

A SIMPLE GUIDE

ISSUE 72 | APR / MAY'23

Our Health is in *Our Hands!*

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ROLE OF EXERCISE IN CONTROLLING
YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE LEVELS

KEEP WELL | GET WELL | LIVE WELL

This newsletter is jointly brought to you by:

Health Up!
Keep Well, Get Well and Live Well
A SingHealth community programme

ECHO
Eastern Community Health Outreach

Dear readers,

Time flies and we are nearing the middle of 2023 already! How have you been?

In this issue, we will be discussing about hypertension, a very common medical condition that is, if not controlled, a significant risk factor for heart attacks, stroke and organ failure. Learn from Dr Ian Phoon, Consultant Family Physician with SingHealth Polyclinics, as he shares about what hypertension is all about and what we can do to prevent, treat and reduce the associated risks.

Read on to the Keep Well & Stay Fit column and try out exercises shared by Active Health Coach, Rong Xin, that can help to lower your blood pressure.

Remember, every day is another opportunity to Keep Well, Get Well and Live Well. 😊

Health Up! Programme Director,
Dr Sabrina Wee Yi-Mei



What is Hypertension and Why Should You Care?

Always monitor your blood pressure levels to ensure that you are in the healthy range.

Hypertension is Common

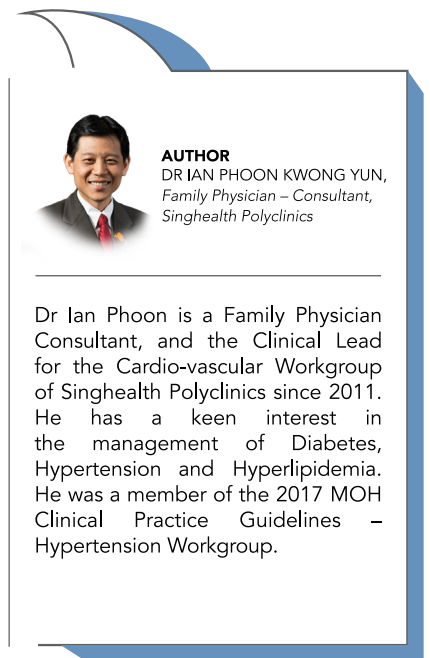
Hypertension, or high blood pressure, is very common. About 1 in 3 Singaporean adults (35%) have hypertension, based on the Ministry of Health's 2020 National Population Health Survey. Hypertension (high blood pressure) means that your blood pressure is, on average, above your "normal" target. For most patients less than 80 years old, and without any medical condition, normal blood pressure should be on average below 135/85 mmHg at home, and below 140/90 mmHg if you are in a clinic. If you have diabetes, kidney disease, or are over 80 years old, the target blood pressure for you may be different. You should ask your doctor what the right blood pressure is for you.

Hypertension is Dangerous

If untreated, hypertension can lead to heart attacks, heart and kidney failure, stroke, and early death.

Hypertension is Silent

Most patients with hypertension feel normal, in that they do not have headaches, neck aches, dizziness, or breathlessness. Blood pressure may be high for many years, without you feeling unwell, but it can slowly damage your organs like your heart, kidneys, and blood vessels silently. That is why hypertension is known as the "**Silent Killer**".



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Dr Ian Phoon is a Family Physician Consultant, and the Clinical Lead for the Cardio-vascular Workgroup of Singhealth Polyclinics since 2011. He has a keen interest in the management of Diabetes, Hypertension and Hyperlipidemia. He was a member of the 2017 MOH Clinical Practice Guidelines – Hypertension Workgroup.

Should you be screened for hypertension?

Anyone 40 years old and above should have their blood pressure checked. If you are obese, have diabetes, gout, or high cholesterol, or are a smoker, then you should do this even earlier.



Hypertension should be measured and monitored over time

Because hypertension is silent, you should get it measured either at your primary care clinic, or by using a digital blood pressure set. Blood pressure can fluctuate throughout the day and tends to be higher in the morning and lower in the evening. It can also rise if you have just exercised, had some coffee, or smoked, are angry or are in pain. If it is high (more than 135/85 mmHg at home), then sit down and rest for 5-10 minutes and repeat the blood pressure measurement. Do not worry about transient high blood pressure if most of your blood pressure at rest is normal. Keep a record of your blood pressure over time and show this to your doctor.



Hypertension is Treatable and Preventable

Hypertension can be prevented or managed with the following healthy habits:

- 1  Cutting down your salt intake (e.g. from sauces, smoked meats, chips, fries, or salted nuts)
- 2  Take more fruits and vegetables everyday
- 3  If you are a smoker, consider quitting or at least cut it down
- 4  If you drink alcohol, limit this. Avoid drinking daily.
- 5  Stay as active physically as possible. Aim for about 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercise (like brisk walking, cycling, swimming, or dancing) for at least 5 days a week.
- 6  If you are over-weight, try to lose weight

If your doctor has prescribed you medicine for hypertension, please take them every day. They are not addictive, and do not harm your kidneys or liver. If you have any concerns about your medication, please inform your care team about this rather than stop your medication.

