37 Ways to Naturally Lower Blood Pressure

Introduction

There are roughly 67 million people in the United States that suffer from high blood pressure. That means 1 in every 3 adult Americans, that is 75 million people, have high blood pressure, or hypertension, as it called in a medical diagnosis [1]. In nearly all instances the terms high blood pressure and hypertension can be used interchangeably. The particularly scary thing about high blood pressure is that the number of adults affected by the condition continues to grow.

There are two types of hypertension diagnosed in adults. The first is primary or essential hypertension. Primary hypertension accounts for approximately 90% to 95% of all hypertension cases [2]. When it comes to primary hypertension, doctors and researches cannot identify an underlying medical cause. However, the second type of hypertension, called secondary hypertension, is initiated by a different medical condition. One of the most common medical conditions that lead to high blood pressure is kidney disease.

Understanding High Blood Pressure

In order to properly define high blood pressure and know why certain remedies will naturally lower blood pressure, we need to first understand the body’s blood circulatory system. It took medical researchers years to study the circulatory system, and there are still discoveries made about this system in the body. However, the basics of this important bodily function are straightforward.

Everyone is aware that blood and circulation are critical to sustaining human life and keeping people healthy. Blood carries oxygen and essential nutrients to all the organs and cells in our body and simultaneously removes carbon dioxide, waste, and certain toxins. The way blood does this is through the circulatory system. The body parts considered part of the circulatory system include the heart, lungs, veins, and arteries.

As your heart beats, it generates pressure. This pressure pushes blood through your arteries. Once this oxygen-rich blood is delivered to a specific body part, it is the veins
that return oxygen-depleted blood to the heart. Therefore, in reality, there are two forces tasked with pumping blood through our bodies. There is force as the heart pumps blood into the arteries, and then force as the heart rests between beats and the blood is drawn back to heart muscle [2].

What we call blood pressure is the measurement of the pressure of the blood within the arteries. Scientists have known about this pressure for a long time, but developing a way to measure and quantify the pressure was an entirely different research process. It was the discovery that the rise and fall of this pressure in the arteries can be measured in terms of millimeters of elemental mercury (or mm Hg) [3]. The device that does this is known as a sphygmomanometer. The numbers we are given for our blood pressure represent one mm Hg.

The reason you are given two mm Hg numbers when a doctor determines your blood pressure is due to the beat and rest of the heart. These numbers should be written one over the other. The top number represents your systolic blood pressure, which is the highest point of pressure during that reading. The bottom number is called diastolic pressure, which is the lowest point of pressure during that reading [3]. Together, these numbers are what many people mean when they say “my blood pressure.”

**Why High Blood Pressure Is Bad**

Everyone’s blood pressure fluctuates. In fact, from hour-to-hour, minute-to-minute, our blood pressure is gradually rising or falling. When your blood pressure increases and stays up, it can damage your circulatory system. Here is why.

Arteries are made of semi-flexible muscle and are made to withstand the natural rise and fall of pressure from a heartbeat and rest. However, when there is a huge force of high pressure against these arterial walls they begin to overstretch [4]. Eventually, it all starts to back up against the heart, and causes the heart to work even harder to pump blood through the body.

As well, this overstretching can result in tiny tears in your arteries, which is commonly known as vascular scarring. Within these tiny, nearly insignificant tears will hide things
such as plague, cholesterol, and even blood cells. This amounts to a massive problem. The risk of developing blood clots goes up and the arterial walls become weaker. In these weakened arteries, tissue damage can occur from a lack of oxygen behind plaque or other obstruction [4].

When blood pressure becomes too high, it can significantly increase the risk of heart attack and stroke [4]. Heart attacks are a loss of part of the heart muscle because it is receiving insufficient oxygen. While this medical condition is different from high blood pressure, it is easy to see why addition pressure on the circulatory system could cause a decrease in oxygen to the heart. A stroke happens when blood is not supplied to a certain part of the brain. It also makes sense that high blood pressure would increase the likelihood of a stroke, as damaged, blocked, or weakened arteries are going to be less efficient moving oxygenated blood to the brain.

How Doctors Want You to Lower Blood Pressure

There are a number of strategies for lowering blood pressure. Nearly every aspect of our lifestyles and daily decisions has an effect on blood pressure. Think about, simply watching a high contested sports match can make blood pressure go up, way up in fact. Therefore, doctors have proposed a number of different ways people with hypertension can lower their blood pressure. One of the most popular treatments in the United States is drug therapy.

However, being on a medication regimen for years is intimidating and questionable, so before you start your drug therapy to lower your blood pressure, you can try certain natural remedies. In this book, I will share with you 37 ways to naturally lower your blood pressure without having to receive any medication.

1. **Reduce Your Salt Intake**

Salt is a natural compound. It is added to any number of prepared and processed foods for the purpose of adding flavor and preserving the food longer. As a compound, salt is not a problem for high blood pressure, but its chemical component, sodium, is.
The human body is designed to process sodium, and it is needed for the retention of fluids within the body. Therefore, you actually need sodium in small amounts to stay healthy. However, too much sodium, and it becomes a bad thin and will disrupt, not assist with, your body's fluid balance. The body recognizes if you have too much sodium in your system, and compensates by drawing water from nearby tissue [5]. The higher amount of liquid moving through the arteries and veins to dilute the salinity causes the heart to pump harder, which results in high blood pressure.

Where Your Salt Is Coming From

Most people keep a saltshaker on their table, and we use a lot of salt to flavor the foods we eat. However, that amount is not enough to explain how salt causes an increase in blood pressure. Researchers estimate that only 6% of our daily salt intake comes from table salt. The other 94% of the 1-2 teaspoons the average person consumes each day must come from a less visible source – hidden in our processed foods [5].

