



# Know It Control It *for Seniors*

blood pressure management  
for older adults

Curriculum Guide

# Table of Contents

Curriculum Overview **1**

**Orientation:** Get Set with the Check. Change. Control. Tracker **3**

**Lesson 1:** Know Your Numbers **5**

**Lesson 2:** Check It Often, Check It Right **7**

**Lesson 3:** Eat Smart, Slow Down on Salt **9**

**Lesson 4:** Eat Smart, the Mediterranean Way **11**

**Lesson 5:** Move More **13**

**Lesson 6:** Live Tobacco Free **15**

**Lesson 7:** Manage Your Blood Pressure Medications **17**

**Lesson 8:** Keep Calm, Sleep Well **19**

# Curriculum Overview

**Know It, Control It for Seniors** is a four-month blood pressure management program. The program is designed to help participants self-monitor their blood pressure and make healthy lifestyle changes to control high blood pressure. Staff trained as blood pressure coaches teach this program using evidence-based strategies to

manage cardiovascular disease. These strategies include self-measured blood pressure monitoring with additional support and team-based care. Tracking, along with health coaching from a blood pressure coach, has been proven to result in better management of blood pressure.

**Curriculum materials:** orientation plan and 8 lesson plans with resources

**Suggested class size:** 8–12 participants

**Suggested class schedule:** Every other week for a total of 8 classes over 4 consecutive months following the orientation. Please allow a total of 90 minutes for each class, depending on class size. The instructional portion will last 30–45 minutes. An additional 30 minutes before and after the lesson will be needed for measuring each participant's blood pressure and discussing it with them. Schedule half of the participants to come in 30 minutes prior to the lesson and half to remain after.

30 minutes before lesson  
for blood pressure monitoring  
of some participants



30 minutes  
for the lesson



30 minutes after lesson  
for blood pressure monitoring  
of the remaining participants

## Program Goals

**Track blood pressure readings:** It is important that you help your participants **record at least eight blood pressure readings over a four-month period**. One goal of Know It, Control It *for Seniors* is to empower participants to monitor their own blood pressure and track it in a log or an online system. If, however, a participant cannot measure his/her own blood pressure, it is your responsibility to measure it for him/her. If a participant cannot enter his/her readings into the online tracker, you will be responsible for entering the information in the online blood pressure tracking tool.

**Teach healthy lifestyle habits:** Group lessons focus on lifestyle strategies to help participants control their blood pressure. Each lesson plan includes learning objectives, suggested activities, an idea for a simple homework activity and a list of evidence-based resources to support the lesson. Blood

pressure coaches can find all resources online at [startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach). Log in with the username: *coach* and password: *knowitco@ch*

**Coach resources** assist the blood pressure coach in teaching the lessons. Copies are not needed for participants.

**Participant resources** can be displayed on a large screen or TV monitor connected to a computer, or downloaded and printed for class participants. Participants can access these resources directly at [startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit)

**Additional resources** provide more background on lesson topics. These are online resources that coaches may or may not share with participants during class.

## Orientation and Lesson Descriptions

### **Orientation: Get Set with the Check. Change. Control. Tracker**

The blood pressure coach will determine if participants are eligible for the class. Participants will learn the goals of Know It, Control It *for Seniors*, create an account with the Check. Change. Control. Tracker (CCC Tracker) and learn how to upload blood pressure readings.

### **Lesson 1: Know Your Numbers**

Participants will learn why high blood pressure is called the silent killer, recognize the effects of high blood pressure on the body and identify the categories of high blood pressure.

### **Lesson 2: Check It Often, Check It Right**

Participants will learn why self-monitoring blood pressure is important, identify how to choose the right type of blood pressure device and demonstrate the correct technique for taking blood pressure.

### **Lesson 3: Eat Smart, Slow Down on Salt**

Participants will learn the effect of salt on their blood pressure, recognize ways to limit salt and identify other strategies to help them stay on track with eating smart.

### **Lesson 4: Eat Smart, the Mediterranean Way**

Participants will learn which foods to eat and which to limit to help lower blood pressure and how these recommendations fit with a Mediterranean-eating pattern.

### **Lesson 5: Move More**

Participants will learn the relationship between physical activity and blood pressure, recognize why older adults should work with their health care provider to develop an activity plan and learn appropriate ways to be physically active.

### **Lesson 6: Live Tobacco Free**

Participants will learn the effects of smoking/tobacco on blood pressure and tools and resources to live tobacco free.