Everyone should follow the above healthy tips regardless of whether your blood pressure is high or not. By doing so, we can prevent the chances of developing hypertension.

Click on the link to learn more about hypertension from Singhealth's Healthy Living Series.

LEARN MORE

➤ Click Here! ➤



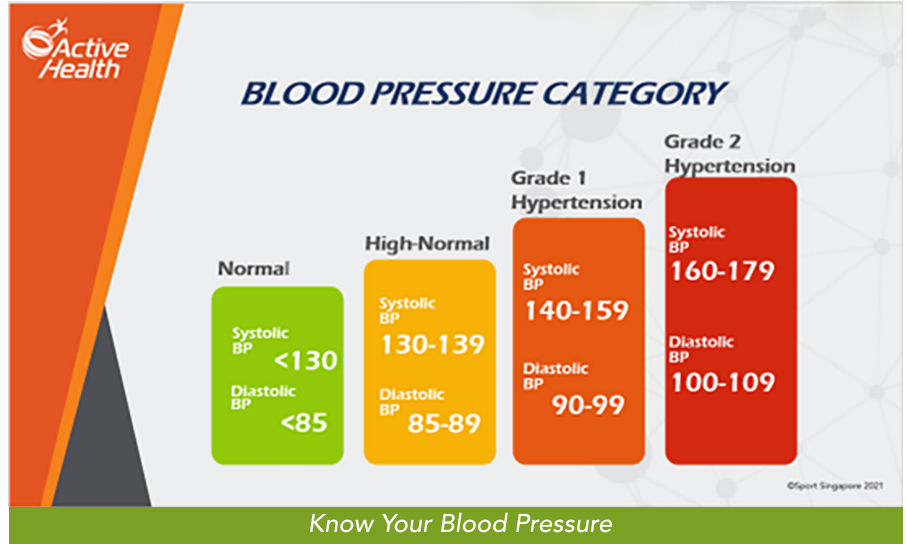
Keep Well & Stay Fit!

Managing Hypertension with Exercise



AUTHOR
YAP RONG XIN,
Active Health Coach

Rong Xing is an Active Health Coach with Sport Singapore, who graduated with a degree in Sport Science from the University of Western Australia. She is also Exercise is Medicine Singapore (EIMS) certified. With a strong passion in health and fitness, she strives to empower the community to adopt a healthier lifestyle through active living to enjoy life to the fullest.



Hypertension, also known as high blood pressure, is a condition whereby the blood flow against the walls of our arteries becomes too high. This increased force can potentially damage our blood vessels and increase our risk of heart disease and stroke, which are the leading causes of death.

Modifiable lifestyle risk factors of high blood pressure include physical inactivity, unhealthy diets (high salt consumption, low fruits and vegetables intake, and high saturated and trans-fat intake) as well as being overweight or obese.

Exercise as your “Magic-pill”

The role of exercise in the management of hypertension has been well-established in scientific research. Studies have shown that a reduction of as little as 3 mmHg in average population systolic blood pressure has been estimated to reduce coronary heart disease by 5–9%, stroke by 8–14%, and all-cause mortality by 4%.

How does this Magic-pill work to reduce blood pressure without any side effects?



Improves health of the lining of our blood vessels (endothelium) to reduce resistance to the blood flow from the walls of the arteries



Increases production in nitric oxide that results in relaxation of the blood vessel wall muscles that results in widening of the blood vessels



New blood vessel growth also occurs, thus reducing the resistance in the blood vessels



Helps with maintaining a healthy weight which reduces risk of hypertension

How much physical activity is sufficient?

Following the Singapore Physical Activity Guidelines, it is recommended for adults aged 18 to 64 years old to perform at least 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity (MVPA) per week to achieve health benefits.

Work towards more than 30 minutes of continuous or accumulated physical activity per day at moderate intensity performed on most days of the week as you can enjoy the effects of post-exercise hypotension (lower blood pressure) for up to 22 hours afterwards.

If you are just starting out, you may go slow and start at low intensity. Remember, consistency is key as it takes about 1 to 3 months for regular exercise to have an impact on your blood pressure!

Stay 'SAFER' when engaging in physical activity



Screen

Assess your readiness before commencing any physical activity through pre-participation screenings such as the Get Active Questionnaire. Whenever in doubt, consult a medical professional before you begin exercising.

Awareness

Stay adequately hydrated, especially on a hot and humid day. Avoid holding your breath, especially during strength training, as that might increase your blood pressure.

Fitness

If you have not been exercising regularly (i.e. structured physical activity for at least 30 minutes at moderate intensity on at least 3 days of each week for the last 3 months), slowly extend the duration of your workout before progressing in intensity and frequency.

After your workout, prolong the cool-down for at least 10 minutes after exercising to allow for the heart rate and blood pressure to normalise.

Exercise With Buddies

Have family and/or friends to exercise together with you to help watch out for one another. Be familiar with emergency protocol and equipment and know when and where to seek help.

Responsibility

Be responsible for your own safety and be educated with life-saving skills such as CPR/AED to support others when needed.

Boost your daily levels of physical activity in just 60 seconds!

