



Dr. Stephen Sinatra

5 Surprising Ways to

# **LOWER YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE NATURALLY**



Plus, the  
One Thing  
You Should  
NEVER Do!



## About Dr. Stephen Sinatra

Dr. Stephen Sinatra is a top cardiologist whose integrative approach to treating cardiovascular disease has helped thousands.

His expertise is grounded in more than 40 years of clinical practice, research, and study beginning as an attending physician at Manchester Memorial Hospital (Eastern Connecticut Health Network). His career there included nine years as chief of cardiology, 18 years as director of medical education, seven years as director of echocardiography, three years as director of cardiac rehabilitation, and one year as director of the weight reducing program.

In 1987, Dr. Sinatra founded the New England Heart Center. Through it, he became a well-known advocate of combining conventional medical treatments for heart disease with complementary nutritional, anti-aging, and psychological therapies.

Today, Dr. Sinatra is a leading authority on integrative solutions for heart health. He has written a more than a dozen books on natural ways to treat many of the heart health conditions we face—including the best-selling book *Lower Your Blood Pressure in Eight Weeks: A Revolutionary Program for a Longer, Healthier Life*. He also developed the highly viewed webinar *8 Steps to Lower Blood Pressure Naturally*.

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# INTRODUCTION

Dear Reader,

Blood pressure is an essential part of cardiovascular health. If you think of your heart and arteries as a system that rhythmically circulates blood throughout your body, then blood pressure is the measurement of how much effort your heart and arteries must put forth to make that happen.



As we all know, to keep your blood pressure in the healthy range (less than 120 mmHg / less than 80 mmHg) it's important to eat a blood pressure-friendly diet, get regular exercise, and reduce stress. Plus, there are many little-known—and often surprising—ways to keep your blood pressure in the normal range.

For instance, did you know that avoiding sugar is as important as avoiding salt? Or, that drinking more water can help to lower your blood pressure? These are just a few of the many small things you can do to make a real difference in your blood pressure. Plus, at the end of this report I'll tell you the one thing you should never do—it's a little-known, and surprising, cause of high blood pressure.

For more information on maintaining healthy blood pressure naturally, I encourage you to visit my website at [drsinatra.com](http://drsinatra.com). You can also join me on Facebook at [facebook.com/SinatraMD](http://facebook.com/SinatraMD).

From my heart to yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Sinatra M.D." in a cursive script.

Stephen Sinatra, M.D.

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## Secret #1 Avoid Sugar!

When people think about lowering blood pressure, they know they should limit salt. I recommend aiming for no more than 2.8 grams of sodium daily. But did you know that too much sugar can raise your blood pressure, too?

Researchers at Louisiana State University analyzed the results of the 18-month PREMIER Study which was conducted on 810 people with prehypertension or stage I hypertension. Their goal was to evaluate how sugar-sweetened beverages affected blood pressure.

The results, which were published in the journal *Circulation*, found that cutting back on sugar will reduce blood pressure. In fact, they found that those who drank one less serving of sugary beverages per day had a measurable decline in blood pressure after 18 months. This is important because high blood pressure is a risk factor for both heart disease and stroke, and even moderate reductions in blood pressure readings can lower your risk.

### What does this mean for you?

To lower your sugar intake, try these four simple things:

- 1. Avoid High Fructose Corn Syrup:** Much of the sugar we eat is disguised as high fructose corn syrup—which is found in everything from ketchup, to salad dressings, and crackers. In a study, researchers found that those who eat more than 74 grams of high fructose corn syrup daily (the amount in about two and a half regular soft drinks) have a much higher chance of developing high blood pressure. So, do everything you can to avoid it.
- 2. Use Natural Sweeteners:** If you need to sweeten foods, add a little juice from oranges, grapes, pears, peaches, or other fruits. Or you can use a natural sweetener like stevia.
- 3. Eat Several Small Meals and Avoid Snacking:** By spacing your food intake out throughout the day, you will be less inclined to overload on sweets that cause high blood pressure.
- 4. Limit Alcohol:** Many people don't realize that alcohol contains a large store of hidden sugar. So, if you're trying to cut back on sugar, remember to limit the alcohol.