### **Lesson 7: Manage Your Blood Pressure Medications**

Participants will learn how to manage medications if medication is a part of their treatment plan for high blood pressure.

### **Lesson 8: Keep Calm, Sleep Well**

Participants will learn the connection between blood pressure, stress and inadequate sleep, and explore tools and resources to reduce stress levels and get a good night's rest.



# Orientation: Get Set with the Check. Change. Control. Tracker

**Orientation is a prerequisite for starting the Know It, Control It *for Seniors* lessons. During this time, the coach will confirm participant eligibility. Participants will learn the goals of the program, create an account with the Check. Change. Control. Tracker (CCC Tracker) and learn how to upload blood pressure readings. The orientation session can be done either one-on-one with the participant or in a group setting.**

## Learning Objectives

By the end of orientation, participants should:

1. Understand the goals of Know It, Control It *for Seniors*
2. Create an account with the Check. Change. Control. Tracker (CCC Tracker)
3. Understand how to upload blood pressure readings by either logging in to the online account or by using the text message feature

## Suggested Activities

### Learning Objective 1

- Introduce yourself, share some background on the program. Share the Know It, Control It *for Seniors* Participant Orientation Handout.
- Take care of any housekeeping items that are necessary as part of senior center procedures, including confirming participant eligibility for program enrollment. Participants must:
  - be at least 50 years old
  - have been diagnosed with high blood pressure
  - not have had a heart attack or stroke in the past six months
  - not have an abnormal heart beat
- Ask the participants to introduce themselves, and ask them to share at least one thing they want to learn or accomplish by the end of this program. If possible help participants establish a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound) Goal. (See coach resource: SMART Goal Examples.)
- Demonstrate the CCC Tracker ([ccctracker.com](http://ccctracker.com)) and its features using a made-up participant and mentor account.

### Learning Objective 2

- Share the Set Up Participant CCC Tracker Account handout.
- Help each participant set up a CCC Tracker account and connect to you as the mentor.

### Learning Objective 3

- Share the CCC Tracker Participant Guide for more information.
- Allow time for participants to read and ask questions about how to upload blood pressure readings by either logging in to the online account or by using the text message feature.

## Homework

Review the CCC Tracker Participant Guide and bring your questions with you to the first lesson.

## Resources

### Coach resources:

- SMART Goal Examples
  - Center 4 Active Living website
  - Goal Setting Worksheet pdf
- Check. Change. Control. Tracker Volunteer Guide

### Participant resources:

- Know It, Control It *for Seniors* Participant Orientation Handout
- Set Up Participant CCC Tracker Account
- CCC Tracker
- Check. Change. Control. Tracker Participant Guide

All resources can be found online at **[startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach)**.  
Username: **coach**  
Password: **knowitco@ch**

Participants can access these resources directly at **[startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit)**.

# Lesson 1:

# Know Your Numbers

**Participants will learn the dangers of high blood pressure and the categories of blood pressure.**

## Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson, participants should:

1. Understand why high blood pressure is called the silent killer
2. Recognize the effects of high blood pressure on the body
3. Identify the categories of high blood pressure

## Suggested Activities

### Introduction

- Explain that in the United States, nearly half (46 percent) of adults have high blood pressure.
- Explain that more than 90% of individuals age 55 years or older who never had high blood pressure, will develop it if efforts to prevent it are not made.
- Explain what blood pressure is and the risk factors for high blood pressure. (See coach resource: An Introduction to High Blood Pressure, page 1.)

### Learning Objective 1

- Describe that high blood pressure is sometimes referred to as the “silent killer” because it often has no warning signs and symptoms, and people do not know they have it. (See coach resource: An Introduction to High Blood Pressure—What Are the Signs or Symptoms of High Blood Pressure?, page 1.)
- Provide time for the group to discuss this learning objective.

### Learning Objective 2

- Talk about the effects of high blood pressure on various organs. (See coach resource: An Introduction to High Blood Pressure—What Are the Effects of High Blood Pressure?, page 2.)
- Share the handout: Consequences of High Blood Pressure.
- Provide time for the group to discuss this learning objective.

### Learning Objective 3

- Explain what blood pressure numbers mean, describe the categories of blood pressure and encourage participants to know their numbers. (See coach resource: An Introduction to High Blood Pressure—What Do the Blood Pressure Numbers Mean?, page 3.)
- Share the participant handout: Don't Let Your Blood Pressure Erupt.
- Provide time for the group to discuss this learning objective.