Processed foods usually have a large quantity of excess salt. We do not prepare processed foods ourselves and therefore the salt is disguised within these meals, and that makes it easy for people to stray over the limit for healthy sodium intake. A good example is that a single microwave 'roast turkey' meal can have salt added to the meat, the potatoes, the stuffing, the gravy, and the flavoring. In total this additional salt equals approximately 5,400 milligrams of sodium [5]. While the recommended maximum sodium intake for an adult human is 2,300 milligrams [5]. The daily limit for sodium intake is even less for African Americans, men, and any individual over the age of 51.

Cutting Out the Salt

Given that so much of an individual’s sodium comes from a now known source, processed foods, it is easy to reduce sodium and salt intake and hopefully lower blood pressure. Simply, cut out processed foods. Replace these foods with fresh vegetables and home cooked meals with the salt carefully monitored. As an added benefit, cooking your own food will cut back on receipts at the grocery store and how much you spend on eating out.
2. **Sip Some Hibiscus**

For a very long time hibiscus, a red tea made from calyces of the Roselle Flower, has been used to manage high blood pressure. Interestingly, different cultures began using the tea for lowering or stabilizing blood pressure [6]. Yet, it was only in the past decade that studies showed there could be a connection between drinking hibiscus and lowering your blood pressure, proving it was an actual remedy, not just a folktale.

Hibiscus acts as a diuretic. After you drink the tea, it draws sodium from your bloodstream, and thus reduces the pressure on your arterial walls. What makes hibiscus an interesting remedy for hypertension is that it can mimic angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitors (ACE inhibitors) [6].

ACE inhibitors are a group of pharmaceutical drugs that are used in lowering blood pressure. These inhibitors work by hampering the angiotensin converting enzymes in the body (after which they are named). The ACE play a critical role in the renin-angiotensin system, which is the hormone system that is tasked with regulating fluid balance and blood pressure by converting the chemical angiotensin I, into the useable angiotensin II [7]. The problem is angiotensin II causes the muscles around your blood vessels to contract, this, in turn, narrows the blood vessels. Too much angiotensin II and blood pressure can go way up.

The ACE inhibitors prevent the ACE from making angiotensin II. The effect is that the blood vessels relax, blood volume goes down, and there is a corresponding decrease in blood pressure [6]. All of these benefits of the pharmaceuticals are replicated just from sipping a little tea.

**Drinking Hibiscus**

- 1-2 teaspoon of dried hibiscus
- A cup of fresh, piping hot water
- Lemon
- Honey, and
• 1-2 cinnamon sticks (this flavor is optional)

What to do

Boil the water, and then add the hibiscus and the cinnamon sticks (if you decide to use them). Allow it to steep for approximately five minutes. Add lemon or honey to taste, and then enjoy. It is recommended by the research that people consume hibiscus two or three times in a day in order to see results in their blood pressure.

3. Mushrooms

Ergothioneine is a powerful antioxidant that protects your cells from oxidative damage, which is much more commonly called aging. This antioxidant protects and preserves nitric oxide in your body, which is important to healthy blood pressure and flow. It is one of the only antioxidants that fights aging and high blood pressure in this way [8]. In fact, ergothioneine's role is so unique to cardio-vascular health that is believed that it should be grouped as a whole new vitamin.

The richest source of ergothioneine that most people will come across is mushrooms. These unassuming fungi are are ranked in the top 5 amongst the 29 most common vegetables and natural foods when it comes to antioxidant capacity [8]. As mushrooms are also a fantastic source of potassium, it makes sense to include them in your everyday diet.

4. Beautiful Blueberry Syrup

Syrups are one of the best ways to incorporate the benefits of spices and herbs into your daily life. The word ‘syrup’ is associated with something that is sweet and heavy, but that is not the meaning here. The ‘syrup’ which you see on the grocery shelves at your local food store may not be the best for your health with added sugars and even a lot of natural ones, but homemade syrup is a wonderful and delicious way of giving yourself a natural boost [9].
Eating blueberries is a great, natural way to lower your blood pressure. These little fruits are rich in the flavonoid quercetin, which is an antioxidants and anti-inflammatories with many other benefits. Among these benefits is lowering blood pressure by decreasing your systolic and diastolic pressure [9]. Flavonoids cause the relaxation of your arterial walls without causing cellular damage, which allows blood to flow easier and blood pressure to go down in a healthy way. Therefore, creating a blueberry syrup is a good way to add flavonoids to your daily diet.

**What You Will Need**

- A strainer, a pot, and a glass jar with an air-tight lid
- A cup of honey
- 4 cups of water
- 8 tablespoons of dried blueberries.

You can also mix in elderberries, if you want an additional heart healthy kick as well. To do this just halve the recommended tablespoons of blueberries to 4 and add four tablespoons of dried elderberries.

**What to do**

Add the dried berries to the water, and then bring both to simmer over low heat. Continue simmering until the amount of liquid has reduced by a half. Then, strain the solids out, while pressing on the particles and blueberry skin, to get any extra juices, and transfer the strained liquid back into the pot. Slowly stir in the honey, and allow the mixture to warm, so as to make sure that the two liquids blend together thoroughly.

Here there are two different paths that you can take. To make thicker syrup, you need to heat the berry juice and honey over medium-high heat for approximately 20 minutes. However, if you are satisfied with the thinner syrup, you can skip this step. As soon as you have mixed the liquids, bottle, label and store your syrup in the refrigerator for
approximately 3 to 4 weeks. To soak up all the health benefits of this natural, low sugar syrup, you should drink 1 tablespoon, 2 times a day.

