



HYPERTENSION by Linda Koval RN

This is the time of year when most of us make our list of New Year's resolutions. If you are anything like me your committed, I will do whatever it takes to remove that additional "love handle" I put on last year. I will wake up at 4 AM to exercise every day, I will go on a diet and eat only healthy foods, and I will not drink anything with caffeine, sugar, or alcohol. I will join a gym and rejoin a weight loss program. I also will purchase any dietary supplement and any piece of exercise equipment that promises to make me look like I'm 21 again. This time I am going to do it, I'm committed!

Usually my commitment to my New Year's resolutions would last maybe two weeks. How about you? It took me 50 years to realize that this is not what the Lord intended for us. He wants us to live full healthy lives, so that by our lifestyle we will draw others to Him. He gave us our instruction manual, the Bible; all we have to do is follow His very clear instructions.

Proverbs 23; 1-3 states: "When you sit down to dine with a ruler, ***carefully consider*** what is in front of you. Place a knife at your throat to control your appetite. Don't long for the ruler's delicacies; the food misleads." I think the Lord may be telling us to be careful what we put into our mouths.

What we are eating and drinking has been directly linked to nearly every disease process. Let's consider hypertension, or high blood pressure. Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the walls of our blood vessels. Our heart pumps blood into the blood vessels which then travels throughout our bodies providing the nutrients necessary for life. We obtain these necessary life sustaining nutrients in the food we eat. High blood pressure is dangerous because it makes the heart work harder to pump blood to the body. High blood pressure can lead to heart failure, stroke, kidney disease and other health problems. Take some steps to get your blood pressure under control.

Most people with high blood pressure are "salt sensitive," meaning that anything more than the minimal amount needed by our body is too much for them and increases their blood pressure. Other factors that have been associated with hypertension include obesity; diabetes; stress; lack of physical activity; and chronic alcohol consumption.

It has been proven that the most dramatic reduction of blood pressure occurs when a diet consists of a (sodium) salt intake of 1,500 milligrams (mg) per day. That is equal to 2/3 teaspoon. "***Carefully consider***" the amount of salt in your diet. Much of the salt in our diet is in the processed foods that we are eating. You can investigate how much salt you are eating by reading the food labels. Try to keep that total amount of salt below 1500 mg per day. Just because we are called to be the salt in a fallen world doesn't mean we have to eat a lot of it.

Consider switching from regular table salt to sea salt. Sea salt has very little processing involved, it is produced by evaporation of sea water. It naturally contains 98% sodium chloride, and 2% trace minerals such as iron, magnesium and iodine. Iodized salt (table salt) is mined underground and requires heavy processing. Iodine and essential minerals are not found naturally in mined salt and must be added along with sugar that acts as an anti-clumping agent.

Blood pressure screening is offered the 2nd Sunday of the month after the 11 AM service in Fellowship Hall. Some people believe what they don't know will not hurt them, so they don't check their blood pressure. But nothing could be further from the truth. High blood pressure is also known as the "**silent killer**". Don't be foolish take advantage of these screenings and have your pressure checked.

For more information on this subject please see your Parish Nurse or go to the following reference web sites:

http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/dci/Diseases/Hbp/HBP_WhatIs.html

<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+23&version=CEB>

http://www.ehow.com/facts_5402846_sea-salt-vs-iodized.html

<http://www.webmd.com/hypertension-high-blood-pressure/guide/blood-pressure-causes>