

Understanding High Blood Pressure

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Read on if you're one of the approximately 30 million Americans with high blood pressure (HBP). The information below might help you better understand this medical malady.

About one-third, or 16 million, of the people with HBP are not aware that they have this problem because it may not have warning signs or symptoms. This is why it's often referred to as "the silent killer." If not controlled, HBP contributes to severe health risks including kidney failure and cardiovascular diseases (CVD).

Blood pressure (BP) is the force of blood pushing against artery walls as it travels to all parts of the body. When health professionals

measure BP, they record two numbers. Systolic, the top number, is pressure when the heart beats. The bottom number, or diastolic, is pressure when the heart is resting. When BP is high, the heart must work harder. This can damage the heart, as well as exert extra pressure on the circulatory system that can damage arteries and veins.

The recommended BP level is 120/80. Even if only slightly above this rate, elevated blood pressure can be unhealthy. However, research has shown that lowering blood pressure, even by a small amount, can decrease health risks.

Hypertension is constant HBP measured at a systolic pressure of 140 or more, and a diastolic reading of 90 or higher. Having a health professional regularly check your BP is the only way to know if you have hypertension, or are at risk for it.

If you have any risk factors for CVD and haven't had your BP checked by a medical provider in the past year, schedule an appointment as soon as possible. Otherwise, be sure to see a health care provider at least once a year.

The causes of HBP aren't known in 90 to 95 percent of the cases. However, research shows that many people can lower HBP and maintain a better rate by making moderate lifestyle changes including eating more nutritious meals and engaging in more physical activities.

Take off some pounds if you're overweight, because the extra weight puts more pressure on the circulatory system.

Eat a lower-fat diet to prevent fat build-up in the arteries.

Make increased physical activity a daily habit. Exercising can increase circulation, which puts less strain on your circulatory system, among other circulatory and health benefits.

Since smoking damages blood vessels, among other health risks, quit now if you smoke.

Relaxing for short intervals during the day will slow down the

heart and expand blood vessels, reducing pressure on the circulatory system.

For more information, contact the Rockcastle County Cooperative Extension Service at 256-2403. The Extension Service provides several publications free to the public on high blood pressure and cardiovascular health.

Educational programs of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service serve all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability or national origin.

Tobacco Paperwork

The old saying "No jobs complete till the paper work is done" has a great meaning for tobacco farmers this year. Farmers usually think of the job as complete when the last stick of tobacco is housed, or last stalk stripped, or maybe the last bale baled. This year, much of the farmers' profit may depend on getting all the paper work for Phase II and the anti-trust lawsuit completed on time.

On August 18 farmers received in the mail the 2002 Phase II paper work. This form is simply verifying the owner names, address, social security number and showing how to split the payment on 2002 basic quota. Don't worry about the selling and growing information because FSA collected this data in previous years. The big thing to take note of is the short turn around time of September 19, 2003 deadline. Even if out of town owners must sign, they still must meet the deadline.

Last spring farmers received the anti-trust lawsuit paper work for years 1996 through 2000. Since that time, information from the FSA has now been made available to complete this form. Farmers should stop by and request the quota and marketing information to complete their forms. If you have lost your forms, then additional forms can be supplied. The deadline for this program is October 14, 2003.

Having different deadlines will create problems for farmers in getting their paper work complete. Keep in mind that the phase II payment is much greater than the anti-trust lawsuit. The September 19, 2003 deadline would be the one to keep in mind for all your tobacco paper work. If you have questions or need assistance contact the Extension Office at 256-2403.

Mary Had A little Lamb

Submitted by Deronia Mink
Mary had a little lamb,
His fleece was white as snow,
And everywhere that Mary went,
The lamb was sure to go.

He followed her to school one day,
When it wasn't against the rules,
He made the children laugh and play,
To have the Lamb of God to school.

Then the rules changed one day,
Against the law it became,
To bring the Lamb of God to school
Or even speak His name.

Every day got worse and worse and
Days turned into years,
Instead of hearing children laugh and
play,
You heard them crying tears.

What must we do to stop the crime,
That's in our schools today?
Let the Lamb come back to school
And teach our kids to pray.



Pictured are Annette Miller, Margie Rose and Sharon Davis during a Christmas Ornament class at the Extension Office on August 22. A series of classes are scheduled at the Extension Office. For a complete list of fall classes, call 256-2403.



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