

# HEALTH BITS

A SERVICE OF THE CBC HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE

## How Do You Measure Up?

### How Does Blood Pressure Effect Your Body?

- Your brain: increases your risk for stroke
- Your heart (and blood vessels): increases your risk of heart attack
- Your kidneys: increases your risk of kidney failure

### Know Your Numbers!

- Systolic blood pressure: this occurs when the heart squeezes and pumps blood to the rest of your body; “the top number”
- Diastolic blood pressure: this occurs when the heart relaxes; “the bottom number”
- What are the good numbers?
  - Less than 120/80: normal blood pressure
  - Between 120-139 (top number): at risk
  - Between 80-89 (bottom number): at risk

### Check Your Blood Pressure at Home

- You can use a blood pressure monitor
  - Before use, you want to rest for 5 minutes
  - Do not cross your legs
  - Measure in both arms the first time you take it (use high #)
  - Take a log
  - Wait 30 min after eating or drinking
- Blood pressure numbers are often lower at home

### Get Your Exercise

- Why is this good for you?
  - Lowers your blood pressure
  - Increases good cholesterol (your HDL)
  - Helps you lose weight
  - Reduces stress
  - Improves your muscle strength

### Eat Less Salt

- Cut back on take out, fast food
- Cut back on pre-packaged foods and salty sauces
- Choose what you are eating wisely
  - Look at the back of the label
- Foods to limit
  - Worcestershire sauce
  - Tomato sauce and barbecue sauce
  - No canned soup
  - All processed cheeses
  - Potato chips, corn chips, pretzels

### Reach a Healthy Weight

- Balance calories
- Increase your intake of veggies and fruits
- Make a healthy plate
- Lose some extra weight
- Ways to save calories
  - Eat whole grains
  - Add lettuce to sandwiches
  - Use fat free dressings
  - Low fat yogurt
  - Mustard not mayo
  - Use smaller bowls and plates

### How Do Blood Pressure Medicines Work

- Most people with high blood pressure need 2-3 medications to lower blood pressure
- Sometimes they can be pricey (ask about off brands)
- There are multiple brands and different medications. Make sure that you are getting the right one for you (ask your doctor)
- How do they work?
  - They relax the arteries
  - Remove extra fluid
  - Allow your heart to beat easier

## *We Value Your Feedback!*

If you ever have a concern that you would like the Health Care Committee to address (referrals, suggestions for educational topics, home visits, etc.) please contact your Parish Nurse or another member of the Health Care Committee (listed on the church website).

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