

# Take High Blood Pressure to Heart!

Keeping your blood pressure at a healthy level can help keep heart disease, stroke and kidney damage at bay. Luckily, you can help maintain a healthy blood pressure easily and naturally, by preparing healthy meals and getting plenty of exercise.



## Tips for keeping your heart happy

In addition to eating right and exercising regularly, try these simple ways to keep your blood pressure under control (be sure to talk to your doctor before making any major changes):

- **Pick the right produce:** Eat fruits and veggies high in potassium, including bananas, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, cantaloupe, potatoes and peas.
- **Shake on spices, not salt:** Try eating more whole foods (foods in their natural form) and season them with lemon, spices and herbs.
- **Head to the dark side:** Just half an ounce of dark chocolate every day can help lower your blood pressure — it contains flavanols that keep your blood vessels flexible.
- **Enjoy some soy:** Instead of that slice of processed bread, try yogurt, cottage cheese or other low-fat dairy food. A new study shows foods with soy or milk protein can lower your blood pressure.
- **Toast to a healthier heart:** Moderate drinking can actually help lower blood pressure. Enjoy a beer or glass of wine, but don't overindulge — too much alcohol can have the opposite effect.



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## A Sweet Treat You and Your Heart Will ❤️

Nectarines are delicious on their own, but baking them intensifies their sweetness. Greek yogurt adds milk proteins that can help lower your blood pressure. Finish it off with a drizzle of honey and this is a dessert your heart will sing about!

### Baked Nectarines with Greek Yogurt & Honey

4 nectarines, pitted and cut into 8ths  
4 tablespoons honey, plus more for drizzling  
1 cup Greek yogurt

#### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375° F.
2. Take a large sheet of foil and divide into four 12" x 12" sections.
3. Cut each of the nectarines in half and discard the pits. Divide the nectarines and place in the middle of each foil sheet.
4. Drizzle the nectarines with the honey and fold foil over, creating a packet.
5. Place packets on a baking sheet and in the oven for 10 minutes. Once soft, scoop the warm nectarines onto serving plates. Top with Greek yogurt, drizzle with additional honey and serve.

Makes 4 servings

Information from: "13 Ways to Lower Blood Pressure Naturally," [www.prevention.com](http://www.prevention.com), updated July 2012 and "Why Blood Pressure Matters," [heart.org](http://heart.org), updated Aug. 27, 2012  
Recipe from: "Baked Nectarines with Greek Yogurt and Honey," [www.foodnetwork.com](http://www.foodnetwork.com), accessed Sept. 28, 2012