Take Medications as Prescribed

- Medications will only work if taken as prescribed.
- Keep a record of your medications (prescription, over-the-counter, herbals and vitamins) to share with your doctor and pharmacist.
- Be aware that some over-the-counter medications may raise your blood pressure.
- Ask your county Extension office for a UT Med Minder card to help you remember the medications you are taking or print out a copy from the http://bemedwisetn.tennessee.edu Web site.

How Do You Know if You Have High Blood Pressure?

- Blood pressure is measured with a cuff wrapped around the upper part of your arm.
- High blood pressure readings by your healthcare provider may indicate high blood pressure.

For more information on high blood pressure and health, contact:

Only you are responsible for your health. Learn self-care skills and lifestyle changes to control your blood pressure. (✓) Check those health actions you plan to try:

Know Your Level of Risk

(✓) Check those that apply to you.
- A family history of high blood pressure.
- Male.
- Overweight.
- A postmenopausal woman.
- Pregnant.
- 35 or older.
- African-American.
- Sensitive to sodium.
- A smoker.
- Stressed.
- Inactive.

Know Your Numbers

✓ Normal blood pressure is less than 120/80 mm Hg.
✓ Prehypertension is from 120/80 to 139/89 mm Hg.
✓ Hypertension is 140/90 mm Hg and above.

Activate your Lifestyle
- Relieve tension with exercise.
- Work up to 30 minutes of exercise, five or more days a week.
- Include stretching, aerobic and strengthening exercises.

Trim the Extra Weight
- Cut down on portion sizes.
- Avoid crash diets.
- Increase activity level.
- Eat more low-fat foods.
- Work at losing ½ to 1 pound per week.
- Walking, swimming and bicycling are good for losing weight.

Watch What You Eat and Drink
- Cut down on salt and high sodium foods, even if you are on high blood pressure medication.
- Choose low-fat foods.
- Eat the Food Guide Pyramid way.
- Watch the calories from sweets and snack foods.
- Limit alcoholic and caffeinated beverages.

Break the Smoking Habit
- Examine why you smoke.
- Explore other outlets to distract your need to smoke.
- Contact the Lung Association or American Cancer Society for programs to help you quit smoking.

Know About High Blood Pressure

✓ Called the silent killer because it has no symptoms.
✓ Causes serious problems to kidneys, brain, eyes and heart.
✓ If left untreated, it can lead to a stroke, kidney failure or eye problems.

Break the Tension Cycle
- Develop tension-release skills:
  - Exercise.
  - Breathe deeply.
  - Keep a positive attitude.
  - Accept what you can’t control.
  - Pursue a hobby.
- Deal with small problems before they become big and out of control.
- Get adequate rest.