

NATIONAL JUDICIAL INSTITUTE
2016 INDUCTION COURSE FOR NEWLY APPOINTED JUDGES AND KADIS
LECTURE ON

PREVENTION OF HYPERTENSION AND HEART RELATED DISEASES AND
MUSCULO-SKELETAL DISORDERS IN JUDICIAL OFFICERS

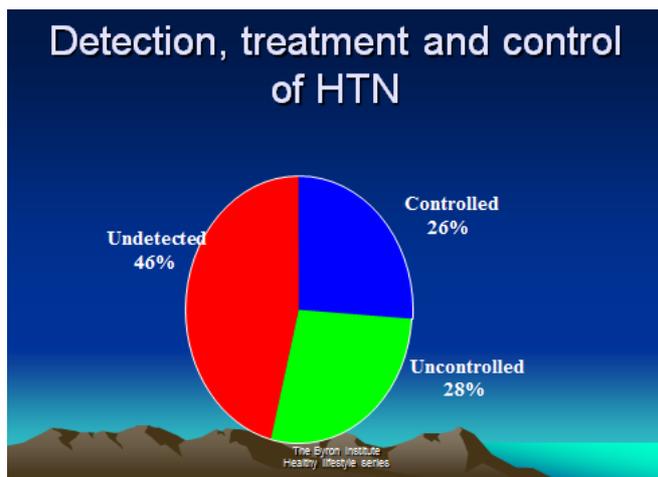
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By

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A recent study by the Byron Institute, Nigeria revealed that about 1 in every 4 Nigerian adults has high blood pressure, also called hypertension, which is a major risk factor for heart and kidney diseases, stroke, and heart failure. Of these, 26% were well controlled. 28% were uncontrolled and 46% were not aware that they were hypertensive, undetected.



High blood pressure is especially dangerous, because it often gives no warning signs or symptoms. Fortunately, you can find out if you have high blood pressure by having your blood pressure checked regularly. If it is high, you can take steps to lower it. Just as important, if your blood pressure is normal, you can learn how to keep it from rising.

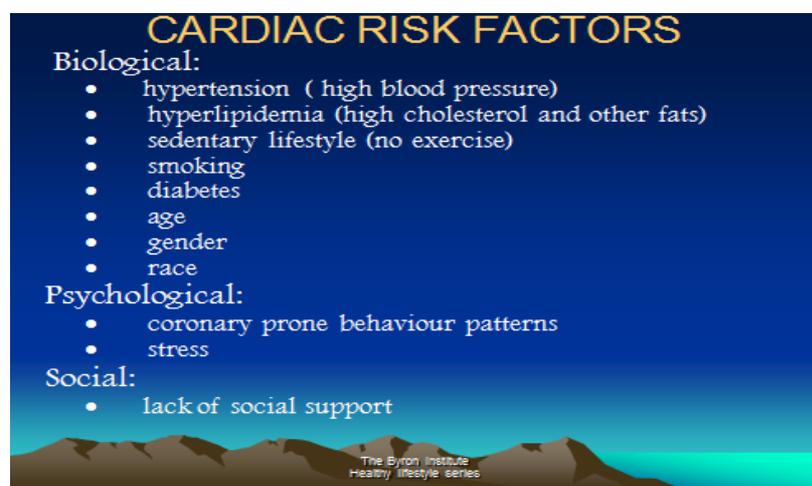
Hypertension (HTN or HT), is a long term medical condition in which the **blood pressure** in the **arteries** is persistently elevated. High blood pressure usually does not cause symptoms. Long term high blood pressure, however, is a major risk factor for coronary artery disease, stroke, heart failure, peripheral vascular disease, vision loss, and chronic kidney disease.

High blood pressure is classified as either primary (essential) high blood pressure or secondary high blood pressure. About 90–95% of cases are primary, defined as high blood pressure due to nonspecific lifestyle and genetic factors. Lifestyle factors that increase the risk include excess

salt, excess body weight, smoking, and alcohol. The remaining 5–10% of cases are categorized as secondary high blood pressure, defined as high blood pressure due to an identifiable cause, such as chronic kidney disease, narrowing of the kidney arteries, an endocrine disorder, or the use of birth control pills.

Blood pressure is expressed by two measurements, the systolic and diastolic pressures, which are the maximum and minimum pressures, respectively. Normal blood pressure at rest is within the range of 100–140 millimetres mercury (mmHg) systolic and 60–90 mmHg diastolic. High blood pressure is present if the resting blood pressure is persistently at or above 140/90 mmHg for most adults. Different numbers apply to children. Ambulatory blood pressure monitoring over a 24-hour period appears more accurate than office best blood pressure measurement.

Lifestyle changes and medications can lower blood pressure and decrease the risk of health complications. Lifestyle changes include weight loss, decreased salt intake, physical exercise, and a healthy diet. If lifestyle changes are not sufficient blood pressure medications are used. Up to three medications controls blood pressure in 90% of people. The treatment of moderately high arterial blood pressure (defined as >160/100 mmHg) with medications is associated with an improved life expectancy. The effect of treatment of blood pressure between 140/90 mmHg and 160/100 mmHg is less clear, with some reviews finding benefit and others not finding benefit. High blood pressure affects between 16 and 37% of the population globally. In 2010 hypertension was believed to have been a factor in 18% (9.4 million) deaths.



