

# A Guide to High Blood Pressure

An insight into living with and caring for those affected by High Blood Pressure



# High Blood Pressure in Canada

Nearly 70% of Canadians living with hypertension are over the age of 70.



67% of Canadians living with hypertension require medications to regulate their blood pressure.

Approximately 7.5 million Canadians are living with high blood pressure.



NOT USING OUR SERVICES ALREADY ?

# GET AFFORDABLE HIGH-QUALITY LIVE-IN CARE

We help you find and manage carefully screened and experienced professional live-in caregivers for your loved ones.

**1-855-410-7971**  
**WWW.CONSIDRACARE.COM**

## WHY USE US ?

- Affordable with no upfront costs or commitments
- Fully vetted caregivers
- Families choose who to hire
- Trial period
- Backup care
- Monthly check-ins to review and update the care plan
- Ongoing caregiver training
- We do payroll, taxes and WSIB
- State-of-the-art platform to guide caregivers and keep you connected with them



# 1. What is high blood pressure?

**The term "hypertension" or "high blood pressure" is used to describe a chronic disease characterized by rise in the pressure exerted by the blood on the blood vessels.** This rise in pressure is caused by the narrowing of the blood vessels. This results in increasing the resistance of blood flow through the arteries. It can occur with no symptoms at all, hence diagnosed at a later stage. It is estimated that as many as 17% of those having hypertension are unaware of it. In later stages, high blood pressure can manifest via a variety of issues, which include stroke, heart disease, kidney disease, vascular dementia and peripheral vascular disease.

Hypertension can be either primary or secondary. Primary or essential hypertension is the most common form of hypertension and its cause is not known. Secondary hypertension can be caused by many different conditions.

## Primary Hypertension

Primary hypertension or essential hypertension consists of 90-95% of total cases of hypertension. It is diagnosed by taking at least three measurements, over a period of few weeks, with an average greater than 140/90 mmHg. This means systolic of 140mmHg and diastolic of 90 mmHg. Essential hypertension is believed to be caused by poor diet, lack of exercise, obesity and smoking.

## Secondary Hypertension

Secondary hypertension consists of 5-10% of total hypertension cases. It is caused by medical conditions such as thyroid disease, kidney disease, renal artery stenosis, coarctation of the aorta, adrenal tumours and sleep apnea. Certain medications can also cause secondary hypertension. Secondary hypertension is suspected when there is a sudden and persistent rise in blood pressure difficult to control by medications.

High blood pressure treatment focuses on reducing the blood pressure and preventing end organ damage. Therapies for both kinds of hypertension range from managing stress and lifestyle changes to the use of medications. Treatment of secondary hypertension involves proper diagnosis, treatment of the underlying cause and may involve surgery in some cases. Prognosis of hypertension is based upon early diagnosis, regular check ups and adequate control of blood pressure.

# What are the early warning signs of high blood pressure?

## Early Warning Signs

**Generally, there are no warning signs of hypertension. That is why it is also known as the "silent killer". Often it is not diagnosed until it is too late. There are few general symptoms that can be identified as early warning signs of hypertension, regardless of the type. These can include:**

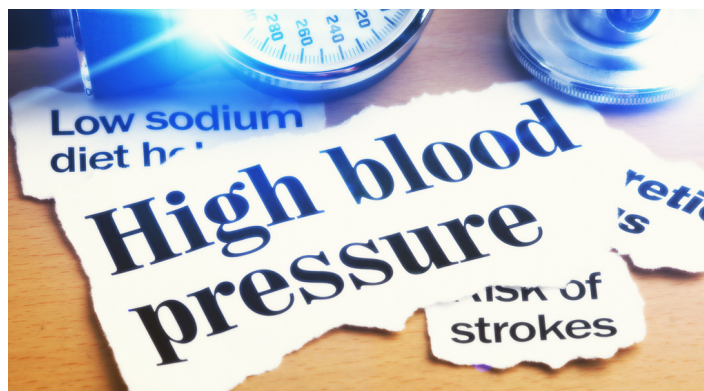
- Fatigue and malaise.
- Headaches
- Feeling of pressure in the ears or chest.