## Secret #2 Eat More Potassium

Potassium relaxes your arterial walls, which helps to reduce high blood pressure. In fact, Harvard researchers have found that a diet high in potassium helps to protect against stroke-related deaths in people who have high blood pressure.

### What does this mean for you?

To lower your blood pressure, include more potassium-rich foods in your diet such as:



#### BAKED POTATOES

926 mg in a medium potato



#### COCONUT WATER

600 mg in a cup



#### BANANAS

422 mg in a medium banana



#### ORANGES

174 mg in a small orange



#### RAISINS

322 mg in 1.5 ounces



#### EGGPLANT

188 mg in a cup

You want to strive to eat 3,000–4,000 mg of potassium a day if you don't have renal (kidney) problems. But talk to your doctor before increasing your potassium intake. Also talk to your doctor if you're taking a diuretic to reduce high blood pressure, since diuretics are notorious for draining the body of minerals.





### ***Secret #3***

## **Harness the Healing Power of Garlic**

Garlic is an excellent natural blood pressure reducer. It is so effective as a blood thinner that I instruct some patients to lay off garlic if they are on a pharmaceutical blood thinner like warfarin.

In an Australian review of 11 studies in which patients with high blood pressure were randomly given garlic or a placebo, researchers found that garlic can reduce blood pressure as effectively as some drugs.

### **What does this mean for you?**

Since you need to eat about four cloves of garlic (about four grams) daily to achieve a noticeable blood pressure-lowering effect, a garlic supplement is a great natural way to lower blood pressure. I like enteric-coated softgel garlic capsules (softgels are better absorbed in the body). Take 500–1,000 mg daily in divided doses.

You can also add garlic to your diet. Although evidence to date indicates that raw, cold-aged garlic offers the greatest medicinal value, studies have also demonstrated that cooked garlic is effective. The highest quality garlic is grown organically.

Eating garlic has few side effects: some people are allergic to it and others may experience some stomach or intestinal upset. If garlic breath is a problem, try chewing fresh parsley, rosemary, or fennel. Freshly squeezed lemon, a piece of grapefruit, or an orange peel may also counteract garlic's pungent odor.





## Secret #4 Limit Painkillers

Painkillers come with a lot of risks, including high blood pressure—especially for women. A report from the Harvard School of Medicine’s ongoing Nurses’ Health Study concluded that women are at increased risk for high blood pressure levels if they take daily doses of painkillers such as acetaminophen and ibuprofen.

Specifically, women taking an average daily dose of more than 500 mg of acetaminophen (one extra-strength tablet) had a 93 to 99 percent increased risk of developing high blood pressure levels within three years, compared to women taking less than 500 mg.

Plus, women taking more than 400 mg a day of over-the-counter nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) had a 60 to 78 percent increased risk of developing high blood pressure levels, compared to women taking less than 400 mg.

But the heart risks of NSAIDs aren’t limited to women. Based on research findings, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a strong warning that NSAIDs can increase the risk of strokes and heart attacks. In fact, manufacturers of NSAIDs are now required to warn users that, “The risk of heart attack or stroke can occur as early as the first weeks of using an NSAID. Plus, the risk appears greater at higher doses.”

### What does this mean for you?

Limit your use of painkillers as much as possible. Instead, try these natural painkillers:

- **MSM**, an active form of sulfur, can help with joint and muscle pain—start with one gram daily, and slowly increase to 4–5 grams in divided doses with meals.
- **Arnica**, which can be purchased as either a topical cream or sublingual (under-the-tongue) pill.
- **For migraine headaches**, I like a combination of magnesium (400–800 mg daily) and Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) (100–200 mg daily).
- **Grounding**. The simple act of grounding yourself to the Earth by walking barefoot decreases inflammation, lowers stress, increases calmness, and helps to relieve pain. Plus, grounding has another benefit—it may help to lower blood pressure.





## **Secret #5** **Drink More Water**

Did you know that staying adequately hydrated is one of the simplest ways to lower your blood pressure naturally? When you're dehydrated, your body attempts to secure its fluid supply by retaining sodium. Sodium is your body's "water-insurance mechanism."

Hydration also affects kidney function, and your kidneys play an important role in regulating your blood pressure. So, what is critical for the health of your kidneys is essential for lowering your blood pressure naturally.

