



Hypertension (High Blood Pressure)

“At Nova Leap Home Health, we support our clients in many aspects of their health and well-being. In addition to assisting with activities of daily living, our nurses provide education on diagnoses, medications, nutrition, and exercise to help clients manage chronic conditions and maintain their independence.

One of the most common conditions we help clients manage is hypertension, or high blood pressure. Ideally, a healthy blood pressure reading is below 120/80 mmHg. The top number (systolic) measures the pressure when the heart beats, while the bottom number (diastolic) measures the pressure when the heart rests between beats.

High blood pressure increases the risk of heart disease and stroke. Although healthy lifestyle habits can help reduce this risk, the natural aging process also plays a role. As we age, our blood vessels become stiffer and less elastic, increasing resistance to blood flow and causing blood pressure to rise.

Managing hypertension often involves a combination of healthy eating and regular physical activity. We educate clients and families on making heart-healthy food choices, including filling each meal with a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables such as blue, purple, red, yellow, green, and white produce. (cont.)



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Foods rich in potassium can also support healthy blood pressure by helping balance sodium levels, relaxing blood vessel walls, and promoting overall vascular health. However, anyone considering increasing their potassium intake should first consult their physician, especially those with kidney disease or those taking certain blood pressure medications, as too much potassium can be harmful.

Limiting sodium is another important step in managing hypertension. Excess sodium causes the body to retain water, increasing blood volume and forcing the heart to work harder, which raises blood pressure. Instead of salt, season foods with herbs and spices such as garlic, basil, lemon, ginger, curry, and rosemary.

Regular exercise also plays an important role in heart health. Because the heart is a muscle, physical activity helps strengthen it and improve circulation. Low-impact activities such as walking, yoga, swimming, and chair exercises are excellent options for many older adults. As always, clients should consult their physician before beginning any new exercise program.”



Sharon Ashton, LPN



INGREDIENTS

0.5 cups rolled oats

1 cups low-fat milk

1 medium banana, sliced

1 tablespoons ground flaxseed

0.3 teaspoons cinnamon

1 teaspoons honey

Banana Oatmeal with Flaxseed



1 serving



15 minutes

DIRECTIONS

Cook the oats: In a small saucepan, bring 1 cups low-fat milk to a gentle boil. Stir in 0.5 cups rolled oats and reduce heat to low.

Simmer: Simmer, stirring occasionally, until the oats reach a creamy consistency.

Add mix-ins: Remove from heat and stir in 1 tablespoons ground flaxseed and 0.3 teaspoons cinnamon.

Top and serve: Top with 1 medium banana, sliced and drizzle with 1 teaspoons honey. Serve warm.

NOTES

For added flavor, substitute the honey with a dash of vanilla extract if a lower-sugar option is preferred.





INGREDIENTS

4 cups baby spinach

1 cups chickpeas,
(drained and rinsed)

1 cups cherry tomatoes, halved

0.5 cups cucumber, diced

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 tablespoons lemon juice

1 garlic clove, minced



Spinach & Chickpea Salad



2 servings



15 minutes

DIRECTIONS

Combine the vegetables: In a large bowl, toss together 4 cups baby spinach, 1 cups chickpeas, drained and rinsed, 1 cups cherry tomatoes, halved, and 0.5 cups cucumber, diced.

Make the dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together 2 tablespoons olive oil, 1 tablespoons lemon juice, and 1 garlic clove, minced.

Dress and serve: Pour the dressing over the salad, toss to coat evenly, and serve immediately.

NOTES

Add a pinch of black pepper or fresh herbs like parsley for extra flavor without sodium.



INGREDIENTS

2 salmon fillets

2 cups broccoli florets

1 cups brown rice

1 tablespoons olive oil

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 medium lemon, sliced

1 tablespoons fresh herbs
(such as dill or parsley),
chopped



Baked Salmon with Steamed Broccoli & Brown Rice



2 servings



50 minutes

DIRECTIONS

Cook the rice: Cook 1 cups brown rice according to package instructions until tender.

Preheat the oven: Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Season the salmon: Place 2 salmon fillets on the baking sheet, drizzle with 1 tablespoons olive oil, and top with 2 garlic cloves, minced and slices of 1 medium lemon, sliced.

Bake the salmon: Bake until the salmon is opaque and flakes easily with a fork.

Steam the broccoli: While the salmon bakes, steam 2 cups broccoli florets until bright green and tender-crisp.

Plate and serve: Serve the salmon over the brown rice alongside the steamed broccoli, garnished with 1 tablespoons fresh herbs (such as dill or parsley), chopped.

NOTES

Use fresh dill for a brighter finish, or swap in asparagus for the broccoli if preferred.