5. **Cat’s Claw Decoction**

Cat’s claw (or *Uncaria tomentosa*) is a woody-climbing vine that is found in Central and South America. It is named after its thorns, which are hooked and resemble the claws of a cat. This vine has been used as a remedy for different health problems in the area it naturally grows for ages. Test tube studies have revealed that the vine has several benefits, with one of them being lower blood pressure [10].

This plant lowers blood pressure by dilating the blood vessels, which is a process known as vasodilation, and consequently, allows blood to flow through the blood vessels more easily. Cats claw can also act as a diuretic, and help rid the body of excess water and sodium [10]. As described, low, healthy sodium levels will reduce your blood pressure. The flavonoid and tannins are most likely the main components, which account for the vine’s healing actions.

There are two things that you need to keep in mind when you looking for and using this herb to naturally lower blood pressure. First, ensure that you have the right plant by asking for it by its scientific name that is mentioned above because there are numerous other plants, from different parts of the world, that are commonly referred to as cats claw. Second, look to purchase cats claw from an ecologically sustainable source. Also, it is important to know that pregnant women must avoid this herb.

Our recommendation is to turn cats claw into a flavorful, enjoyable decoction, which will give you numerous benefits. A decoction essentially is a type of tea. The difference is that a decoction is simmered for much longer to extract the flavor and benefits from a tough, woody, fibrous parts of a vine, such as roots or bark.

**What You Will Need**

- 1 to 2 tablespoons of dried herb
- 1½ to 2 cups of cold water and
• Lemon or honey, to taste

**What you need to do**

Place the water and herb in a small saucepan, over low heat, and let it simmer slowly. Then cover the water and herb, and allow the combination to simmer for another 40 to 45 minutes. During these 40 to 45 minutes you may need to add more water, depending on how concentrated you would your decoction to be. After this time, strain the herb from the liquid and add lemon or honey, if desired. This decoction should be consumed once daily.

**6. Basil**

This is a delicious herb that goes well with several foods. The pleasing taste and diversity with which the herb can be used means it is easy to incorporate into meals. However, a wide range of uses is not basil’s only positive. The herb can also help in reducing hypertension.

Studies have specifically shown that basil extract is good in lowering blood pressure [11]. However, it is believed that fresh basil will provide the same benefit to cardiovascular health. Our recommendation is to try and add a little fresh basil to your diet every day. The best, and most cost effective way, to do this is keep a pot of herb in your kitchen, and add the fresh leaves to casseroles, salads, soups, and pastas.

**7. Ginger- Cardamon Tea**

A study on how cardamom affects blood pressure was carried out in December 2009, and the results later published in the Indian Journal of Biochemistry and Biophysics. This particular study gave a group of participants a teaspoon of cardamom powder every day for a few weeks. The outcomes showed a substantial reduction in blood pressure [12]. While additional studies are needed to pinpoint exactly how it helps in reducing blood pressure, cardamom has still proven itself as a valuable home remedy for those with hypertension.
When cardamom is combined with cinnamon and ginger, which are both warming spices known to improve circulation, you can easily make tea that will help you in achieving a healthy heart and better blood pressure readings at the doctor’s office. Interestingly, black tea alone seems to help in reducing hypertension [12]. This is likely due to the high concentration of flavonoids in the herbs used to make black tea.

**What You Will Need:**

- Mortar and pestle
- ½ cup of milk
- ½ cup of water
- 1 teabag or 1 ½ tablespoons of black tea
- 1 teaspoon of cardamom pods
- A teaspoon of cinnamon powder
- 2 teaspoons of minced fresh ginger or ½ teaspoon of ginger powder.
- 2 to 3 teaspoons of honey

**What To Do**

Crush the cardamom pods, so as to release the oil. For this tea you do not need to grind the cardamom pods finely. In a saucepan mix all the ingredients, except the honey. Bring the liquid it a boil. Once boiling, quickly turn down the heat and let the ingredients simmer together for 6 to 9 minutes. At this point you should have a rich caramel brown color. Add honey, stir, and then strain the drink into a cup. Drink this ginger-cardamom tea 1 or 2 times a day [12].

**8. Watermelon in the Morning**

Watermelon is usually seen as a strictly summer fruit, one for barbecues and seed spitting contests. However, rather surprisingly, it can also help lower your blood pressure. In 1914, an organic compound known as citrulline, which is an amino acid, was first isolated in watermelon. When this compound is ingested, the body converts citrulline to L-arginine, which is another amino acid. L-arginine is a precursor to nitric oxide that is used by the
body to relax the walls of the blood vessels and allows blood to flow more easily through arteries and veins [13]. A more in-depth description of nitric oxide’s purpose is below.

Nitric oxide communicates with the different systems and cells in the body. These cells regulate, among other things, how hard your blood gets pumped via your whole body. This is known as vascular systematic resistance. Nitric oxide causes these cells to widen the blood vessels, and this lowers the vascular resistance [13]. Ultimately, this chemical compound to cell communication reduces blood pressure. Just imagine trying to pump a specific volume of liquid via a small opening versus a wider opening. The opening that is wider will allow the liquid to flow easily and smoothly. This is exactly how blood vessels work.

**What to do**

Each morning eat 1 to 2 cups of fresh watermelon on an empty stomach. If you have access to a personal blood pressure device at home, it is a great idea to monitor yourself, and observe the changes.

