

MEDIA RELEASE

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Lifestyle messages timely for hypertension patients

Helping patients with hypertension remain healthy over the holiday season is a challenge that affects nearly all healthcare professionals.

In this edition of ***Australian Prescriber***, healthcare professionals are reminded that routinely providing advice on smoking, nutrition, alcohol use, physical activity and body weight to patients with hypertension is particularly important at this time of year.

The article also includes information on integrating lifestyle advice into clinical management and resources for promoting lifestyle management to patients.

“Lifestyle modification is indicated for all patients with hypertension, regardless of drug therapy, because it may reduce or even abolish the need for antihypertensive drugs,” say the authors Dr Nancy Huang, Professor Karen Duggan and Ms Jenni Harman.

Lead author Dr Nancy Huang of the Heart Foundation says that regardless of other treatments indicated, all patients who need to lower their blood pressure should be given advice and support to achieve and maintain healthy behaviours.

Recently updated guidelines for the management of hypertension from the Heart Foundation recommend lifestyle modification as an important and effective first-line treatment strategy.

“The '5As' approach – Ask, Assess, Advise, Assist and Arrange – is often useful for primary care health professionals to provide brief interventions for lifestyle modification,” Dr Huang said.

“The article lists practical resources which are now widely available to help Australian health professionals effectively promote positive lifestyle changes.”

“The resources will help health professionals to broach the subject with patients, negotiate goals, give tailored advice including written information, and refer patients to more information and other medical and support services,” Dr Huang said.

Hypertension is a major risk factor for stroke and coronary heart disease, and is a major contributor to the onset and progression of chronic heart failure and chronic kidney failure.

For the complete article visit the Australian Prescriber website www.australianprescriber.com

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For further advice health professionals can also call the [NPS Therapeutic Advice and Information Service](http://www.nps.org.au) (TAIS) – a medicines information service staffed by specialist drug information pharmacists – on 1300 138 677 Monday to Friday 9am-7pm Eastern Standard Time for the cost of a local call (mobiles may cost more).

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