

# Clear and Easy #8



**Molina Healthcare**  
**24 Hour Nurse Advice Line**  
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**Molina Healthcare**  
**Línea de TeleSalud**  
**Disponible las 24 Horas**  
(866) 648-3537

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# **Titles by Clear and Easy**

Book 1 – Pregnancy

Book 2 – Diabetes

Book 3 – Stress and Depression

Book 4 – End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD)

Book 5 – Asthma

Book 6 – Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary  
Disease (COPD)

Book 7 – Congestive Heart Failure

Book 8 – Hypertension

Book 9 – Coronary Heart Disease

Book 10 – How to Take Care of Your Sick  
Family

Book 11 – Help to Quit Smoking

Book 12 – Kids and Asthma

Book 13 – Kids and Diabetes

Book 14 – How to Keep Your Family Healthy

Book 15 – Asthma and COPD

Book 16 – Hypertension and Coronary Heart  
Disease

Book 17 – Postpartum: Caring for You and  
Your Newborn

Do you have health questions? Call Molina Healthcare's Nurse Advice Line. Places to put our number:

- On all your home phones.
- Your cell phone. Add us to your list of contacts.
- Your purse or wallet.
- Refrigerator door.
- Bedroom nightstand.
- In your medicine cabinet.
- In easy to reach places.



**NM SCI Members:**

You may also call UNM SCI Nurse Advice at (877) 725-2552. Molina Healthcare services are funded in part under contract with the State of New Mexico.

# Clear and Easy

## Book 8 - Hypertension

### Important Phone Numbers

Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Family: \_\_\_\_\_

Neighbor: \_\_\_\_\_

Molina Healthcare offers programs to help members stay healthy. These health and wellness programs are at no cost to you. They are part of your benefits. Programs include:

- Asthma
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Diabetes
- Heart Health
- Pregnancy Support
- Stop Smoking

Molina Healthcare uses different ways to identify members for these programs. These include information from claims, pharmacy or other health programs. You are eligible for one or more of these programs. The choice is yours.

Our providers, nurses and other staff are here to help you learn about your health. You can talk with them by phone to get answers to your questions. You can also get more information such as a newsletter or booklet. Our staff can help you stay in touch with your health care provider. They can help you understand your treatment. They can also help you if you have any problems.

You are part of one of these programs. Call us if you would like more services. Your health care provider can call us too. The number to call is **(866) 891-2320**. You can choose to be removed at any time. We look forward to helping you stay in good health.

***If you need this booklet in another language, large print, Braille or audio format, please call the Member Services number on the back of your ID card.***



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## **Introduction**

You and your provider can work together to help you be as healthy as you can be. This booklet helps you understand hypertension. This is also called high blood pressure. It gives you ideas on how manage it. You should not use this booklet in place of what your health care provider tells you. If you have problems with your health, be sure to see your provider for treatment.

For questions about medicine or health concerns, you can call your health care provider.

If your health plan has a nurse advice line, you can call them too. If you don't feel well, they can help you decide what to do.

You may have someone who helps you with your health care. You must give permission to your providers or case managers to talk to this person about your care.



*This booklet is to help you. It does not take the place of your provider's care. If you or your family has an emergency, you should call your provider. Or, go to the nearest emergency room.*

## **What Is Hypertension?**

Hypertension is a condition when your blood pressure is too high. Most people call it high blood pressure. Your heart has to pump blood through your arteries to get it to the rest of your body. If the pressure in the arteries is too high, the heart has to work harder. This can lead to other health problems.

High blood pressure does not always have symptoms. You might not have any symptoms at all but the damage is still being done to the body. It is important to keep blood pressure normal so that this damage doesn't occur. Once damage

occurs it may be too late to reverse it. However, if the high blood pressure is treated, you can prevent problems.

## **Blood Pressure Numbers**

Blood pressure is measured as systolic and diastolic pressures. “Systolic” is the blood pressure when the heart is pumping blood. “Diastolic” is the blood pressure when the heart rests between beats. Both are important. Usually you will see the systolic number written on top of the diastolic number.