**9. Try Garlic**

Garlic is rich in beneficial ingredients that address several ailments in the human body. One of these ailments is high blood pressure. However, there is a catch. Allicin, the organosulphur compound that is responsible for many of garlic health benefits does not work well with the human body [14]. The problems with allicin are exasperated when garlic is consumed while raw. This is why certain people develop indigestion or heartburn after eating raw or too much garlic on their pizza, pasta, or other foods.

Obviously, humans can process allicin. This is because allicin is fairly unstable, and the factors that cause our bodies trouble are normally deactivated when allicin reacts with a substance that is acidic to a measurement lower than a pH of 3. A great example of such an acidic substances is our stomach acid.

Another option is to consume allicin in tablet form. When ingested in tablet form, there is an assured allicin yield, which makes sure that you get the appropriate amount of the
compound and the desired results when it comes to reducing blood pressure [14]. You should only take allicin tablets as directed on the bottle.

**10. Physical Exercises**

Physical exercises should be very high on your list of natural ways to lower blood pressure. There is not a medication, supplement, or food product that can replace what physical exercises does for your body, and in a society that is gradually becoming more sedentary, it can take effort to stay active. However, every minute of physical exertion is worthwhile when it comes to fighting off hypertension.

Our hearts are muscles, and as we engage in physical exercise our hearts become stronger. As we build up biceps and quads, it also becomes easier and easier to pump blood throughout the body and the heart can do less work to move the same amount of oxygen-rich and nutrient-rich blood. The force that is propelled through the arteries is smoother and less intense, which releases the pressure on the arterial walls and blood pressure goes down.

**How Much Exercise Helps**

Exercise can make a significant difference in your blood pressure. If you recall, the systolic pressure is the first and higher number provided in your blood pressure reading. It is this number that exercise reduces. Exercise can lower this reading by, approximately, 4 to 9 millimeters of mercury (or mm Hg) [15]. This is easily the same amount that blood pressure medications have been shown to lower systolic pressure.

Try to work out for 30 minutes in a day. You do not need to run a marathon to beat hypertension, in fact simple chores, such as scrubbing the floors or walking to work, are beneficial. The goal is to engage in 30 minutes of activity that raises you heart rate and increases your respiratory rate. What is particularly important to remember is that the benefits of exercise only last as long as you engage in physical activity. If you take a month off, it will reflect on your blood pressure reading [15].

**11. Flaxseed**
Flaxseed is a type of fiber that can be grown in certain climates around the world. It is prevalent in countries such as Egypt and China. This fibrous plant is surpassingly rich in omega-3 fatty acids, and it has been found to significantly lower blood pressure.

Flaxseed can also protect us against atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease by lowering serum cholesterol, acting as an antioxidant, and improving glucose tolerance [16]. You can purchase numerous products at your grocery store that contain flaxseed, but a better bet is to grind it yourself in a coffee grinder or buy ground flaxseed and add it to your home-cooked meals. The greatest part about flaxseed is that it is easy to stir it into any dish, from smoothies to soups, and to bake goods. For optimum potency and effect on your blood pressure, ensure that you store the flaxseed in your freezer [16].

12. Heart-Healthy Hawthorn

Hawthorn is a common herb that is used to treat heart ailments, as it is rich in flavonoids, such as quercetin and oligomeric procyanidins (OPC’s). Flavonoids are hyped as having numerous benefits, but one of the most studied effects of flavonoids is how these plant pigments affect different forms of heart disease [17]. This includes changes or improvements to palpitations, arrhythmia, regulate glucose metabolism, improved capillary functionality, and also reduction to arterial blood pressure.

As we have previously discussed, flavonoids are able to relax the arterial walls. This directly reduces the amount of pressure within these blood vessels. Therefore, consuming hawthorn, or another product rich in flavonoids can have a very quick effect on your blood pressure [17]. For some people, the drop in mm Hg in a blood pressure reading is almost immediate.

What You Will Need

You can enjoy hawthorn in the form of ‘balls’ or tea, depending on what is more convenient for your lifestyle. Here, we provide a way to make an edible version of hawthorn that can be stored and consumed on the go.

- 4 tablespoons of powdered hawthorn berry
• Carob or cocoa powder
• Water
• Raw honey
• ½ to 1 tablespoons of cinnamon powder

**What To Do**

Place the hawthorn and cinnamon powder in a bowl and thoroughly mix the two ingredients together. Then, add a good amount of water and honey to turn these ingredients into a paste. Thicken the mixture by adding carob or cocoa powder until it has formed dough that you can cleanly roll into small balls no larger than your index fingernail. Put these balls on a cookie sheet and dry them in an oven at a temperature less than 150 degrees Fahrenheit. These hawthorn treats must be stored away from sunlight and in a cool place. The best is within a glass jar kept in a kitchen cabinet. It is recommended to eat 1 daily.

**13. Fish oil**

Fish oil and its generous omega-3 fatty acids are good for your heart. Fish oil lowers blood pressure, while at the same time reducing triglycerides and increasing the levels of HDL cholesterol, which is a beneficial form of cholesterol [18]. Patients who have undergone transplant are given fish oil so as to reduce their risk of high blood pressure.

We recommend liquid fish oil drank in orange juice, over the fish oil pills that are currently on the market, but both versions give you the omega-3 fatty acids you need for heart health [18]. Take the amount that you have been prescribed by a doctor or as recommended on the supplement’s bottle.