## Homework

Talk to your family about what you learned in class and encourage them to find out their blood pressure.

## Resources

### Coach resources:

- An Introduction to High Blood Pressure
- Consequences of High Blood Pressure

### Additional coach resources:

- What Is High Blood Pressure?: Web Resource for videos
- High Blood Pressure Learning Center
- Check. Change. Control. Tracker (CCC Tracker)

### Participant resources:

- Don't Let Your Blood Pressure Erupt
- High Blood Pressure Brochure

### Additional participant resources:

- Check. Change. Control. Tracker (CCC Tracker)

All resources can be found online at [startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach).  
Username: **coach**  
Password: **knowitco@ch**

Participants can access these resources directly at [startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit).



## Lesson 2:

# Check It Often, Check It Right

**Participants will learn why and how to self-monitor their blood pressure.**

### Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson, participants should:

1. Understand the need for self-monitoring blood pressure
2. Identify how to choose the right type of blood pressure device
3. Demonstrate the correct technique for taking blood pressure

## Suggested Activities

### Learning Objective 1

- Explain the need for self-monitoring blood pressure. (See coach resources: Self-Measured Blood Pressure Monitoring Protocol—Why Do I Need to Monitor My Blood Pressure?, Who Should Monitor Blood Pressure at Home?, Who Should Not Monitor Blood Pressure?, pages 1-2.)

### Learning Objective 2

- Provide tips for choosing the right type of blood pressure device. (See coach resources: Self-Measured Blood Pressure Monitoring Protocol, Choosing the Right Type of Home Monitor, page 2.)
  - Choose an automated upper arm device.
  - Make sure it is validated and checked for accuracy.
  - Purchase the correct cuff size.
- Describe the correct technique for taking blood pressure. (See coach resource: Self-Measured Blood Pressure Monitoring Protocol—How to Monitor Your Blood Pressure, Page 3.) Share the participant resource: Steps to Measure Blood Pressure.
- Play the video on self-monitoring blood pressure. (See coach resource: Self-Monitoring Blood Pressure video.)

### Learning Objective 3

- Provide time for the group to practice the technique for taking blood pressure. Provide cuffs of different sizes.

## Homework

Consider purchasing your own blood pressure device to begin monitoring your blood pressure at home, or identify places such as a local pharmacy where you could monitor your blood pressure.

## Resources

### Coach resources:

- Self-Measured Blood Pressure Monitoring Protocol
- Self-Monitoring Blood Pressure: Video

### Additional coach resources:

- ABCD's of Blood Pressure Measurement

### Participant resources:

- Steps to Measure Blood Pressure
- Video on self-monitoring blood pressure

### Additional participant resources:

- ABCD's of Blood Pressure Measurement
- Check. Change. Control. Tracker (CCC Tracker)

All resources can be found online at **[startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach)**.  
Username: **coach**  
Password: **knowitco@ch**

Participants can access these resources directly at **[startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit)**.

# Lesson 3:

# Eat Smart, Slow Down on Salt

Participants will learn why it is important to limit sodium and how to do it, and learn how to track what they eat using a food diary.

## Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson, participants should:

1. Understand the effect of salt on their blood pressure
2. Recognize ways to limit salt in their diet to help control blood pressure
3. Identify other strategies to help them stay on track with eating smart

## Suggested Activities

### Learning Objective 1

- Explain that a high sodium diet can increase blood pressure and that reducing salt/sodium in the diet can help control blood pressure.
- Explain the relationship between sodium and salt.

#### Approximate amounts of sodium in a given amount of table salt:

1/4 teaspoon salt = 575 mg sodium  
1/2 teaspoon salt = 1,150 mg sodium  
3/4 teaspoon salt = 1,725 mg sodium  
1 teaspoon salt = 2,300 mg sodium

- Provide the following recommendations:
  - Reducing dietary sodium intake to 2,400 milligrams (mg) a day can lower the systolic blood pressure by 2-8 mm Hg. Give an example of a day's worth of food that can add up to 2,400 mg sodium.
  - The American Heart Association recommends no more than 2,300 mg a day and an ideal limit of no more than 1,500 mg per day for most adults. (See coach resource: How Much Sodium Should I Eat per Day?) Give an example of a day's worth of food that can add up to 1,500 mg sodium.
- Talk about how sodium can be sneaky and share the Salty Six infographic about the six popular foods that can add high levels of sodium to the diet. (See participant resource: Salty Six Adults)

### Learning Objective 2

- Discuss ways to decrease sodium in the diet by replacing salt with spices and eating fewer processed/packaged foods. (See coach resource: Spice It Up and Use Less Sodium.)