If you have any medical or musculoskeletal conditions that might affect your ability to be physically active, please consult your doctor or a healthcare professional first.



Try Out the Modified Jacks!

This exercise helps to build aerobic endurance.

- ① Start with feet together and arms by the side.
- ② Step out to the right with your right leg while simultaneously raising your arms overhead to clap. Return to start position.
- ③ Repeat on the left before returning to start position.

Where can I learn more?

If you wish to learn more about how to use the 'Magic-pill' of exercise in the fight against hypertension, join us for our 6-week Manage Hypertension with Exercise programme guided by our Active Health Coaches at an Active Health Lab nearest to you!



Find out more about the programme above

This fragrant chicken dish is subtly flavoured with the refreshing zing of coriander and parsley. Omit bird's eye chillies for a non-spicy version.



Live Well by Eating Right!

Spicy Coriander and Parsley Chicken

Preparation Time: 1 day + 45 minutes

Serves 2

PER SERVING			
Calories	90 kcal	Cholesterol	28 g
Carbohydrate	3.6 g	Fibre	1.0 g
Fat	2.6 g		

This recipe is brought to you by the Department of Dietetic and Food Services, Changi General Hospital.

METHOD:

- ① Prepare chicken a day in advance or at least 2 hours before. In a mixing bowl, combine seasoning ingredients and mix well.
- ② Add chicken breasts and rub seasoning in thoroughly. If preparing a day ahead, refrigerate and leave to marinate overnight.
- ③ Preheat oven to 170°C (340°F).
- ④ Lay tomato slices on a lightly greased baking tray. Sprinkle with salt, pepper and oregano.
- ⑤ Bake for 10 minutes or until tomatoes start to blister, with juices running. Remove from heat and set aside to cool.
- ⑥ Reduce oven temperature to 160°C (320°F) and keep warm.
- ⑦ Heat a frying pan over medium-high heat. Sear chicken breasts on both sides for 30 seconds and transfer to a baking tray.
- ⑧ Bake for 12 minutes or until tender.
- ⑨ Arrange tomato slices on prepared serving plates and top with chicken breasts. Serve hot.

INGREDIENTS:

Chicken breasts – 2pcs, skinned
 Cooking oil – 1 tsp
 Tomatoes – 2pcs, sliced
 Salt – a pinch
 Ground black pepper – a pinch
 Dried oregano – a pinch

SEASONING:

Coriander leaves (cilantro) – 2 sprigs, bruised and coarsely chopped
 Bird's eye chillies – 3, finely chopped
 Garlic – 2 cloves, peeled and chopped
 Paprika – a pinch
 Salt – a pinch
 Pepper – a pinch
 Water – 2 tbsp
 Parsley – 2 sprigs, chopped



Eastern Community Health Outreach

Health Up![™]

A SingHealth community programme

CONTACT US!

SEND IN YOUR INQUIRIES TO:

- ECHO Programme: echo@cgh.com.sg
 Visit ECHO website: <https://www.singhealth.com.sg/rhs/keep-well/Health-Screening-in-the-East>
- Health Up! Programme: health.up@singhealth.com.sg
 Visit Health Up! website: <https://www.singhealth.com.sg/rhs/health-up>



ALWAYS WANTED TO GET HEALTHIER
BUT TOO BUSY TO ACT?

Health Up!TM

Keep Well, Get Well and Live Well
A SingHealth community programme



IS THE PROGRAMME FOR YOU!

Health Up! is a SingHealth initiative that aims to encourage individuals to adopt healthy lifestyle habits and complete age-appropriate health screenings.

Kickstart your journey to better health now!

- **Complete the Onboarding Survey** to help us understand your health status and lifestyle habits
- **Receive a Health Action Plan Personalised for You (H.A.P.P.Y)** based on your current health and fitness levels
- **Be recommended to selected health screening(s)*** if you are eligible
- **Get connected to various fitness activities** and pick up health and wellness tips from trained professionals



Register [now!](#)

Only open to:
Singapore Citizens & PRs
Aged 40 and above
Living in the East



*Obesity, Diabetes, Hypertension, High Cholesterol, Selected Cancer Screenings (i.e. Colon, Cervical and Breast) based on recommendation and eligibility. Subsidised fees applicable. For more enquiries, visit <https://www.singhealth.com.sg/rhs/health-up>

SingHealth

Defining Tomorrow's Medicine

Mild to Moderate Medical Conditions?

Your GP can **treat it!**



The GPFirst Programme is an initiative by Changi General Hospital's A&E Department in partnership with over 170 participating GP clinics in eastern Singapore.

Patients with mild to moderate symptoms are encouraged to seek treatment at the GP clinics first instead of going to the A&E.

Should the patient be given an A&E referral from the GPFirst GP, he or she will:

- ✓ Be accorded higher priority over non-emergency cases
- ✓ Receive a \$50 subsidy* on the prevailing attendance fee at CGH A&E

For more information, visit www.GPFirst.sg

Like us on Facebook at  [gpfirst.sg](https://www.facebook.com/gpfirst.sg)

*Terms and Conditions apply

GPFIRST
YOUR FAMILY DOCTOR, YOUR FIRST STOP