**In cases of severe rise in blood pressure, a person may experience these symptoms. If a person is experiencing any of the following symptoms with high blood pressure, it is crucial to get emergency medical attention.**

## Symptoms of hypertensive crisis

**These can include one or all of the following symptoms**

- Severe chest pain
- Intense headache
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea and vomiting
- Nose bleeds
- Irregular heartbeat
- Blurred vision and confusion
- Seizures and coma



## 2. What questions should you ask your doctor about high blood pressure?

If you have been diagnosed with high blood pressure, you will want to consult your primary care physician to better understand your prognosis. Consistent communication between affected individuals and medical professionals is imperative as it plays a key role in the development of a treatment plan. The following are some questions that you should ask your doctor after receiving a high blood pressure diagnosis:

### Key Questions to Ask Your Doctor

- What type of hypertension do I have?
- What is a healthy blood pressure reading for my age?
- Does my current weight affect my blood pressure?
- Do I need to change my diet to help regulate my blood pressure?
- How often should I check my blood pressure?
- Do you see any current complications as a result of my hypertension?
- Will I need medications to control my blood pressure?
- If so what kind? What are the possible side effects?
- How might these drugs interact with my other medications??
- What lifestyle changes do you recommend I pursue to help manage my blood pressure?
- How do I know when is it time to call for emergency care?



### 3. How can high blood pressure impact an individual?

Hypertension or high blood pressure has long-term health implications. It can lead to serious and life-threatening conditions if not properly managed. Refusal or reluctance to take medications can add to the long-term damage of the body organs. Hypertension is considered to be one of the top risk factors of death in Canada.

Following are some of the ways that high blood pressure can impact an individual's health.

#### Effect on body systems

Hypertension is one of the leading causes of death in Canada. Slowly and steadily, over a period of time, it causes a decline in the function of almost every organ in the body. This is why it is referred to as a "silent killer". Chronic increase in blood pressure leads to damaged arteries. Following are the long-term effects of high blood pressure.

- Heart attack - A rise in the blood pressure causes the heart to pump more, this leads to enlargement of the heart. Eventually, an enlarged heart can lead to heart failure and heart attack.
- Neurological problems - High blood pressure can lead to damage in blood vessels in the brain, which can cause stroke, TIA's (transient ischemic attacks), cognitive impairment and dementia.
- Kidney disease - Rise in blood pressure also can damage arteries in the kidney. It can lead to scarring of the kidneys, also known as glomerulosclerosis or even kidney failure. Many people with high blood pressure end up needing dialysis or a renal transplant.
- Eye problems: High blood pressure can cause serious eye damage or even blindness. The damage to the blood vessels in the eyes can cause retinopathy (retinal damage), Choroidopathy (fluid buildup under the retina) and optic neuropathy (nerve damage in the eyes).

# 4. Learning to live with high blood pressure

While learning to live with high blood pressure can be challenging, it is not impossible. Here are some helpful tips on how to live and cope with a high blood pressure diagnosis:



## 1. Dietary changes

- Consume plenty of whole grains, nuts, beans, poultry, fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Drink lots of water, reduce sodium, caffeine and alcohol intake

## 2. Exercise

- Reduce stress using means such as yoga, meditation and support groups
- Exercise such as walking, hiking, swimming, biking, pilates, strength training and stretching are all beneficial.

## 3. Medication & monitoring

- Take your medication according to your doctor's prescription.
- Always inform your doctor before starting any new medication to avoid drug interactions.

## 4. Regular checkups

- Keep up your follow-up appointments
- Monitor blood pressure, and bring the record to the doctor on each visit.
- Get all blood work and tests done as per doctor's orders.



