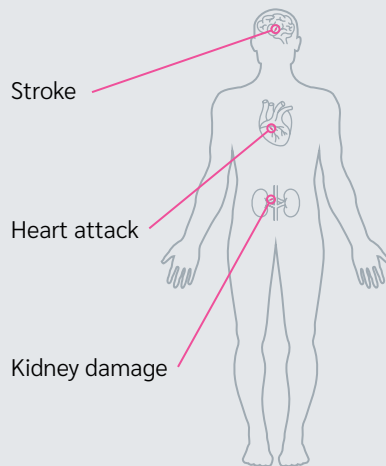
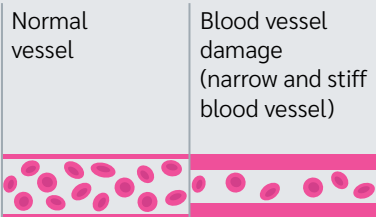


Better habits, better health

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April 2024

HYPERTENSION COMPLICATIONS



High blood pressure

Blood pressure is the pressure of blood pushing against the walls of your arteries. Blood pressure normally rises and falls throughout the day, but it can damage your heart and cause health problems if it stays high for a long time. Hypertension, also called high blood pressure, is blood pressure that is higher than normal.

Left undetected or uncontrolled, high blood pressure can lead to:

- **HEART ATTACK.** High blood pressure damages arteries, which can become blocked and prevent blood flow to the heart muscle.
- **STROKE.** High blood pressure can cause blood vessels that supply blood and oxygen to the brain to become blocked or burst.
- **KIDNEY DISEASE.** High blood pressure can damage the arteries around the kidneys and interfere with their ability to filter blood effectively.
- **VISION LOSS.** High blood pressure can strain or damage blood vessels in the eyes.
- **SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION.** High blood pressure can lead to erectile dysfunction in men and may contribute to lower libido in women.
- **PERIPHERAL ARTERY DISEASE (PAD).** Atherosclerosis caused by high blood pressure can lead to narrowed arteries in the legs, arms, stomach and head, causing pain or fatigue.

Unfortunately, many people are unaware they have high blood pressure, as there are no obvious signs or symptoms. Certain people or groups are at higher risk for developing high blood pressure, including those individuals with:

- Diabetes.
- Obesity.
- A family history of hypertension.
- A personal history of tobacco use.
- A sedentary lifestyle.

**CONTACT YOUR
NURSE ADVOCATE TEAM**



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The best way to identify high blood pressure is to have it checked regularly by a medical professional. While there are machines in many pharmacies or other public spaces, these may be less accurate. If you get an abnormal reading on a blood pressure machine, make sure to have it double-checked manually by a medical provider!

To ensure an accurate blood pressure reading, try following these guidelines:

- Don't eat or drink anything 30 minutes before you take your blood pressure.
- Sit in a comfortable chair with your back supported for at least five minutes before your reading.
- Put both feet flat on the ground and keep your legs uncrossed.
- Rest your arm with the cuff on a table at chest height.
- Do not talk while your blood pressure is being measured.



The ideal blood pressure may vary slightly due to individual risk factors, but in general, medical providers use the guidelines below to assess your risk.

Risk category	Systolic (top number) in mmHg	Diastolic (bottom number) in mmHg
Normal	Less than 120	Less than 80
Elevated	120-129	Less than 80
High blood pressure (hypertension)	130 or above	Above 80

April is Move More Month!

The benefits of an active lifestyle have long been appreciated. But one out of three adults over 50 get no physical activity. Many studies have demonstrated the benefits of increasing physical activity, such as maintaining a healthy weight, reducing the risk of heart disease and even improving mental health. When it comes to movement, one of the easiest ways to get more active is to start walking. You don't need fancy or expensive equipment and can do it almost anywhere. Simply walking at a brisk pace has been shown to be just as good as running for lowering the risks of high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes.

TIPS TO HELP YOU GET (AND STAY) MOTIVATED

- Get a wearable step tracker.
- Find a walking buddy.
- Join a local walking group at work or in your neighborhood.
- Vary your routes, exploring local trails, landmarks or neighborhoods.
- Check your employer's wellness plan. You may be able to earn an incentive for achieving walking goals.
- Remember, every step counts! Over time, small changes can lead to big rewards.
 - 20 minutes of vacuuming is like walking one mile.
 - 30 minutes of grocery shopping every other week for a year is like walking a marathon.
 - Five hours of walking every week for a year is like walking across the state of Wyoming.
 - One hour of dancing every week for a year is like walking from Chicago to Indianapolis.

Baked apples with oatmeal & yogurt

Ingredients

- 6 apples (Gala or Fuji), bottoms sliced so apples stand
- 1 fresh lemon, halved
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 6 tablespoons light brown muscovado sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- Pinch ground black pepper
- 1 cup apple cider
- 1 cup whole milk, heated
- 2 teaspoons finely grated orange zest
- 1 1/2 cups cooked quick-cooking steel-cut oatmeal, prepared according to package directions, warm
- Low-fat Greek yogurt

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375 F. Cut off the top third of each apple. With a small knife, and working from the top of each apple, carefully carve out a large “bowl,” including the core, about two inches in diameter. Rub the cut part with lemon and put the apples into a nine-inch square baking dish. Dice the carved-out parts of the apples, without the seeds, and set aside.
2. Melt the butter in a small saucepan, and then whisk in four tablespoons of the muscovado sugar, the cinnamon and pepper and cook until smooth. Brush the inside of the apples with the butter mixture.
3. Pour the apple cider into the bottom of the baking dish. Cover the dish with foil and bake until the apples are tender, about 30 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for five minutes longer. Transfer the apples to a platter.
4. Carefully strain the cooking liquid into a small saucepan and bring it to a boil. Cook until it is reduced and thickened, about five minutes.
5. While the apples are baking, stir the hot milk, remaining muscovado sugar, reserved chopped apples and orange zest into the warm oatmeal and cook for a few minutes. Divide the oatmeal among the baked apples. Top each apple with a dollop of yogurt and drizzle the reduced cider over the top.



NEED A LITTLE HELP GETTING YOUR HEALTH ON TRACK?

If you find yourself wanting more, seeking a plan or needing assistance to execute your own plan for better health, reach out to your Lockton Nurse Advocate. They can help you create a plan, provide information and resources, and offer ongoing support to get you where you want to be.

Do you have a topic you want to learn more about or feedback about past topics or articles?

Please feel free to contact the author at:

membersupport@lockton.com.



RESOURCES: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov), [corporatewellnessmagazine.com](https://www.corporatewellnessmagazine.com), [foodnetwork.com](https://www.foodnetwork.com)