### Learning Objective 3

- Explain the importance of reading food labels and share tips and resources. (See coach resources: Using the Nutrition Facts Label—A How-To Guide for Older Adults, Reading the Label.)
- Share tips for understanding food portion sizes and right sizing their food portions. (See coach resources: Right-Size Your Portions, Suggested Servings from Each Food Group.)
- Explain how to use a food diary to keep track of what you eat. (See participant resources: Food Diary, My Food Diary, Digital Food Tracker.)

## Homework

Begin checking food labels for the sodium content of the foods you eat. Check websites for restaurant foods commonly eaten.

## Resources

All resources can be found online at [startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach).  
Username: **coach**  
Password: **knowitco@ch**

### Coach resources:

- How Much Sodium Should I Eat per Day?
- Spice It Up and Use Less Sodium
- Using the Nutrition Facts Label—A How-To Guide for Older Adults
- Reading the Label
- Right-Size Your Portions
- Suggested Servings from Each Food Group

### Participant resources:

- Salty Six Adults
- Food Diary (AHA)
- My Food Diary (CDC)

### Additional coach resources:

- Digital Food Tracker
- The Effects of Excessive Sodium on Your Health and Appearance (Infographic)
- Interactive Nutrition Label
- Shaking the Salt Habit to Lower High Blood Pressure
- Sodium: The Facts
- Sodium: Q & A

### Additional participant resources:

- Digital Food Tracker (USDA)
- The Effects of Excessive Sodium on Your Health and Appearance (Infographic)
- Interactive Nutrition Label
- Using the Nutrition Facts Label—A How-To Guide for Older Adults
- Right-Size Your Portions
- Suggested Servings from Each Food Group
- Check. Change. Control. Tracker (CCC Tracker)

Participants can access these resources directly at [startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit).

# Lesson 4:

# Eat Smart, the Mediterranean Way

**Participants will learn which foods to eat more of and which to limit to help lower blood pressure and how these recommendations fit with the Mediterranean eating pattern.**

## Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson, participants should:

1. Understand the type of foods to add to help lower blood pressure
2. Understand the type of foods to limit to help lower blood pressure
3. Learn about the Mediterranean eating pattern and its health benefits

## Suggested Activities

### Introduction

- Explain that the Mediterranean eating pattern can help manage blood pressure and how all the tips discussed in this lesson are designed to help participants eat the Mediterranean way. Talk about the Mediterranean eating pattern's various health benefits. (See coach resource: Eating the Med Way.)

### Learning Objective 1

- Explain the importance of eating a diet that is rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, skinless poultry, fish, nuts and olive oil. (See coach resource: Enjoy More Fruits and Veggies; Med Instead of Meds Tips and Tools.)
- Explain the importance of eating foods rich in potassium, magnesium, and fiber as they help lower blood pressure. (Examples include nuts, seeds, legumes, lean meats, and fruits and vegetables.)

### Learning Objective 2

- Explain the importance of limiting saturated fat, trans fats, sodium and sugar. Limiting red meat will help decrease saturated fat while limiting sweets and sugar-sweetened beverages will help decrease sugar. (See coach resource: Med Instead of Meds Tips and Tools, Re-Think Your Drink.)

### Learning Objective 3

- Discuss the seven steps to eating the Mediterranean way and show the videos for some of these steps. (See coach resource: Seven Steps to Eating the Med Way.)
- Provide time for the class to discuss this information and share thoughts.



## Homework

Choose one healthy eating strategy we discussed in class today that you want to make part of your routine.

