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### Blood Pressure Down - You Are What You Eat

Wednesday, May 8th, 2013  
by [Charlene Giannetti](#) on [Reading Around](#)

There's nothing all that startling in Janet Bond Brill's new book, *Blood Pressure Down: The 10-Step Plan to Lower Your Blood Pressure in 4 Weeks Without Prescription Drugs*. Yet what she has to say cannot be said often enough. And rarely has it been packaged in such a way that makes it, dare we say, easy to digest.



Simply put: what you eat has a lot to do with those blood pressure readings. A common belief that high blood pressure owes to heredity and age is not always true. Brill emphasizes that by changing your diet you can change those readings. And she has a plan that you can follow to do just that.

If high blood pressure is not a health issue you face, you probably have relatives or close friends who do struggle with trying to lower those numbers. Give them this book as a gift. They will thank you.

fats—inactivity and middle-aged spread instigates the rising squeeze on the arteries, a relentless pressure cooker that eventually injures the fragile cells that line our inner arterial walls, causing irreparable and life-threatening damage,” Brill writes.

Americans have paid a high price for consuming more and more processed foods. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 76 million of our fellow citizens have been diagnosed with high blood pressure. That statistic takes a toll, not only in disease and death, but in health care costs. High blood pressure is said to cost the U.S. Around \$74 billion in health care services, medications, and missed days of work each year.

Brill is not a medical doctor, but holds master's degrees in both nutrition and exercise physiology and a doctorate in exercise physiology. She has built her reputation as a nutritionist in private practice and has focused on combatting cardiovascular disease, including with her previous books, *Cholesterol Down* and *Prevent a Second Heart Attack*.

In *Blood Pressure Down*, Brill starts at the beginning, telling readers how to measure their own blood pressure at home. “Since there are no noticeable symptoms of high blood pressure, measuring it over time is the only way to measure your progress,” according to Brill. There's also a good reason for taking these measurements at home. Many people, particularly those worried about the results, become anxious in a doctor's office and could influence the results.

Brill details why processed foods are so bad for us, with a section, “Supermarket Salt Shockers,” calculating the salt content in everything from canned soups, vegetables, and spaghetti sauce, to deli meats. Salt, just to review, is toxic in excessive amounts. Salt may make food taste more appetizing, but we pay a price for all those salty snacks.

The Ten Step program is so obvious is brilliant. The way Brill lays it out makes each step not only easy to follow, but also hard to resist. Who couldn't get into eating a banana or two a day? Or having two glasses of red wine? Losing weight might be a challenge, but Brill softens to blow by starting slow, with the goal is losing just five pounds.

To get you off on the right foot, Brill has an appendix with tasty, easy to prepare recipes. Why not throw a party to get started and serve Brill's fresh avocado dip?



Fresh Avocado Dip (Guacamole)

Serve as a dip with low-salt bagel or pita chips, or as an accompaniment to the Salmon Black Bean Quesadillas or Shrimp Tacos with Kiwi Salsa.

- 2 cups chopped avocado (from 2 medium avocados)
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon salt-free seasoning
- 6 drops hot pepper sauce

Mash the avocado in a bowl with a fork until desired consistency. Mix in the cilantro, lime juice, garlic powder, ground cumin, salt-free seasoning, and hot pepper sauce. Serve immediately.

Yield: 1 ½ cups - Serves 6

Nutrition per ¼ cup serving:

- Calories: 98 kcal
- Sodium: 6 mg
- Potassium: 301 mg
- Magnesium: 17 mg
- Calcium: 9 mg
- Fat: 9 g (EPA 0g, DHA 0g, ALA <1g)
- Saturated Fat: 1 g
- Cholesterol: 0 mg
- Carbohydrate: 5 g
- Dietary fiber: 1 g
- Sugars: <1 g
- Protein: 1 g

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*Blood Pressure Down: The 10-Step Plan to Lower Your Blood Pressure in 4 Weeks Without Prescription Drugs*  
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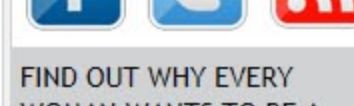
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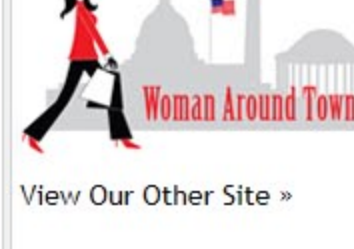


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