

MEDITATION AND BLOOD PRESSURE REDUCTION

STRESS! There's no escaping it! Work, family, health, finances and time-management are just some of the ways stress presents itself in our everyday life. It is unrealistic to think that we have the power to stop it from happening. The good news is that we have the power to limit it, or at least, limit its effects on our health and well-being. Now if you are one of those people reading this saying: "I can't do meditation, it's not for me" then you have given up before you've even given it a try. Many people think meditation means you have to sit Indian style, with your head shaved in an Ashram to get the effect of meditation. This is simply not true. Meditation can be anything you want it to be so long as you stay connected to the practice while you are doing it. The type of meditation studied that yielded significant results is called Transcendental Meditation, which consists of sitting in a quiet space and humming a word repeatedly, otherwise known as a "mantra." If this concept is foreign to you, or even frightening, then maybe you can start with short periods of quiet where you concentrate on breathing. Set a timer and build up starting with 5 minutes a day and working your way up to 20 minutes a day. Then you can go on to TM once you have mastered the discipline.

Why am I telling you this? Because it's an overwhelming **FACT**, yes **FACT**, that Transcendental Meditation has been proven to have numerous benefits on your health, such as reduced blood pressure, reduced stress, improved sleep, improved concentration and learning ability, and improved general overall well-being.¹ One study showed a reduction of 4.7 mm systolic blood pressure and 3.2 mm diastolic blood pressure after practicing twice a day for a few months.² Considering that 1 out of 3 Americans suffer from high blood pressure, according to the CDC, this study is quite remarkable. In addition, a study published in *STROKE*, a medical journal, proved that TM resulted in a reduction in carotid atherosclerosis in African Americans.³ Thus, reducing the risk of thrombotic events in this population.

Health essentially comes from within and becoming proactive against cardiovascular disease is the greatest gift you can give yourself. It is increasingly being documented that emotional and mental health account for many debilitating diseases. It's not enough to just eat a healthy diet and exercise. We must also honor the thoughts that shape our perceptions. For More information visit www.HeartandHealth.com or contact us at Heart and Health 1350 Deer Park Ave N- Babylon NY 11703 (631) 482-1355

By Rhonda Daniels PA intern at Heart and Health

¹ <http://www.healthiertalk.com/meditation-blood-pressure-1234>

² *Am J Hypertens* 2008; 21:310-316

³ <http://stroke.ahajournals.org/cgi/content/full/strokeaha;31/3/568>