## Resources

### Coach resources:

- Eating the Med Way
- Med Instead of Meds Tips and Tools
- Enjoy More Fruits and Veggies
- Re-Think Your Drink
- Seven Steps to Eating the Med Way: Web Resource for videos

### Additional coach resources:

- Food and Nutrition Services
- My Eat Smart, Move More: Farmers' Markets page
- North Carolina Association of Feeding America Food Banks
- USDA National Farmers' Market Directory—Limit the search to NC and then check SNAP under Payment Accepted for a regularly updated listing

### Participant resources:

- Healthy Eating Tips for Seniors—National Council of Aging
- Six Ways to Eat Well as You Get Older—National Council of Aging

### Additional participant resources:

- Seven Steps to Eating the Med Way: Web Resource for videos
- Enjoy More Fruits and Veggies
- Re-Think Your Drink
- Check. Change. Control. Tracker (CCC Tracker)

All resources can be found online at **[startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach)**.  
Username: **coach**  
Password: **knowitco@ch**

Participants can access these resources directly at **[startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit)**.

# Lesson 5:

## Move More

Participants will learn why and how they should be physically active to help control their blood pressure.

### Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson, participants should:

1. Understand the relationship between physical activity and blood pressure
2. Recognize that **older adults should work with their health care provider** to develop an activity plan to consider chronic conditions, activity limitations and reduce risk of falls
3. Learn ways to be physically active as appropriate

## Suggested Activities

### Learning Objective 1

- Explain the relationship between physical activity and blood pressure and how exercise can be a drug-free approach to lowering high blood pressure. Emphasize that physical activity is not a replacement for taking medications and that participants who are already taking blood pressure medications should continue taking them. (See coach resource: Getting Active to Control High Blood Pressure.)
- Share that regular aerobic physical activity (such as brisk walking for at least 30 minutes most days of the week) can reduce systolic blood pressure by 4–9 mm Hg.
- Explain the various health benefits of physical activity for older adults. (See coach resource: Physical Activity and Health: Older Adults.)

### Learning Objective 2

- Explain why it is important for **older adults to work with their health care provider** to develop an activity plan that considers their current health and possible activity limitations. (See coach resource: Physical Activity in Older Americans.)
- Brainstorm questions that participants can ask their health care providers about how to safely increase their physical activity.

### Learning Objective 3

- Share tips for moving every day. (See coach resource: Physical Activity in Older Americans. See participant resources: Choose to Move More Every Day, Mix it Up, More is Better, See Yourself Here.)

- Share information and tips from the Go4Life campaign created by the National Institute of Aging and its resources which are tailored to older adults. (See coach resource: Go4Life.)

## Homework

Write down the physical activity questions you want to ask your health care provider at your next appointment.

## Resources

### Coach resources:

- Getting Active to Control High Blood Pressure
- Physical Activity and Health: Older Adults
- Physical Activity in Older Americans
- Go4Life

### Additional coach resources:

- See Yourself Here

### Participant resources:

- Choose to Move More Every Day
- Mix it Up
- More is Better

### Additional participant resources:

- Go4Life
- Check. Change. Control. Tracker (CCC Tracker)

All resources can be found online at **[startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach)**.  
Username: **coach**  
Password: **knowitco@ch**

Participants can access these resources directly at **[startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit)**.

# Lesson 6:

# Live Tobacco Free

**Participants will learn the effects of smoking/tobacco on blood pressure and tools and resources to live tobacco free.**

## Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson, participants should:

1. Understand the relationship between smoking/tobacco and blood pressure
2. Share tools and resources to support tobacco cessation

## Suggested Activities

### Learning Objective 1

- Explain that smoking cigarettes and chewing tobacco can cause an immediate rise in blood pressure and long-term narrowing of the arteries, further increasing the risk for heart attack and stroke. (See coach resource: Smoking, High Blood Pressure and Your Health.)
- Share that cigarette smoking harms nearly every organ in the body, causes many diseases and is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States. (See coach resource: Health Effects of Cigarette Smoking.)
- Share the participant resource: Risks from Smoking and provide time for the class to discuss this information and share thoughts. (See participant resource: Risks from Smoking.)

### Learning Objective 2

- Share information about QuitlineNC which provides free cessation services to any North Carolina resident who needs help quitting tobacco use. Share the QuitlineNC brochure with the participants. (See coach resource: QuitlineNC. See participant resource: QuitlineNC brochure.)
- Share other tools and resources that are available to quit smoking. (See coach resources: Smokefree60+, How Can I Quit Smoking?, Create My Quit Plan and Smoke Free Apps.)

## Homework

If you use tobacco, talk to a loved one or a health care provider about steps you'd like to explore to help you quit or cut back.

All resources can be found online at **startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach**.  
Username: **coach**  
Password: **knowitco@ch**

Participants can access these resources directly at **startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit**.