Blood pressure doesn't stay the same all the time. It goes down when you sleep.

It's higher when you are awake. It can go up if you are nervous or stressed. It also goes up if you are excited.

Blood pressure is measured by category. The higher the blood pressure, the higher the category. Normal blood pressure numbers are different for kids and teens.

## **Symptoms**

Most people don't have any symptoms of high blood pressure. Some people may get a headache.

## Causes

Blood pressure tends to go up with age. Some medical problems can cause high blood pressure. These include chronic kidney disease thyroid disease and sleep apnea. Women who take birth control pills or hormones might have slightly higher risk.

If high blood pressure runs in your family, you have more risk. Be sure to get your blood pressure checked at least once a year.

## **Risk Factors**

Your risk for complications can go up. This happens if you have high blood pressure and any of these things:

- Age – older people have more risk.
- High blood pressure in your family.
- Men have more risk.
- Overweight.
- Smoking.
- High cholesterol.
- Diabetes.
- You don't exercise.

## **Complications**

Blood pressure that is not treated can lead to serious problems:

- Damage to the heart and coronary arteries. This includes heart attack, heart disease, congestive heart failure, aortic dissection and hardening of the arteries.
- Stroke.
- Kidney damage.
- Vision loss.
- Erectile dysfunction.
- Memory loss.
- Fluid in the lungs.
- Angina (chest pain).



## What You Can Do to Stay Healthy

1. Eat a low fat, low salt diet.
2. Maintain a healthy weight.
3. If you drink, limit alcohol.
4. Take your medications exactly as your provider tells you.
5. Always have a list of medications with you.
6. Do not smoke.  
Stay away from others who smoke.
7. Stay active. Lose weight if you are overweight.



8. Get enough rest.
9. Manage stress - Get support from a mental health counselor, health care team, support group, your church or friends and family. They can give you new ideas. They can also join you in your healthy lifestyle.

## **Watch Your Salt Intake**

You can learn how to limit salt in your diet.

- Look for foods that are labeled “low-sodium”, “sodium-free”, “no salt added” or “unsalted”. Check the total sodium content on food labels.
- Be careful with canned, packaged and frozen foods. Some have lots of salt.

- Don't cook with salt. Don't add salt to what you are eating. Try pepper, garlic, lemon or other spices instead. Some spice blends may have salt or MSG.
- Some foods are naturally high in sodium. Stay away from these:
  - Anchovies
  - Cured meats
  - Bacon
  - Hot dogs
  - Sausage
  - Bologna
  - Ham
  - Salami
  - Nuts

- Olives
  - Pickles
  - Sauerkraut
  - Soy sauce
  - Worcestershire sauce
  - Tomato juice
  - Vegetable juices
  - Cheese
- If you eat out, have your food steamed or grilled. You can also bake, boil and broil food. Avoid adding salt, sauce or cheese.
  - Use oil and vinegar on salads. Or, try lemon juice.
  - Eat fresh fruit or sorbet when having dessert.

## How to Read a Food Label

The Nutrition Facts label helps you determine the amount of calories and nutrients in one serving of food. Nutrients include fats, carbohydrates, protein, vitamins and minerals. This information helps you know whether you're eating a healthy, balanced diet.

- **Calories** - Watch your calories if you are trying to lose or maintain your weight. You can use

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>			
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)			
Servings Per Container about 2			
<b>Amount Per Serving</b>			
<b>Calories</b>	250	Calories from Fat 110	
<b>% Daily Value*</b>			
<b>Total Fat</b>	12g		<b>18%</b>
Saturated Fat	3g		<b>15%</b>
<i>Trans</i> Fat	3g		
<b>Cholesterol</b>	30mg		<b>10%</b>
<b>Sodium</b>	470mg		<b>20%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b>	31g		<b>10%</b>
Dietary Fiber	0g		<b>0%</b>
Sugars	5g		
<b>Proteins</b>	5g		
Vitamin A			4%
Vitamin C			2%
Calcium			20%
Iron			4%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:			
	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

the labels to compare products to see which have fewer calories. To find out how many calories you need each day, talk with your provider.