**14. Coconut Water**

Coconut water is found inside the shell of unripe, green coconuts, which retain the fruits natural benefits in a raw and organic form. Coconut water has a lot of magnesium and potassium, both of which relate to the regular muscle function [19]. This includes regulation of the heart, which is a massive muscle in the body.
Many people have reported that drinking coconut water has helped in reducing their blood pressure. Drinking coconut water appears to affect systolic blood pressure, or the force that is created when the heart is pumping blood away from it. Therefore, drinking a bit of coconut water every day might be a good, natural remedy for you to try if you are preconditioned to hypertension or noticing rises in your blood pressure [19].

**What to do**

Drink approximately 8 ounces of coconut once or twice daily. Drinking it in the morning is perfect, especially if you will only be drinking it once daily. If you want to drink it twice throughout the day, you can do so in the morning and at night.

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15. **Cardamom**

This is a type of seasoning that originates from India and is usually used in different foods from South Asia. A study that was carried out to investigate the health effects of this seasoning found that the participants who were given powdered cardamom each day for several months saw a considerable reductions in their levels of blood pressure [20]. You can include cardamom powder or seeds in stews, in soups, and spice rubs, and also in baked goods for a special aroma and a positive health advantage.

16. **Celery Seed**

Celery seed is an herb that used to flavor casseroles, stews, soups, and any other savory dishes. This herb has been used for centuries in the treatment of high blood pressure in China, however studies have shown that its use in all parts of the world can be very effective in fighting hypertension [21]. You can use these seeds in lowering high blood pressure, but you can also juice the entire plant.

In addition to the benefits provided by the celery seeds, the plant itself is a diuretic. This means that celery is good for treating hypertension [21]. Also, celery is a water-based vegetable that is low in calories, but filling. This can help with weight management, and makes for a healthy snack.

17. **French Lavender**
The lovely, perfume-like scent of lavender is not the only useful characteristic of the plant. Oil of lavender has been used for hundreds of years as a perfume ingredient and also in inducing relaxation. Yet, a little known secret is that French lavender helps to reduce the effects of hypertension [22]. Though, not many people use lavender as a culinary herb, it is possible to use its flowers in baked foods and its leaves can be used in the same manner you utilize rosemary in cooking.

**18. Try a Mediterranean-Style Diet**

Thanks to foods such as flax seeds and olives, the Mediterranean diet is high in healthy omega-3 rich fat oils, seafood, vegetables, and fruits. To ward off high blood pressure, research has found that the low-grain or even grain-free Mediterranean diet, with naturally copious with omega-3 foods, is a perfect natural alternative, whereas, many American diets include flour-packed breads, cereals, and sweets [23].

A few of the top foods that you may want to include in your transition to a Mediterranean diet are vegetables, such as tomatoes, olives, and cucumber, fruits, wild-caught fish, particularly salmon, flax seeds, and olive oil [23]. All of these natural, low-calorie foods will assist in lowering your blood pressure naturally.

**19. Use the Power of Magnesium**

Magnesium is a great chemical element for fighting hypertension, as it helps in relaxing your blood vessels. In this way, magnesium can have a direct impact in naturally reducing hypertension. Yet, the majority of people around the world have a magnesium deficiency [24]. To combat this deficiency and naturally lower your blood pressure you can take magnesium supplements. The recommended dose for specifically fighting hypertension is 500 milligrams of magnesium daily [24].

**20. Increase Your Intake of Potassium**

The crucial element of potassium, and foods that are high in potassium including watermelons and avocados, assist in counteracting the effect of sodium within the blood
stream and body and also guard against high blood pressure. Some other foods that are high in potassium include bananas and coconut water [25].

Coconut water is a good choice if you want something that is a little bit sweetened and flavorful to drink through the day and can be a great alternative to slugging down calorie-filled sodas or sugary juices. Another pleasant way to overcome low-potassium levels and naturally reduce your blood pressure is to use coconut water as the liquid base for your super-food smoothie each morning.

21. Maintain balance with Coenzyme Q10

Coenzyme Q10 is usually known as CoQ10, and it is an anti-oxidant that is important for supporting heart health [26]. Many individuals recognize the name CoQ10 if they have taken or researched blood pressure medications or cholesterol-lowering medicines, as CoQ10 is an important active ingredient in both of these types of medication. To reflect the amount of CoQ10 that is obtained from medication, individuals should consume 200 – 300 milligrams of Co-enzyme Q10 each day through supplements. In this form, CoQ10 becomes a natural remedy for hypertension.

22. Beetroot

Nitrites and nitrates are compounds that play a huge role in our metabolic system [27]. Although mistaken, the majority of people believe that nitrites and nitrates are unnatural, but that is not really the case. It is true that both nitrites and nitrates are added to foods as preservatives, but our bodies also produce these compounds naturally for saliva. Nitrites and nitrates can be converted into different compounds, such as nitric oxide, which is very good for blood pressure or nitrosamines, which are generally bad for the human body.

Nitrosamines are made when nitrites get exposed to very high temperatures. Think frying the nitrites in preservative-loaded bacon. When nitrites are changed into this form it is typically associated with an increase in the risk of developing cancer. For this particular reason, foods that are rich in nitrates should not be exposed to extremely high temperatures. This allows the compound to become the beneficial nitric oxide.
Alternatively, nitric oxide acts as a signaling molecule, which is usually beneficial to health [27]. It provides signals to the cells in your arteries, telling them to relax and soften. This action significantly improves vasodilation and lowers blood pressure.

What many people do not recognize is that vegetables are the biggest source of nitrates in many diets. A 2013 review that examined results of 16 different clinical trials on beetroot juice supplementation found that the intake of beetroot juice lowers blood pressure by approximately 4 to 10 mm Hg in a few hours. Any reduction of at least 5 mm Hg in blood pressure significantly reduces the risk of a cardiovascular disease by 9% and a fatal stroke by about 14% [27].