### **What does this mean for you?**

- **Make sure you're drinking enough water.** Most people need to drink eight to ten 8-ounce glasses of water per day to maintain healthy blood pressure.
- **Don't overdo it.** Like a sponge, your body can absorb water at a limited rate. It will require some time to adapt to your new level of water intake and become fully hydrated. Drinking too much water, more than 96 ounces per day, can overwork your kidneys and digestive system.
- **Remember to hydrate well** before, during, and after exercise since you lose water through sweat and evaporation.

Finally, if you have congestive heart failure, kidney issues, or are taking diuretics and/or are on fluid restrictions, consult your physician before increasing your water intake. That's because hypertension, diabetes, and stress all leave the kidneys in a weakened state.





## ***One Thing You Should Never Do*** **Use a Cordless Phone or Wi-Fi**

I spend a lot of my time getting the word out about the dangers of wireless technology when it comes to heart health. And a few years back, a case study by Citizens for Safe Technology drove home the point that wireless technology can raise blood pressure.

In the case study, a German man went to the hospital in a hypertensive crisis. His blood pressure quickly stabilized in the emergency room. Then, after a week in the hospital where his blood pressure normalized, he was allowed to return home—where his blood pressure rose again.

This man's indoor wireless transmitter had been turned off, and the DECT cordless phone disabled. The ambient radiation levels in his home were low. But what he overlooked was a cordless phone charging station near his bed. Once that second charger was disabled, his blood pressure normalized.

### **What does this mean for you?**

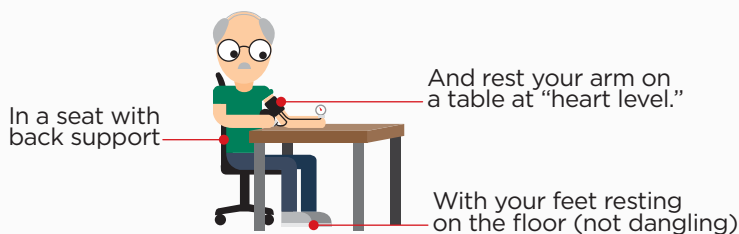
If you have high blood pressure, consider switching out your cordless phones for corded models—especially if the phones are near your bedroom.

You also want to limit your exposure to Wi-Fi by using an Ethernet cable for your computer connection and disable the built-in Wi-Fi once you have an Ethernet connection. If you're not able to switch to an Ethernet connection, use an extension connection on your Wi-Fi network plug-in to keep it at a better distance from your body.

Many cell phones, smart phones, tablet devices, and cable television routers also use Wi-Fi. So you want to turn that feature off when you're not using these devices. Also, with some devices—such as gaming systems—you need to unplug the device in order to disable the Wi-Fi. Plus, you want to limit the time you spend in places with Wi-Fi, such as coffee shops.

# HOW TO GET AN ACCURATE BLOOD PRESSURE READING

To get an accurate blood pressure reading, posture is extremely important. You want to position yourself:



You also want to test both arms since readings can vary.

It's also important to refrain from talking and try to relax. For standardization and accuracy, blood pressure should be taken exactly the same way every time. It's best to take a blood pressure reading an hour after awakening, before breakfast.

However, if you are monitoring your blood pressure at home, I recommend taking blood pressure tests at different times throughout the day and averaging your readings to get the best sense of what your current pressure is. Doing this is important because blood pressure fluctuates over the course of the day, and you don't want all of your readings to be taken at a time when it's naturally high or low.

## What Should Your Blood Pressure Be?



**NORMAL**  
less than 120  
over 80 mmHg



**HIGH**  
140 mmHg over  
90 mmHg, or greater



**HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS**  
higher than 180 mmHg over  
110 mmHg  
(requires emergency care)

# Dr. Sinatra

AMERICA'S #1 INTEGRATIVE CARDIOLOGIST®

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*drsinatra.com* and *heartmdinstitute.com* empower you with the tools and information you need to take an active role in managing your health. You can easily access information on a wide range of health conditions, get answers to the most frequently asked questions about heart health, or read Dr. Sinatra's blog where he discusses the latest integrative solutions to keep your heart healthy.



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### Connect with Dr. Sinatra on Facebook

Stay in contact daily with Dr. Sinatra, and exchange health information and ideas with other health-conscious individuals on Dr. Sinatra's Facebook page.

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