## Resources

### Coach resources:

- Smoking, High Blood Pressure and Your Health
- Health Effects of Cigarette Smoking Fact Sheet
- QuitlineNC
- Smokefree60+
- How Can I Quit Smoking?
- Create My Quit Plan
- Smoke Free Apps

### Additional coach resources:

- BeTobaccoFree.gov
- Harms of Smoking and Health Benefits of Quitting
- Smoking: It's Never Too Late to Stop

### Participant resources:

- QuitlineNC brochure
- Risks from Smoking

### Additional participant resources:

- Health Conditions and Diseases Quit Smoking (easy to read)
- Smokefree60+
- Create My Quit Plan
- Smoke Free Apps
- Check. Change. Control. Tracker (CCC Tracker)



## Lesson 7:

# Manage Your Blood Pressure Medications

**Participants will learn how to manage medications if medication is a part of their treatment plan for high blood pressure.**

### Learning Objectives

By the end of orientation, participants should:

1. Recognize the need to partner with their health care provider to set treatment goals especially if it involves taking blood pressure medications
2. Learn tips and tools to manage blood pressure medications effectively

## Suggested Activities

### Learning Objective 1

- Explain that participants should follow their health care providers' advice and take medications as prescribed. Emphasize that medications and lifestyle changes together can help control high blood pressure and that participants should not stop taking their medications before talking to their health care provider.
- Discuss questions that participants can ask their health care provider about their high blood pressure and medications. (See participant resource: High Blood Pressure—Questions to Ask Your Doctor.)

### Learning Objective 2

- Show the video “Tips for Taking Blood Pressure Medicines as Directed.” (See coach resource: Tips for Taking Blood Pressure Medicines as Directed.)
- Share strategies for managing medications. (See coach resource: Managing of Your Medicines.)
- Share sample medication trackers with the participants and encourage their use. (See participant resources: My Drug and Supplement Diary, Medicine Chart, 5 Trusted Apps For Seniors to Manage Your Medications.)
- Share other tools and resources that are available to support medication management. (See coach resource: Medicines and You: A Guide for Older Adults.)

## Homework

Write down questions you can ask your health care provider about your high blood pressure and medications at your next appointment.

## Resources

### Coach resources:

- Managing of Your Medicines

### Additional coach resources:

- NC Med Assist
- North Carolina Drug Card
- Medicare Matters
- Prescription Drug Options for Older Adults: Managing Your Medicines

### Participant resources:

- High Blood Pressure—Questions to Ask Your Doctor
- Tips for Taking Blood Pressure Medicines as Directed: Video
- My Drug and Supplement Diary
- Medicine Chart
- 5 Trusted Apps for Seniors to Manage Your Medications
- Medicines and You: A Guide for Older Adults

### Additional participant resources:

- NC Med Assist
- North Carolina Drug Card
- Check. Change. Control. Tracker (CCC Tracker)

All resources can be found online at **[startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach](https://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach)**.  
Username: **coach**  
Password: **knowitco@ch**

Participants can access these resources directly at **[startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit](https://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit)**.

## Lesson 8:

# Keep Calm, Sleep Well

**Participants will learn the connection between blood pressure, stress and inadequate sleep and explore tools and resources to reduce stress levels and get a good night's rest.**

### Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson, participants should:

1. Understand the relationship between stress and high blood pressure
2. Learn tips and tools to manage stress in a healthy way
3. Understand the relationship between inadequate sleep and the risk for high blood pressure and heart disease
4. Learn tips and tools to improve sleep habits

## Suggested Activities

### Learning Objective 1

- Explain how stress can affect blood pressure by contributing to risk factors such as poor diet and alcohol consumption. (See coach resource: Managing Stress to Control High Blood Pressure.)
- Share signs of stress and anxiety in older adults. (See coach resource: Coping with Stress and Anxiety, Page 3.)

### Learning Objective 2

- Share tips and strategies to prevent or reduce stress. (See coach resources: Manage Stress, Fight Stress with Healthy Habits, What Is Stress Management? See participant resource: How Can I Manage Stress?)

### Learning Objective 3

- Explain how older adults require 7–9 hours of sleep each night and how changes to sleep patterns are a part of the normal aging process. (See coach resources: Sleep Duration Recommendations, Aging and Sleep, Sleep and Aging.)
- Share how inadequate sleep can increase the risk of obesity and as a result could contribute to high blood pressure.
- Share that poor quality of sleep, especially due to a treatable cause such as sleep apnea, has been linked to an increased risk for high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease. (See coach resources: Sleep Apnea, Sleep Apnea and Heart Disease, Stroke.)

