



Wellness at Work

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Healthsync, 330 N. Evergreen Rd Suite 2, Louisville, KY 40243
Healthsync@bellsouth.net (502) 693-5404

Action Items To Help Lower Your Blood Pressure

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“One reason exercise is so good at controlling blood pressure is that it stimulates the production of nitric oxide—a substance that keeps your blood vessels open. Nitric oxide is produced by the endothelial cells that line the blood vessels. When you exercise, the pumping of your heart forces more blood to flow through the vessels and push along the lining—which the endothelial cells release more nitric acid.”

Maintain a healthy weight

- Check with your health care provider to see if you need to lose weight.
- If you do, lose weight slowly using a healthy eating plan and engaging in physical activity.

Be physically active

- Engage in physical activity for a total of 30 minutes on most days of the week.
- Combine everyday chores with moderate-level sporting activities, such as walking, to achieve your physical activity goals.

Follow a healthy eating plan

- Set up a healthy eating plan with foods low in saturated fat, total fat, and cholesterol, and high in fruits, vegetables, and lowfat dairy foods such as the DASH eating plan.
- Write down everything that you eat and drink in a food diary. Note areas that are successful or need improvement.
- If you are trying to lose weight, choose an eating plan that is lower in calories.

Reduce sodium in your diet

- Choose foods that are low in salt and other forms of sodium.
- Use spices, garlic, and onions to add flavor to your meals without adding more sodium.

Drink alcohol only in moderation

- In addition to raising blood pressure, too much alcohol can add unneeded calories to your diet.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, have only moderate amount—one drink a day for women, two drinks a day for men.

Take prescribed drugs as directed

- * You still must follow the lifestyle changes mentioned above.

“A home gym doesn’t need to be expensive. For under \$100 you can have all you need to stay fit and healthy.”

High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)

High blood pressure (also called **hypertension**) is a serious illness that affects nearly 65 million adults in the United States. High blood pressure is often called a “silent killer” because many people have it but don’t know it. Over time, people who do not get treated for high blood pressure can get very sick or even die.

What does high blood pressure do to your body?

High blood pressure can cause life-threatening illnesses like kidney problems, stroke, heart failure, blindness, and heart attacks.

Who is at Risk?

Anyone can have high blood pressure. Some people are more likely to have high blood pressure including:

- African Americans
- People over age 55
- People with a family history of high blood pressure

Your chances of having high blood pressure are higher if you:

- Are overweight
- Eat food high in salt
- Do not get regular exercise
- Smoke
- Drink alcohol heavily

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For More Information on company wellness programs and how they may help your company, contact **Healthsync** today.

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Wellness at Work Pays Off

The average company that implements a wellness program sees a 4 to 1 return on investment. When companies add the increased productivity and decreased absenteeism, they often save more than \$500 per employee per year. Companies who are seeing 15% to 20% increases in health related costs each year should look at implementing wellness programs immediately to help stop this expensive trend. For more information about company wellness and productivity planning, call Ed Dyer at Healthsync.

Starting a Company Wellness Program

Many companies are faced with healthcare cost increases of 15% or more per year. In most cases, insurance premium rates are based on the health claims of the employee group. Leading companies throughout the country are getting a grip on their healthcare costs by starting wellness programs with their employees.

A wellness program that is well organized generally has a 5 to 1 return on investment, and can be implemented with very little disturbance in a company's workflow. Here are 4 major ingredients to a successful wellness program.

- * Get support from senior management for the wellness program
- * Collect data on the company and employees to set a baseline
- * Based on the data, set an action plan to reduce health risks and cost
- * Evaluate the success of your activities and change course as needed

Today, wellness programs are an important part of strategic planning. As healthcare costs eat up company profits, companies need to aggressively plan their financial defense.

High Blood Pressure (hypertension)

- When you have your blood pressure taken by your doctor, you are told two numbers, such as 120/80. Both numbers are important.
- The first number is your pressure when your heart beats (**systolic pressure**). The second number is your pressure when your heart relaxes (**diastolic pressure**).
- Your pressure goes up and down during the day, depending on what you are doing. Brief rises in blood pressure are normal, but the higher your blood pressure stays, the more at risk you are.
- If your blood pressure is often greater than 140/90, you may need treatment.
- If your blood pressure is greater than 120/80, and you have other **risk factors, such as diabetes**, you may need treatment

How is high blood pressure treated?

There are medicines people can take every day to control their blood pressure. Only your doctor can tell if you need to take medicines.

“A wellness program that is well organized generally has a 5 to 1 return on investment . . . “



Maintaining proper body weight has tremendous health benefits.