

25 Supplements for high blood pressure (part one)



Last month, health authorities moved the goalposts on high blood pressure, suddenly recategorizing 31 million Americans with borderline blood pressure as frankly hypertensive. If your blood pressure is 120-129/80-89, this applies to you. In a recent newsletter article, I cautioned against a stampede toward drug fixes for those newly diagnosed; then, in a second article, I took issue with the conventional recommendations about the right diet for hypertension. After that, I proposed 20 lifestyle measures that lower blood pressure.

This week and next, I'll be listing the most scientifically-validated *supplements* for high blood pressure.



1) Magnesium: It's long been known that magnesium relaxes blood vessels and improves arterial blood flow. That makes sense, because it's a natural calcium channel blocker—similar in action to a category of anti-hypertensive medication. In a recent study, magnesium supplementation showed a modest effect on blood pressure, lowering both systolic and diastolic readings by around two points.

2) Taurine: One of the reasons I use magnesium taurate for my hypertensive patients is because taurine itself has blood pressure lowering effects. In a recent study, 1.6 grams of taurine lowered systolic blood pressure by 7 points, diastolic by 5 points. To get that much taurine, you'd have to consume lots of mag taurate capsules, so consider adding L-taurine, 500 mg, 2 or 3 caps per day to your magnesium regimen.

3) Potassium: When it comes to blood pressure, it's not about how much sodium you consume; rather it's your sodium to potassium *ratio*. Most Americans get too much sodium from processed foods and not enough potassium from fresh fruits and vegetables. Potassium supplementation has been shown to significantly lower blood pressure, particularly in African Americans.

The problem is, the amount of potassium in supplement pills is limited, for safety reasons, to just 99 mg; Studies demonstrating potassium benefits use 1000 to 2000 mg per day. Instead of swallowing numerous pills, consider that a banana delivers around 450 mg; fresh-squeezed orange juice around 475 mg; an avocado offers a lower carb alternative yielding 430 mg. A half tsp of Now Foods potassium powder provides around 1 and 1/2 grams, but check with your doctor first if you have impaired kidney function or are taking a medication that can cause you to retain potassium.

4) Peptides: Fish peptides derived from bonito are natural ACE-inhbitors, mimicking the effects of popular drugs. So, too, are milk peptides derived from casein.

5) CoQ10: A must for high blood pressure; a recent meta-analysis concluded that "coenzyme Q10 has the potential in hypertensive patients to lower systolic blood pressure by up to 17 mm Hg and diastolic blood pressure by up to 10 mm Hg without significant side effects."

6) Vitamin D: Low D (and vitamin K) have been associated with

hypertension but a recent study failed to show that supplemental vitamin D was effective at lowering blood pressure.

7) Olive polyphenols: Olive oil, rich in hydroxytyrosol and oleuropein, is the business end of the Mediterranean diet's protective effects against heart attacks and strokes. A study showed polyphenol-rich olive oil lowered blood pressure compared to a control intervention of refined olive oil. Olive leaf extract supplements contain concentrated olive polyphenols.

8) Aged garlic extract: A recent study showed that a dosage of two capsules daily containing 480 mg of aged garlic extract (Kyolic) significantly lowered systolic blood pressure by 12 points compared with placebo—an effect comparable to many blood pressure medications.

9) Omega 3: Fish oil can modestly decrease blood pressure. Provision of greater than 2 grams per day of EPA/DHA was required to reduce diastolic blood pressure.

10) Grape seed: Grape seed extracts (GSE) contain powerful vasodilator phenolic compounds that lower blood pressure in subjects with the metabolic syndrome.

Next week, I'll continue with my last fifteen supplement suggestions for helping to manage your hypertension. In the meantime, many of the above supplements can be purchased from my online store with FullScript. It's free to register, and you'll receive access to the *Intelligent Medicine* store, personally curated by me to include only the supplements that I recommend.

Before signing off for the year, I'd like to thank all my readers for sharing 2017 with me, and wish you all a happy, peaceful and healthy New Year.

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