

Hypertension in the workplace



The workplace can be a high stress environment, in which people with a predisposition for or existing high blood pressure, or hypertension, can suffer detrimental effects as a result of the disorder.

Employees with a family history, or personal medical history of high blood pressure are more susceptible to the condition. High blood pressure is aggravated by stress and stressful environments, such as work and the workplace. However, this doesn't mean that high blood pressure in the workplace can't be managed.

Here are a few tips to ensure that you don't suffer reduced productivity as a result of high blood pressure:

- **Eat regular, small meals** that are high in fibre, and contain lots of fruits and vegetables. This will keep you energised.
- **Reduce, limit, or cut out salt.** Do this by preparing your lunch and snacks at home, rather than buying fast food during your lunch hour. Make your meals and snacks quick and easy by including lots of fruits.
- Dose yourself with a **small amount of exercise at work.** Aside from waking you up if you feel sleepy, taking a quick walk will help lower your blood pressure, and clear your head so that you can get back to work feeling refreshed.
- Use work as an excuse to **stop smoking.** Fill in your breaks with healthy activities to distract yourself from your craving.
- **Choose healthy drinks.** Steer clear from

the vending machine and opt for healthy drinks options, like water, unsweetened tea, vegetable and fruit juices (diluted with water), to help reduce blood pressure.

- **Get enough sleep,** so that you feel well-rested in the morning, and are able to work at an optimal level throughout the day. This will help you to reduce the stress you feel at work.

Following these simple tips will also help you to lose weight, which is one of the best ways to reduce your blood pressure.

High blood pressure in the workplace can cause:

- **Lost productivity:** Stressed and unhealthy employees cannot produce their best work.
- **Absenteeism:** Unhealthy employees will need to take more days of sick leave to treat and manage their conditions.
- **Presenteeism:** Stressed and unhealthy employees who do come to work will find it difficult to get work done, and may spend their day avoiding work.

Encourage others to get their blood pressure checked. Make sure that if you have high blood pressure, you keep it under control so that you can live and work at your best.