**23. Almonds and Cashews**

Tree nuts, which should not be confused with peanuts, come from the ground, and are linked to several health benefits. Cashews and almonds stand out from other tree nuts in terms of health benefits, especially when it comes to metabolic conditions like hypertension [28]. What makes almonds and cashews stand out is their rich magnesium content.

Magnesium is a critical mineral that is involved in more than 300 bodily processes. The lack of magnesium in a diet is closely linked with blood pressure problems, and there are many people that have a magnesium deficiency. About 68% of adults in the United States are magnesium deficient. Numerous studies have shown that addressing the lack of magnesium in the body can significantly reduce hypertension.

A study that was carried out among people suffering from type 2 diabetes indicated that there were reductions in blood pressure once Vitamin E and C were added to a regular magnesium supplementation [28]. As diabetes is a cause of secondary hypertension, it can be important to address the unique concerns of a diabetic individual with high blood pressure. Therefore, if you are diabetic, adding magnesium Vitamin E, and Vitamin C is something that you should keep in mind.
The current recommended intake of magnesium in the United States is 310 to 420 milligrams per day [28]. One cup of cashews or almonds provides about 360 milligrams, which is enough to help you maintain optimum levels.

**24. Kale**

Like spinach, kale is loaded with antioxidants, minerals, vitamins, and other compounds that are known to assist in preventing disease. Nonetheless, the reason kales reduce hypertension is because of its distinct nutrient profile. Kale is rich in Vitamin C, potassium, and magnesium [29]. A diet that is high in potassium can be strongly associated with eliminating hypertension. This could be because magnesium’s effect on hypertension is enhanced when it is combined with an increased consumption of potassium. In some of the cases, this particular combination has reduced blood pressure as much as medications. Unfortunately the majority of people do not consume enough potassium. Several centuries ago, hunters-gatherers consumed approximately 10,500 milligrams of potassium each day, whereas today the average American consumes only 2,800 milligrams [29].

Kale is so much better than spinach for high blood pressure, as it has 4 times more Vitamin C. Similar to the relationship between magnesium and potassium, Vitamin C increases the blood pressure-reducing effects of magnesium and can even increase potassium in the blood [29]. Since kale has Vitamin C, potassium, and magnesium it is one of the best food for controlling blood pressure and minimizing the risk of cardiovascular disease.

**25. Stevia**

With refined sugar being recognized today as harmful, sweetener substitutes have become extremely popular. Stevia is one of the few natural sweeteners that do not have the negative side effects of sugar of the poor taste of chemical substitutes. Also it does not mess up your blood sugar, like the other artificial sweeteners on the market today. The two active ingredients that make stevia sweet are known as rebaudioside and stevioside [30].
A one-year trial on the participants with hypertension found that those who were given 750 milligrams of stevioside each day reduced their systolic pressure by approximately 8.1% and diastolic pressure by about 13.8% after a period of just 3 months. Remarkably, they were able to keep this reduction for a period of 9 months [30]. Similarly, another study, which used high doses of stevioside (approximately 1,500 milligrams per day), found that after 2 years, the blood pressure reduced by 6.5% [30].

In the event you want to replace sugar in your diet, or you are already using another kind of sweetener, stevia is a great alternative for also helping hypertension. It is not a quick-fix, but its long-term effects are beneficial and safe.

26. Turmeric

This is a popular Indian curry spice. For many centuries, Indians have used it in cooking, and also utilized turmeric as a medicinal herb. Turmeric’s medicinal ability to effectively lower high blood pressure has been confirmed by many different studies. Its main active ingredient is curcumin, which has potent anti-inflammatory effects in the human body [31].

In a study that was carried out among 32 post-menopausal women, supplementing 150 milligrams of curcumin, for 8 weeks, successfully improved blood flow to the levels seen among those individuals who exercise for about 3 times in a week. Another study that used 500 milligrams of turmeric 3 times per day, containing approximately 22.1 milligrams in each dose, showed a considerable reduction in blood pressure among participants with nephritis [31]. Those who had cardiovascular issues, especially individuals with diabetes, are at a higher risk for such kidney problems.

The advantages of curcumin on blood pressure and blood flow are believed to be related to nitric oxide. Supplementation of curcumin has been shown to increase the circulation of nitric oxide, and in some cases by 40% in a period of weeks [31]. These possible cardiovascular advantages are too significant to be ignored, particularly if you are at a risk of suffering complications related to hypertension. However, with curcumin, there is just one problem. Human beings can find it hard to absorb. For any health benefits, it is
critical to consume curcumin with enhancers like black pepper. Black pepper is a good choice since it has piperine - a substance which considerably boosts the absorption of curcumin by a whopping 2,000% [31].

27. Green Tea

Traditionally green tea is from China. This drink is loaded with an assortment of powerful antioxidants and compounds unrivalled by any other foodstuff. It has become quite trendy to drink green tea, and after hearing the list of benefits it is easy to jump on the bandwagon.

The main reason why green tea is so advantageous is because of its polyphenols. Green tea contains a compound known as catechin; this compound can improve blood pressure and blood flow [32]. Just like curcumin, and beetroot, the mechanism is believed to involve nitric oxide.

A review of green tea established that two cups per day (approximately 500 milliliters) can significantly increase arterial diameter by 40% [32]. Just as wider pipes will significantly increase water flow, more relaxed and wider blood vessels increases blood flow. This, in turn, reduces pressure. It is no big surprise therefore that regular green tea drinkers have up to a 31% lower risk of cardiovascular disease, hypertension included [32].

