

Introduction:

There are a lot of questions many patients have, but the demand on physician these days, limits your time to discuss these questions in depth. The Noelli Center is a program whose purpose is to provide patient education, dedicated in bridging the gap between the doctor's office and patient awareness. This is a summarized hand-book that gives information on common adult medical conditions and how they should be approached with your physician. It differs from other family health guides in its conciseness and easy level of understanding. This book is not intended for those already trained in medicine, but instead the average patient. Those who will benefit from this booklet include

1. Adults who are in their 20-40's who are relatively healthy but have risk of diabetes, blood pressure or heart problems given lifestyle or family history.
2. Adults who are in their 40's or above who have already developed medical problems listed in this book
3. Those who care for family members (siblings, adults)

This book is in no way intended to replace your doctor's visits in any way, but instead used as an additional tool, to make better health decisions.

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Guide to Book, this book is intended to be easy-to-read guide.
The following symbols are used to easily identify key points.



Recommendation: To be discussed with your doctor



Warning or early signs of a disease



Mistakes commonly made by patients

Bold burgundy- medical terms/ definitions are highlighted



Common Abbreviations to know

HTN-hypertension – high blood pressure DM- diabetes

CHF-congestive heart failure Hyperlipidemia- high cholesterol

CAD- coronary heart disease LV- left ventricular (chamber of the heart)



Medication

Medications



Types:

Each disease has a group of medications to treat it, and each group has subcategories (class) of medications. Each class has the same characteristics, but generally they are produced by different pharmaceutical companies and therefore may have 3-4 different medications that behave the same way. For example, *Motrin, Aleve, Ibuprofen* act the same. Many conditions need a combination of medications from different classes to treat efficiently. See example below

Disease

i.e. Arthritis

Medication

Pain Medication

Subcategories

anti-inflammatory analgesic narcotics

Brand

Advil, Motrin Tylenol morphine, Percocet

Each medical condition in this book contains a medication chart, which shows the different classes of medications and which ones you may benefit from.



Medication can be split into two main groups

- 1- Daily
- 2- As needed

Daily medications are those you need to take everyday to be effective. These are the most important as they treat diseases. **As needed** medications are medication you only take for certain symptoms. Typically, diabetes, blood pressure and cholesterol are daily medications and people who take randomly will not have the best controlled sugar, pressure or cholesterol. On the other hand as needed medications should be taken infrequently as possible, as they have more side effects, and many may even have addictive properties.



If you use pill boxes, you should have two one for daily medications and the others, so they are not mixed up. At your next doctors appointment ask them to differentiate the medications for you.

Daily	Use for treating disease	Diabetes, Blood pressure, Cholesterol and Heart Medications	Everyday use
As Needed	Use for Treating symptoms	Sleeping Pills, Anxiety , pain medications, Cold or Allergy medications	Try to take as minimal



Side Effects

There are 4 types of side effects

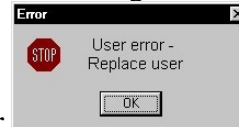
1. Potential side effects: These are the “laundry list“ of effects mentioned in commercials or the pharmacy packet that scares every one to death. These are all possible effects but doesn’t mean they will happen to you, in fact most people don’t complain of feeling them at all. My suggestion is to be aware but don’t anticipate.

2. Common side effects: These are the ones that many people will actually feel, i.e. stomach irritation with aspirin, sleepiness with cold medicine, stomach cramps with laxatives, etc., When starting a new medication ask your doctor, what effect do most people feel.

3. Serious (- black box warning): These effects are actually *very rare* , but serious enough to be monitored for , such as checking your liver after starting cholesterol pills. Again I repeat these are rare and the risk of not taking the medication usually outweighs the risk of actually getting the side effect.

4. Contraindications: This means that if you have certain condition or medications , you should avoid taking the specific medication. This usually applies to people with significant impairment of one of their organs, mainly liver disease, on dialysis or very bad heart. This is why it can be

dangerous seeing more than one general



doctor. Case scenario: Ms Jones had diabetes, blood pressure and because of both has had a heart attack 2 years ago and poorly functional kidneys. One Saturday she had back pain and went to her nearby clinic in her neighborhood, instead of her regular doctor. She told the doctor , she has her own regular physician ,but just needed something over the weekend for the pain. He gave her *Ibuprofen* which is a strong pain medication. The patient did not feel it was important to mention all of her medical problems. However the medication actually worsens her kidneys.

This example is actually how most people get in trouble with side effects, by getting medications from multiple doctors. Try to avoid this at all cost..



Try to get all medications from one doctor, or only other (specialist) that your primary doctor refers you to, this way you know they have some general information on your health



Carry a list of your medications in wallet or purse.



HYPERTENSION

- What is hypertension?
- What is normal blood pressure?
- What is the big deal about blood pressure?
- Common Hypertension Medications



What is Blood pressure?

Known as **Hypertension**: Refers to the excessive pressure (force) created by circulating blood on the walls of arteries, when the heart beats. The top number being the force when the heart contracts (systolic) and the bottom number being when the heart relaxes (diastolic) (see heart section). A rule of physics is: for fluid to flow (blood to circulate) there needs to be a pressure gradient. The pressure is from two parts, one the pressure exerted by the heart pumping and then pressure of the walls of the blood vessels.



What is normal blood pressure?

American Heart Association recommended blood pressure levels ¹

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic (mm Hg)	and	Diastolic (mm Hg)
Normal	less than 120	and	less than 80
Pre-hypertension	120–139	or	80–89
High			
Stage 1	140–159	or	90–99
Stage 2	160 or higher	or	100 or higher
Stage 3	180 or higher	or	110 or higher

It is recommended that medical treatment of high blood pressure be started at stage 1, lifestyle changes such as exercise, lowering salt and weight loss at the pre-stages. It has been proven that the sooner the blood pressure is optimal, the less risk of complications listed below.



What is big deal with blood pressure?

Hypertension is called the silent killer because after prolonged time of elevated blood pressure multiple complications develop that lead to death or disease including:

Stroke

Heart Attack

Aneurysms

Heart Failure

Kidney Disease

Retinal (Eye) Disease

Peripheral vascular disease

¹ AHA website: <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=2112>