- **Total Fat** - Total fat tells you how much fat is in a food per serving. It includes fats that are good for you such as mono and polyunsaturated fats. It also includes fats that are not so good, like saturated and trans fats. Mono and polyunsaturated fats can help to lower your blood cholesterol and protect your heart. Saturated and trans fat can raise your blood cholesterol. This can increase your risk of heart disease.

- **Sodium** - Sodium (or “salt”) does not affect blood glucose levels. However, many people eat more sodium than they need. Table salt is very high in sodium. There is also hidden salt in many foods like cheese and salad dressings. Canned soups and other packaged foods are also high in salt. Use herbs and spices in your cooking instead of adding salt. Adults should aim for less than 2300 mg per day. If you have high blood pressure, it may be helpful to eat less.
- **Total Carbohydrate** - Carbohydrates can raise your blood sugar. Look at the grams of total carbohydrate, rather than the grams of sugar. Total carbohydrate on the label includes sugar, complex carbohydrate and fiber.

Carbohydrate includes milk and fruits. Some food has no natural or added sugar but has a lot of carbohydrate.

- **Fiber** - Fiber is part of plant foods that is not digested. Dried beans, like kidney or pinto beans, fruits, vegetables and grains are all good sources of fiber. Try to eat 25-30 grams of fiber per day. This goes for everyone, not just people with diabetes.





- **List of Ingredients** – This list helps you spot things to avoid, like coconut oil or palm oil. The ingredient list is also a good place to look for healthy ingredients like olive or canola oils. Look for whole grains, like whole wheat flour and oats.

## **When to See Your Provider**

See your health care provider regularly. Take all your medicines with you. Be sure to call if you don't feel well.



Take your medicines the way your provider tells you. Take them even when you are feeling well. Call your provider if you aren't sure how to take your medicine. Get refills before they run out. Tell your provider if you can't afford to buy your medicines.

Call your health care provider if you have new or unexpected symptoms.

Call 911 or go to the emergency room if you:

- Experience severe crushing chest pain.
- Fainting.
- Rapid and irregular heartbeat.
- Blood pressure more than 180/110.

## Support

Many people with high blood pressure have other health issues. These can include:

- Thyroid problems.
- Heart disease and stroke.
- Diabetes.
- Osteoporosis.
- Depression.
- Cancer.

Coping with these issues can be hard. You may be stressed or become depressed. It's different for every person.



People who help take care of others can also be stressed. It can be hard to keep up with a treatment plan. Some people don't understand what they need to do. Family members may disagree with a treatment plan. There can be financial problems. Sometimes people feel fear or anxiety, even depression. Alcohol and other substance abuse can occur.

Tell your family and friends how you feel. Let them know how they can help you.

It's OK to ask for help if you are having any of these problems. Your treatment team can help you. Talk to your provider or case manager. Joining a support group can help too. This booklet gives names of places where you can get help.

## **How Can Family or Friends Help?**

You may have someone who helps you with your health care. They can:

- Help remind you to take your medicines.
- Help you buy and prepare healthy foods.
- Take a walk with you.
- Go to provider visits with you.

Sometimes it helps when someone else hears what your health care provider says. You must give permission for your providers and case managers to talk to this person about your care.

## Blood Pressure Record

Talk to your provider to set your targets. Write down the date, time and results of your checks. Take your blood pressure about the same time every day.

Date	Time	Result	Time	Result

## **Resources**

### **National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute**

(301) 592-8573

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/hbp/>

### **American Heart Association**

(800) 242-8721

<http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/HighBloodPressure/High-Blood-Pressure-or-Hypertension>  
UCM\_002020\_SubHomePage.jsp

### **American Academy of Family Physicians: FamilyDoctor.org Patient Education Site**

(800) 274-2237

<http://familydoctor.org/familydoctor/en/diseases-conditions/high-blood-pressure.html>













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