28. Green Coffee

You might be surprised to learn that coffee beans are naturally green in color. As they grown and even ripen they maintain a bright green color, and it is only when they are roasted that they turn to the deep brown color we associated with our morning coffee. Therefore, green coffee is just another name for unroasted coffee.

While roasted coffee beans do have a similar chemical composition as that one of green coffee beans, the process of roasting the beans destroys its chlorogenic acid [33]. The acid is an active ingredient that gives green coffee beans their additional health
properties. It is also the ingredient that is extracted to be used in supplements, for instance green coffee bean extract.

Green coffee bean extract may not be the ‘weight-loss wonder’ that Dr. Oz claimed, but it does improve blood flow. A 12-week study was carried out with the use of 480 milligrams of green coffee extract, which is equal to 140 milligrams of chlorogenic acid. This study found that blood pressure and heart rate reduced by approximately 8% by the end of this 12-week period [33]. These benefits were maintained for a period of 12 weeks of supplementation, but only among those participants who started with high blood pressure. Hypothetically, drinking more green coffee should have the same benefits of supplementing, but it depends on the concentration of chlorogenic acid concentration. The doses in these studies were the same as 120-300 milligrams of chlorogenic acid [33].

29. Vitamin K2

For decades now, nutritionists have told us to eliminate fats from our diet. However, recent research and medical information shows that is a bad recommendation that was based on bad science. When it comes to fat intake and blood pressure, full-fat dairy is beneficial to overall health. These dairy products are high in Vitamin K2 [34]. This vitamin helps to regulate where calcium ends up in your body. It works to maintain high levels of calcium in your bones, and will eliminate it from your blood vessels, where calcium can cause calcification and arterial stiffness.

Blood pressure is a critical predictor of vascular diseases, for instance type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Full-fat, and grass-fed dairy products are the best sources of Vitamin K2. This includes ghee, full-fat yogurt, cheese, and butter. Liver and other organs are also good Vitamin K2 sources, as are fermented foods like miso, natto, and sauerkraut [34]. If these food sources are not good options for you, supplementation is a good alternative. Just keep in mind that a K2 supplement should be taken with Vitamin D for maximum effect.

30. Extra-Virgin Olive Oil
In many people’s opinion, olive oil is the healthiest oil in the world. This oil is a staple in the majority of Mediterranean-style diets, and it is very rich in heart-healthy phenolic antioxidants and monounsaturated fats. Extra-virgin oil has the highest levels of advantageous components since it is the least processed type of olive oil [35].

The cardiovascular advantages of olive oil are certainly no secret. Cultures and people who have easy access to olive oil have been lauding its benefits for a long time. More recently, one study showed that olive oil might reduce the likelihood of strokes, heart attacks, and death from heart disease by nearly 30% [35]. Therefore, it is no surprise that olive oil is one of the best natural products in the world for reducing high blood pressure.

Some specific results better highlight the benefits of olive oil. In a study of 23 participants with hypertension, extra-virgin olive oil reduced hypertension by about 48%, as compared to sunflower oil [35]. As well, consistent olive oil consumption reduced the need for blood pressure reducing pharmaceuticals in 8 of the 23 participants.

**31. Pomegranate**

Much like curcumin and beetroot, pomegranate is a great source for artery-relaxing nitrates. Softer arteries remain elastic and thin, and create much less resistance as blood is pumped from the heart. This increased flexibility enables the heart to pump the blood at a lower pressure.

As a matter of fact, drinking 1.7 oz. (50 ml) of pomegranate juice daily has been associated with a 30% reduction in carotid artery thickness [36]. This is the artery that supplies oxygen and nutrient-rich blood to the neck and head. Given the very important purpose of this artery, a natural product that can improve its functionality receives a lot of attention. After this study, researchers have become even more curious about the benefits of pomegranate.

In other studies involving people with hypertension, data shows that consuming approximately 5 oz. (150ml) of pomegranate juice daily for 2 weeks can lower both diastolic and systolic blood pressure by considerable amounts [36]. In addition, the distinct fatty acid, called punicic acid, which is found in pomegranate has been shown to
protect against different factors of the heart disease progression. These include lowering LDL cholesterol and improving triglyceride numbers, which is the HDL ratio.

32. **Reduce Carbohydrate Intake**

One of the major contributors of high blood pressure is insulin resistance and high blood sugar. Some evidence shows that pathological changes in insulin and glucose metabolism considerably affect the clinical and developmental course of blood pressure, and therefore should be main targets for dietary intervention against high blood pressure. Chronically high triglycerides, hyperinsulinemia, and high blood sugar are far more common in people with hypertension than those with normal blood pressure, and one of the biggest contributors to all the three of these conditions is the excess intake of carbohydrates, especially refined sugars and grains [37].

While some studies show that high fructose intake can increase blood pressure, other studies show that fructose itself is not the main problem, but rather it is the excess consumption of carbohydrates. This means that you should not be concerned with your eating modest levels of naturally-occurring fructose, like that from honey and fruit, as these foods in the context of a moderate carbohydrate diet are healthy [37]. Makes sure that you adjust your intake of carbohydrates to fit your health goals and needs, and get your carbs from nutrient-dense whole foods such as starchy vegetables and fruits.

While carbohydrates, not fructose, appear to be an underlying cause of high blood pressure, it does not mean you should immediately begin consuming massive amounts of high fructose corn syrup. Excess intake of sugar-sweetened drinks, such as sweet tea, soda, and other sugary beverages, has been shown to affect blood pressure directly. Eliminating these beverages should be a step that you take to lower your blood pressure, and it can also help you in loosing excess weight and lowering your blood sugar levels.