### Learning Objective 4

- Share tips and strategies to improve sleep habits. (See coach resource: Your Guide to Healthy Sleep. See participant resource: Sleeping Well.)

## Homework

- Choose one strategy discussed during today's class that you'd like to try.
- Continue to self-monitor your blood pressure.

## Resources

### Coach resources:

- Managing Stress to Control High Blood Pressure
- Coping with Stress and Anxiety
- Manage Stress
- Fight Stress with Healthy Habits
- What Is Stress Management?
- Sleep Duration Recommendations
- Aging and Sleep from the Sleep Foundation
- Sleep and Aging: About Sleep
- Sleep Apnea
- Sleep Apnea and Heart Disease, Stroke
- Your Guide to Healthy Sleep

### Additional coach resources:

- Stress Screener

### Participant resources:

- Sleeping Well
- How Can I Manage Stress?

### Additional participant resources:

- Stress Screener
- Sleep Duration Recommendations
- Your Guide to Healthy Sleep Check. Change. Control. Tracker (CCC Tracker)

All resources can be found online at **[startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit/coach)**.  
Username: **coach**  
Password: **knowitco@ch**

Participants can access these resources directly at **[startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit](http://startwithyourheart.com/knowitcontrolit)**.

# Don't Let Your Blood Pressure Erupt

Blood Pressure Category for Adults	Systolic mmHg (upper number)	Diastolic mmHg (lower number)
<b>HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS</b> (Consult your doctor immediately)	<b>HIGHER THAN 180</b>	and/or <b>HIGHER THAN 120</b>
<b>HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE</b> (Hypertension) Stage 2	<b>140 OR HIGHER</b>	or <b>90 OR HIGHER</b>
<b>HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE</b> (Hypertension) Stage 1	<b>130–139</b>	or <b>80–89</b>
<b>ELEVATED</b>	<b>120–129</b>	and <b>LESS THAN 80</b>
<b>NORMAL</b>	<b>LESS THAN 120</b>	and <b>LESS THAN 80</b>

2017 ACC/AHA/AAPA/ABC/ACPM/AGS/APhA/ASH/ASPC/NMA/PCNA Guideline for the Prevention, Detection, Evaluation, and Management of High Blood Pressure in Adults: A Report of the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association Task Force on Clinical Practice Guidelines. *J Am Coll Cardiol* 2017;Nov 13.



# Steps to Measuring Your Blood Pressure



## Step 1

Make sure the cuff fits. Measure around your upper arm, and choose a monitor that comes with the correct size cuff.

## Step 2

Don't smoke, drink caffeinated beverages, or exercise within the 30 minutes before measuring your blood pressure. Also, use the bathroom first. A full bladder can increase blood pressure slightly.

## Step 3

Be still. Do not talk while taking blood pressure readings.

## Step 4

- Sit correctly, with your back straight and supported (on a dining chair, for example, rather than a sofa).
- Place feet flat on the floor, with legs uncrossed.
- Support your arm on a flat surface (such as a table) with your upper arm at heart level. Make sure the middle of the cuff is placed directly above the eye of the elbow and approximately one inch above the elbow.
- Place the cuff on bare skin. Check your monitor's instructions for an illustration, or have your pharmacist show you how.



## Step 5

Follow directions on the blood pressure device to start the reading.

## Step 6

Take multiple readings. Each time you take your blood pressure, do it two or three times, one minute apart, and record all results.

## Step 7

Measure your blood pressure twice daily, once in the morning (before breakfast and medications) and once at night, or as recommended by your health care provider. It is also important to take the readings at the same time each day.

## Step 8

Record all of your readings, including the date and time taken. Share your blood pressure records with your health care team.

A single high reading of blood pressure is not an immediate cause for alarm. However, if you get a high reading, take your blood pressure several more times. If readings remain high, consult your health care professional to determine if a medical intervention is needed or your blood pressure monitor is malfunctioning. **When blood pressure reaches a systolic (top number) of 180 or higher OR diastolic (bottom number) of 120 or higher, emergency medical treatment is required.**

**Community & Clinical**  
**CONNECTIONS**  
**for Prevention & Health**  
**Branch** NORTH CAROLINA  
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH