How I Cured My Blood Pressure in Under 4 Weeks Without Drugs or Exercise

written by Holly
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By Holly Lisle

 In the past three and a half weeks, I've manage to drop my blood pressure from a high of 160/100 to an average of 116/74, without taking blood pressure medicine, exercising, or visiting a doctor. (I don't have health insurance or, at the moment, money, so for me, a doctor wasn't even a consideration.) By doing so, I've eliminated the daily headaches I've been having for for the last several months and the constant—waking and sleeping—headache I had though the last two weeks of April and the first two weeks of May. I've also gotten my energy back, and the lack of ability to focus on anything that has been plaguing me since the end of 2005 is gone, along with its dreadful effect on my writing progress. I've appended a couple of charts so you could take a look at how this has been going.

 The first numbers you see on the chart are the first pressures I took, barring the one at Wal-Mart that was 160/100 that made me buy the blood pressure cuff/ stethescope combo. The second chart shows the results of trending—averaging highs and lows to see if overall the pressures are going up or down.

The day I discovered my blood pressure was dangerously high was the day I decided to fix it. Here's what I did.

I eliminated all milk products (milk, cheese, ice cream, whey, and processed foods that are made with milk in them—I had to start reading labels if this was going to work, because the

dairy industry insinuates their crap everywhere). I eliminated most meat. DISCLOSURE: In the nearly four weeks I've been doing this, my exceptions to the no-meat rule have been one 10-oz ribeye steak at Applebee's, and three small servings of chicken of various sorts from the local Chinese buffet. I also added an over-the-counter herbal diuretic that contained potassium—that will go as soon as 100% of my readings for at least one week are below the chalk. I could have gotten the same results by eating a lot of celery… but I *hate celery*.

Will I still have blood pressures above the chalk lines? Some, certainly, for at least the next couple of weeks. *Trending down* means I still have a ways to go. I'd like to see my normal readings at 90/60, with my highs at 120/80. There is this common misconception that if your blood pressure is 120/80, that's good. No. It isn't. 120/80 means you're standing on a superhighway exactly one millimeter from the cars racing by you. If 120/80 is your normal blood pressure, you're at the last hairbreadth of illusory safety before you get run over.

 To me, the chart tells the whole story. But if looking at the chart isn't telling you anything, here's how to read it.

In the red circle at the top, you see the line of the measured systolic pressure. This pressure is the pressure in the system when the heart contracts and pushes blood through. It's highly susceptible to mood, stress, exertion, and other variables.

In the green circle at the bottom, you see the diastolic pressure. This is the pressure of the system when the heart rests between beats, not pushing blood through the system, and it is less susceptible to outside forces. Elevations of the diastolic are also overall more dangerous than elevations of the systolic (though there are some exceptions, generally related to secondary hypertension [hypertension that is caused by another physical problem, as opposed to primary, or ideopathic, hypertension, which is the kind that hits you out

of nowhere]). If your overall systemic pressure at rest is okay, spikes in your systolic pressure are usually pretty well tolerated, at least over short periods of time. If your diastolic pressure is always high, though, you're most likely taking damage to kidneys and circulatory system.

The dark red line points to the line on the chart that marks off 120 mmHg, which is the highest number you should ever see on your blood pressure.

The light blue line points to the line on the chart that marks off 80 mmHg, which is the highest number you should ever see on your diastolic blood pressure.

Anything you see above those two lines is bad. Marks on them are only so-so. Anything below them is good.

And the numbers in the purple oblong are millegrams of mercury, marked off in tens (the graph is done in fives, though). Those of us who have been doing this for enough years used to actually check blood pressures with tall roll-around metal stands that had a blood pressure cuff attached to a tall tube of mercury marked off in millimeters. You pumped the pressure up and watched the mercury climb in the tube, then listened for pulses while you slowly let the air out and watched the mercury fall. You recorded the millimeter markings where you first heard a pulse, and where you last heard a pulse. Nobody uses mercury anymore. But the standard remains.

Someone is going to be worried about the word "cure" in the title of this post. Common medical wisdom tells us that once we have high blood pressure, it is a chronic problem and the best we can hope for in our lives is to treat it with drugs and more drugs, none of which are very effective, most of which are hellishly expensive, and almost all of which have dangerous side effects.

If I can eliminate all milk products and most meat products from my diet, though, and the blood pressure goes down to

normal and stays there, that’s not treatment. That’s a cure. I’ll keep checking my blood pressure, just to make sure. I’ll keep you posted. But having just had a friend drop her blood pressure to normal doing the exact same thing, I’m betting that after another week or two of system clearing, blood pressure is not going to be a problem for me again.

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