# Heart Health 411

New ideas for fighting high blood pressure and heart attack

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**Get magnesium**

Many folks pop prescription pills to handle their hypertension, not knowing that magnesium is a natural alternative. “Magnesium isn’t a patented medicine, so drug companies don’t make money from it,” says Carolyn Dean, MD, ND, author of The Miracle of Magnesium. “But it’s essential in relaxing blood vessels and preventing high blood pressure.” She recommends a 400 mg supplement two to three times daily.

**Decompress it**

Together, water pills (also known as diuretics) and stress counseling are as effective at lowering blood pressure as drugs known as ACE-inhibitors, the Journal of the American Medical Association reports. Research on African Americans found diuretics actually work better to prevent heart failure. Stress management classes are often offered at local Ys. Always consult a doctor first before trying diuretics.

**Take the E Train**

If you’re 65-plus, you might consider taking a vitamin E supplement each day. According to a study conducted by the Women’s Health Organization, vitamin E can lower your chances of heart attack by 26%. But don’t take any more than 400 IU daily, says Joseph Diamond, MD, from the Long Island Jewish Medical Center. He cautions that too much vitamin E can be harmful.

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