33. **Sweet Potatoes and Potatoes**

Sweet potatoes and potatoes are high in potassium. In the context of heart health and blood pressure, potassium works well with sodium in order to regulate the electrical activity of the heart. Human trials have shown that when potassium intake is increased, it
will significantly lower high blood pressure, particularly in individuals who have a potassium deficiency [38]. The only exception to these findings was individuals who had secondary hypertension due to a chronic kidney disease. As a matter of fact, the combination of magnesium and potassium can reduce blood pressure to the same degree as medication.

It goes without saying that individuals suffering from hypertension can benefit tremendously from consuming vegetables, but in this book we would like to put more emphasis on consuming root vegetables, for instance sweet potatoes and potatoes. These foods tend to replace the other starchy carbs on your plate with have far less sodium but far more potassium [38]. For instance replacing grains in your diet with root vegetables will dramatically increase your potassium intake.

34. Dark Chocolate

The words “healthy” and “chocolate” in the same sentence may sound too good to be true. Well that is not case, as long as some simple rules about chocolate and cardiovascular health are followed. The single biggest rule is consuming chocolate that is high in cocoa content and has less added sugars or other ingredients.

Dark chocolate has cocoa that is extracted directly from the cocoa plant. The active constituents within cocoa plant are known as flavanols, specifically in cocoa are called Flavon-3-ol, which can reduce blood pressure through the inhibition of ACE (angiotensin converting enzyme). These flavanols act much like ACE inhibitor drugs [39].

An in-depth analysis of 20 different studies concluded that the consumption of cocoa (usually cocoa supplementation or dark chocolate) is linked with a 2 to 3 point mm Hg reduction of systolic blood pressure [39]. This is consistent with an earlier review of 13 relevant studies that came to the same conclusion. This first analysis also noted that cocoa products were some of the most effective natural products for treating pre-hypertension or high blood pressure.
According to Calorieking, 1 ounce (30 grams) of 70% to 85% dark chocolate has 7.2 grams of sugar and 179 calories. The similar amount of milk chocolate has more than twice the sugar, not to mention a fraction of the flavanols and half the potassium.

Yet, the relationship between dark chocolate, Flavon-3-ol, and blood pressure must be considered more carefully. These studies were following individuals who consumed a great deal of dark chocolate or cocoa extract; a consumption of between 500 to 1,000 mgs a day [39]. This is more than the average person would consume on a casual basis. This suggests first, that for chocolate to be beneficial it needs to be dark, equal to about 25 to 40 grams of 85% dark chocolate, which is usually shown on its package as 85% cocoa, and second, that it must be eaten in high quantities.

35. Spirulina

Spirulina, which is blue-green algae, is an organism that can grow in both salt and fresh water. This organism has been known for its health benefits for some time, but became even more popular when NASA suggested that astronauts could grow spirulina in space to supplement their diet [40].

Spirulina influences cardio-vascular and blood pressure by increasing the production of the signal molecule nitric oxide. The benefits of nitric oxide in widening blood vessels was discussed earlier in this book, but suffice to repeat that this chemical compound makes it easier for the same amount of blood to pass through arteries and veins. Among healthy individuals, a daily dose of approximately 4.5 grams of spirulina, for about 6 weeks can considerably lower blood pressure [40].

36. Increase Your Fatty Fish Intake

Fatty fish, such as salmon, tuna, sardines, and mackerel, are rich in essential omega-3 fatty acids. In several studies, these particular fatty acids have been shown to minimize the risk of high blood pressure and cardio-vascular events [41]. In fact, a recent meta-analysis showed that fish oil supplementation could considerably reduce both diastolic and systolic blood pressure.
The numerous benefits of fatty fish for promoting general health are hard to argue against, and those with hypertension may particularly benefit from adding fish to their diet. In addition, certain fatty fish such as wild salmon and halibut are extremely high in potassium [41]. Potassium carries electrical impulses through your body, which can make your heart healthier, your brain faster, and your muscles respond more rapidly. This additional benefit of increasing the potassium in your diet shows the advantage of choosing whole-foods, instead of supplements when it comes to disease prevention.

### Gotu Kola Tea

Gotu Kola tea originates from India, China, and Indonesia, where it has been used for medicinal purposes for thousands of years. In these eastern countries, Gotu Kola tea was prescribed by healers for wounds, mental deficiencies, and even applied to skin conditions. While the western world has been more hesitant to accept some of these medicinal uses, there has been recent evidence that Gota Kola tea can lower blood pressure [42]. In some medical circles, it has become an attractive natural treatment for this purpose.

While Gotu Kola tea is thought to lower blood pressure for most individuals, it seems to be particularly useful for treating individuals with venous deficiencies [42]. It is believed that this tea can assist in the maintenance of connective tissue, which strengthens the weakened veins and improves blood circulation. Three cups of gotu kola tea is the current recommended amount.

### Conclusion

It has become incredibly common in modern society to look for a pharmaceutical, quick fix to our health problems. We often visit medical professionals, only to learn that a medical regimen is the recommended course of action in solving our health conditions. These medications have given humans a number of benefits and second chances to live healthy lives. However, they should not always be the first course of action.

When it comes to lowering blood pressure, Americans, and individuals around the world, have become incredibly reliant upon pharmaceuticals and across the board there is an
ignorance of the natural options. Yet, there are natural, healthy ways to fight hypertension and reduce high blood pressure. Perhaps using some of the methods in this book you will find a non-medical answer for your blood pressure concerns.

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