Symptoms of High Blood Pressure

One of the most dangerous aspects of hypertension is that you may not know that you have it. In fact, nearly one-third of people who have high blood pressure don't know it. The only way to know if your blood pressure is high is through regular checkups. This is especially important if you have a close relative who has high blood pressure.

If your blood pressure is extremely high, there may be certain symptoms to look out for, including:

- Severe headache
- Fatigue or confusion
- Vision problems
- Chest pain

- Difficulty breathing
- Irregular heartbeat
- Blood in the urine
- Pounding in your chest, neck, or ears

If you have any of these symptoms, see a doctor immediately. You could be having a hypertensive crisis that could lead to a heart attack or stroke.

How Can I Prevent High Blood Pressure? You can prevent high blood pressure by:

Maintaining a healthy weight.

Being overweight can make you two to six times more likely to develop high blood pressure than if you are at your desirable weight. Even small amounts of weight loss can make a big difference in helping to prevent and treat high blood pressure.

Getting regular exercise:

People who are physically active have a lower risk of getting high blood pressure -- 20% to 50% lower -- than people who are not active. You don't have to be a marathon runner to benefit from physical activity. Even light activities, if done daily, can help lower your risk.

Reducing salt intake:

Often, when people with high blood pressure cut back on salt, their blood pressure falls. Cutting back on salt also prevents blood pressure from rising.

Drinking alcohol in moderation, if at all:

Drinking too much alcohol can raise your blood pressure. To help prevent high blood pressure, limit how much alcohol you drink to no more than two drinks a day. The "Dietary Guidelines for Americans" recommends that for overall health, women should limit their alcohol to no more than one drink a day.

Reduce stress:

Stress can make blood pressure go up, and over time may contribute to the cause of high blood pressure. There are many steps you can take to reduce your stress.

Heart Disease and Stress: What's the Link?

Having too much stress, for too long, is bad for your heart.

If you're often stressed, and you don't have good ways to manage it, you are more likely to have heart disease, high blood pressure, chest pain, or irregular heartbeats.

The stress itself can be a problem. It raises your blood pressure, and it's not good for your body to constantly be exposed to stress hormones. Studies also link stress to changes in the way blood clots, which makes a heart attack more likely.

The way you handle stress also matters. If you respond to it in unhealthy ways -- such as smoking, overeating, or not exercising -- that makes matters worse. On the other hand, if you exercise, connect with people, and find meaning despite the stress, that makes a difference in your emotions and in your body.

You may also want to:

- Change what you can to lower your stress.
- Accept that there are some things you cannot control.
- Before you agree to do something, consider whether you can really do it. It's OK to say "no" to requests that will add more stress to your life.
- Stay connected with people you love.
- Make it a point to relax every day. You could read a book, listen to music, meditate, pray, do yoga or tai chi, journal, or reflect on what is good in your life.
- Be active! When you exercise, you'll burn off some of your stress and be better prepared to handle problems.

Some people have a hard time with stress because they are depressed. If that's you, seek help from a doctor or counselor. Depression is linked to heart disease, and it can be treated.

If you're finding it hard to shift your way of handling stress, take a stress management class, read a book on managing stress, or sign up for a few sessions with a therapist. It's an investment in your health and the quality of your life, both now and for years to come.

Other nutrients may also help prevent high blood pressure. Here's a roundup of the research:

Potassium.

Eating foods rich in potassium will help protect some people from developing high blood pressure. You probably can get enough potassium from your diet, so a supplement isn't necessary (and could be dangerous without a doctor's oversight). Many fruits, vegetables, dairy foods, and fish are good sources of potassium.

Calcium.

Populations with low calcium intakes have high rates of high blood pressure. However, it has not been proven that taking calcium tablets will prevent high blood pressure. But it is important to be sure to get at least the recommended amount of calcium -- 1,000 milligrams per day for adults 19 to 50 years old and 1,200 mg for those over 50 (pregnant and breastfeeding women also need more) -- from the foods you eat. Dairy foods like low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese are good sources of calcium. Low-fat and non-fat dairy products have even more calcium than the high-fat types.

Magnesium.

A diet low in magnesium may make your blood pressure rise. But doctors don't recommend taking extra magnesium to help prevent high blood pressure -- the amount you get in a healthy diet is enough. Magnesium is found in whole grains, green leafy vegetables, nuts, seeds, and dry peas and beans.

Fish oils.

A type of fat called "omega-3 fatty acids" is found in fatty fish like mackerel and salmon. Large amounts of fish oils may help reduce high blood pressure, but their role in prevention is unclear. Taking fish oil pills is not recommended, because high doses can cause unpleasant side effects. Most fish, if not fried or made with added fat, is low in saturated fat and calories and can be eaten often.

Garlic.

There has been some evidence to suggest garlic's effect in lowering blood pressure, in addition to improving cholesterol and reducing some cancers. Further research is being conducted to fully assess garlic's potential health benefits.