hypertension?

Hypertension is high blood pressure. Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the walls of your arteries as the heart pumps blood. High blood pressure is a common disease where blood flows through arteries at a higher than normal pressure.

Complications and Symptoms

When blood pressure stays high over time, it can damage the body and cause complications. Some common complications include:

- cognitive changes, like memory loss and difficulty finding words
- aneurysms and stroke
- chronic kidney disease
- eye damage
- heart attack and heart failure
- peripheral artery disease, where plaque builds up in arteries and causes pain, cramping, or numbness in the legs, feet, and buttocks after walking or climbing stairs

Risk Factors

Anyone can develop high blood pressure, and risk increases with age. Other risk factors include:

- age
- race and ethnicity. Hypertension is more common in African American adults than in Caucasian or Hispanic American adults.
- being overweight
- gender. Men are more likely than women to develop high blood pressure.
- unhealthy lifestyle habits, like eating too much sodium, lack of physical activity, and stress
- family history of high blood pressure

Prevention and Management

Treatment for hypertension includes:

- eating healthy and limiting sodium
- being physically active, like participating in moderate-intensity aerobic exercise at least 2 hours and 30 minutes per week
- maintaining a healthy weight
- limiting alcohol intake
- managing and coping with stress
- taking blood pressure medicines



Keeping track of your blood pressure is important. Each time you check your own blood pressure, you should write down your numbers and the date.

The information on this side of the handout comes from the National Institutes of Health.

Visit www.nhlbi.nih.gov to learn more about hypertension.



ITHACA HEALTH ALLIANCE



ITHACA FREE CLINIC

ITHACA FREE CLINIC

how we can help

Chronic Care Program

Joining the Chronic Care Program gives you access to all of the services offered at the Ithaca Free Clinic. Patients are seen by appointment, instead of waiting at the walk-in clinic. Services include:

- acupuncture
- chiropractic
- massage therapy
- occupational therapy
- counseling
- herbal medicine
- dietitian
- energy work
- reiki
- health insurance enrollment

Here are some examples of how these services can help patients with hypertension.

Acupuncture

Acupuncture is a form of alternative medicine where thin needles are inserted into the body. Although it is often known for treating pain, acupuncture can treat or alleviate various conditions.

Acupuncture can help treat heart disease, but sometimes the treatment is temporary. Long-term treatment is usually needed to adequately treat heart disease.

Chiropractic

Chiropractors seek to reduce pain and improve functionality. Treatment usually involves manual spinal adjustments and joint manipulations. Studies show that chiropractic treatment on specific areas of the spine in people with hypertension can reduce and maintain a lower blood pressure.^{1,2}

Massage

Massage therapy involves putting pressure on various parts of the body to reduce stress, relieve pain, in addition to other therapeutic benefits.

Studies show that massage decreases both systolic and diastolic blood pressure in people with hypertension and pre-hypertension.³

Herbal Medicine

Herbal medicine uses plants for their therapeutic properties. Herbal medicines can be taken in various forms, including as teas or tinctures.

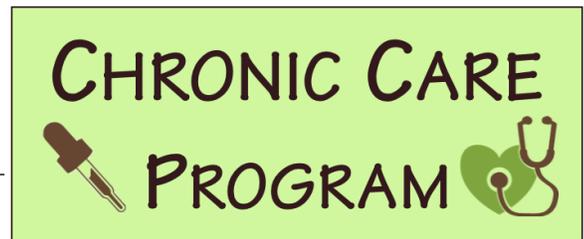
Herbalists do a patient assessment including symptoms, history and medication; they look at tests such as blood pressure and cholesterol levels; they discuss other symptoms that may or may not be associated with heart disease, diet and exercise and relaxation strategies are also discussed; the severity and long-term complications may also be discussed; Herbalists then prepare herbal medicines:

1. For overall support for the heart and vascular system
2. For specific cardiovascular disorders
3. To help modify cholesterol
4. For any other health care problems and overall health

¹"Atlas vertebra realignment and achievement of arterial pressure goal in hypertensive patients: a pilot study" in the Journal of Human Hypertension, published in May 2007.

²"Sympathetic and parasympathetic responses to specific diversified adjustments to chiropractic vertebral subluxations of the cervical and thoracic spine" in the Journal of Chiropractic Medicine, published in September 2008.

³"Effects of Massage on Blood Pressure in Patients With Hypertension and Prehypertension: A Meta-analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials" in the Journal of Cardiovascular Nursing, published in February 2016.



The Ithaca Free Clinic offers the Chronic Care Program, an integrative project that:

- helps patients with chronic diseases and conditions live with potential long-term health consequences
- makes each patient a part of a "care team" with multiple providers and health care professionals to help set and maintain the patient's health care plan
- helps patients set goals and also provides support to reach those goals
- works with each patient to become and stay healthy!

To join the Chronic Care Program,
call (607) 330-1254
or email ChronicCare@IthacaHealth.org.

Learn more about the Ithaca Free Clinic at:
IthacaHealth.org

We are located at 521 West Seneca Street,
Ithaca, New York.



The Ithaca Free Clinic offers many services to help decrease blood pressure including but not limited to acupuncture, massage and chiropractic care.

