



The link between stress & high blood pressure

It's a common belief that stress causes high blood pressure. Have you ever heard someone say, "My blood pressure went through the roof!" when referring to a stressful event? Indeed, stress can cause a temporary spike in your blood pressure. You may notice symptoms like a pounding heart or sweaty palms as stress hormones flood your system.

But, the American Heart Association says these effects are only temporary. Fortunately, stress has not been shown to raise your blood pressure permanently. But, this doesn't mean you should ignore high stress levels. Chronic stress isn't good for you emotionally, and may be linked to a higher risk for heart disease, obesity, depression and other health conditions.

Although more research needs to be done on this topic, experts know that the "fight or flight" response we feel when we are faced with stress does have an effect on our bodies. It's normal to deal with this once in a while, but when it happens often, it can take a toll on you physically and emotionally. In addition, many people turn to unhealthy habits, such as smoking, drinking or overeating to help cope with stress.

If you're dealing with high stress levels from work, personal matters, or other issues, don't try to tough it out. Talk with your doctor or a mental health care provider about ways you can get the help and support you need.