TEN
Ways to Help Control
High Blood Pressure
without Medication
Sometimes it isn’t necessary to take medication to control your blood pressure. Here are ten simple lifestyle choices for healthy blood pressure:

1. Keep a healthy weight. Check with your health provider to see if you need to lose weight. If you do, work on an eating plan that will help you lose weight in a healthy way.

2. Exercise regularly. Set a goal to exercise 30 to 60 minutes most days of the week. Moderate exercise, like walking, can make a difference. Avoid being a “weekend warrior” and trying to squeeze in all your exercise on weekends. These sudden bursts of activity may actually hurt you.

3. Eat healthy foods. Foods low in saturated fat, total fat and cholesterol may be healthier options. Choose fresh fruits, vegetables and low fat dairy. Keep a food diary to track what you eat and when. If you are trying to lose weight, work with your health provider on a plan that is right for you.

4. Limit your salt. Avoid processed foods which are high in salt. Choose foods that are low in salt and other forms of sodium. Substitute spices, garlic, and onions to add flavor to your meals.

5. Drink alcohol in moderation. In addition to raising your blood pressure, alcohol adds extra calories to your diet. If you are a woman, limit alcohol to one drink per day. The recommendation for men is a maximum of two drinks per day.

6. Don’t use tobacco products. Nicotine in tobacco can raise your blood pressure for as long as one hour. Using tobacco throughout the day means blood pressure raising nicotine is in your body all day. Also avoid secondhand smoke, which puts you at risk of high blood pressure and other diseases.

7. Manage stress. Stress can temporarily increase your blood pressure. Think about what causes stress in your life and seek ways to either eliminate those stressors or cope with them in a healthier way. Your doctor or health provider can help.

8. Watch your caffeine intake. Caffeine can cause temporary spikes in blood pressure.

9. Limit or eliminate sugary drinks from your diet.

10. Regularly check your blood pressure. Have your doctor check it, or find a blood pressure kiosk near you at www.commongroundhealth.org/kiosk.