# 5. Caregiving and high blood pressure

If someone you love has been diagnosed with high blood pressure, they may require assistance in daily activities. Here are some ways you can help your loved one cope with their blood pressure. Keep in mind that the condition affects everyone differently, so care needs may vary.

## 1. Learn everything you can about their condition

Understanding your loved one has been diagnosed with hypertension will help you to understand the management of the condition. You can tailor your care approach accordingly. It is important to recognize the warning signs of hypertension. This will help them to seek medical care urgently.

## 2. Promote healthy eating

Offer help whenever possible, and let your loved one know that you are prepared to offer assistance whenever needed. For example, help them in grocery shopping. Encourage them to take grains, fish, poultry, fruits, nuts and vegetables. Limit the salt intake and increase water intake.



## 3. Encourage lifestyle changes and exercise

Encourage our loved ones to exercise. Go out for a walk with them. Other ideas include swimming, playing sports or hiking. Joining a gym and signing up for low-impact exercises could also increase motivation levels.

## 4. Monitoring blood pressure and stress reduction

If you notice your loved one feeling down or stressed, try to engage them with activities to reduce stress. These may include meditation, tai chi or yoga. Other examples include joining a seniors club and planning regular social engagements.

# How can ConsidraCare help?

Chronic diseases can be a challenge, especially for seniors, but with proper care, it may be possible to maintain a healthy and happy lifestyle.

Our care experts can help you assess your needs and match you or your loved one with a screened, professional and dedicated live-in caregiver experienced in providing care for common chronic conditions. We also provide you, your family and your caregiver with tools and support to deliver an affordable and superior alternative to long-term care facilities.

Why is ConsidraCare's live-in home care a better alternative ?



## **Consistent, 1-on-1 personal care**

Carefully screened and vetted caregivers matched with your loved one's care needs. Primary caregivers stay with the loved one at least 75% of the time.



## **Families stay in control**

We recommend but the families choose who to hire, get a trial period and engage directly with caregivers through our smart platform.



## **Cost-effective, high-quality care**

More affordable than hourly agencies and assisted living facilities, with faster caregiver placement and higher quality of care.



## **We have your back**

We assist with hiring, planning of care and daily tasks, payroll, taxes, WSIB, backup care and more, and are always on hand to help.

Call us now for a free consultation from our dementia care experts

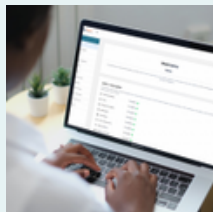
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**wecare@considracare.com**

**www.considracare.com**

# How does ConsidraCare work?

ConsidraCare places dedicated live-in care professionals within the homes of seniors , and provides their families and caregivers with a state-of-the art- platform to improve collaboration, increase visibility and improve the delivery of care.



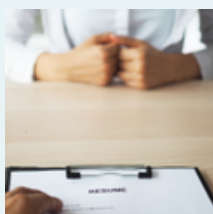
## 1. Needs assessment

We first work with families to identify their care needs and build a detailed care plan for the loved ones.



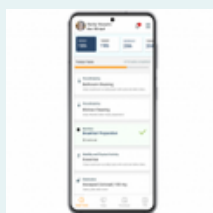
## 2. Caregiver matching

We match live-in caregivers from our pool of pre-screened caregivers with the loved ones' specific needs and personality, and arrange the interviews with the caregivers short-listed by families.



## 3. Hiring and trial period

We assist with the logistics of hiring and orienting the caregiver and setting up accounts for CRA, WSIB and payroll processing. The first week is a trial period to allow the families and caregivers to get comfortable with each other.



## 4. Ongoing care management

Families and caregivers use the ConsidraCare platform to coordinate care planning, daily tasks and timesheets. We take care of payroll, updating care plans, monitoring care delivery and assisting the caregivers and families with addressing any issues.



## 5. Backup and respite for the caregiver

Every few weeks, we arrange for a back-up caregiver to give the primary caregiver a respite break. Backup caregivers can also be provided to cover the primary caregivers when they take vacation.

Call us and we would be happy to help with your care needs

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