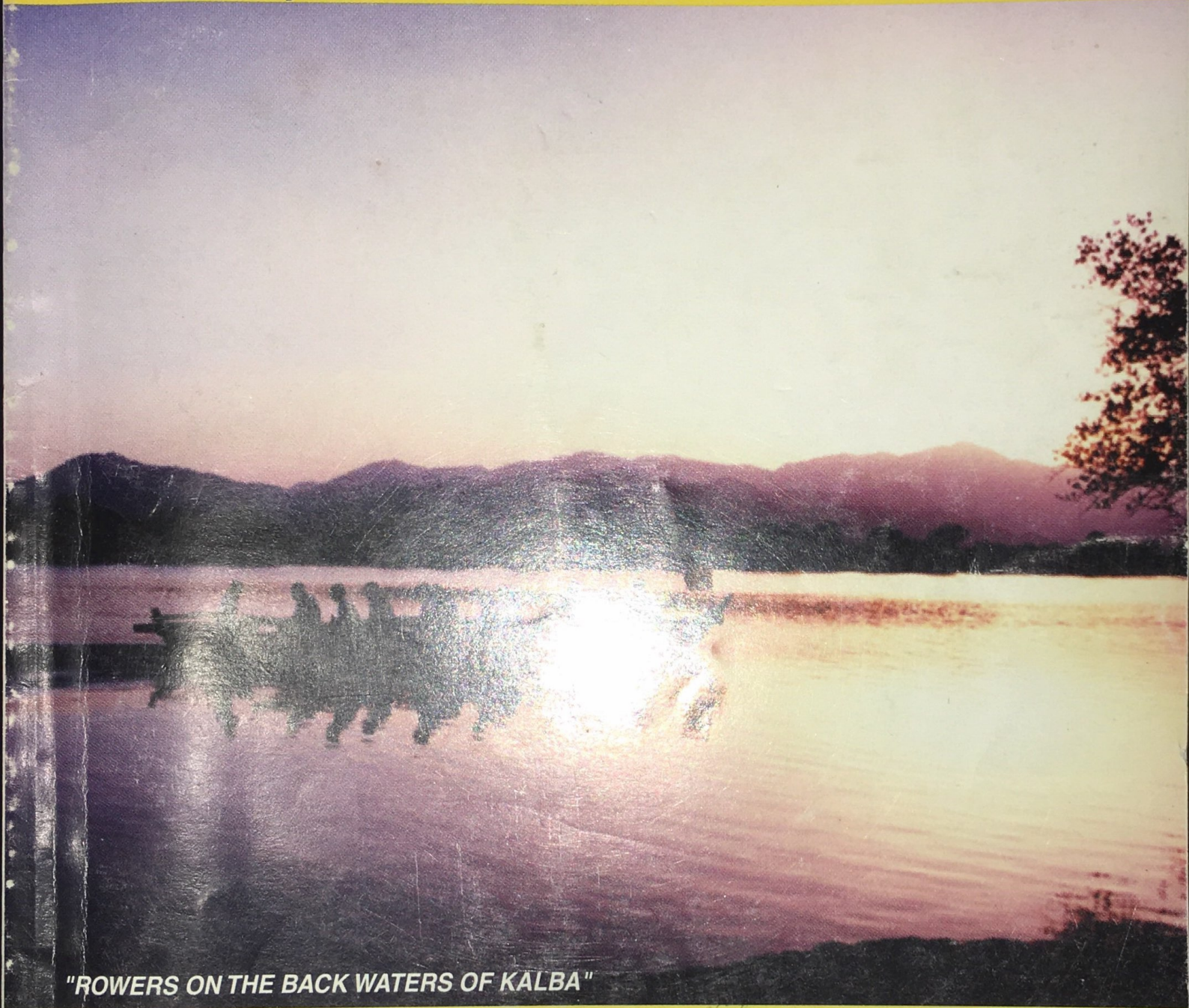


FUJAIRAH OBSERVER

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KNOW YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE AND PROTECT YOUR HEART

What is Hypertension or High Blood Pressure?

With the stresses and strains of everyday life, it is often a sign that we need to slow down when our doctor tells us that our blood pressure is high. However exactly what that entails remains a mystery. This month Dr Bharat Bhushan, Administrator and ISO Lead Auditor at Fujairah Port Clinic explores this matter further

Hypertension is the medical term for **High Blood Pressure**. Blood pressure is the measure of the force of the blood pushing against the walls of the arteries. When the heart contracts to pump out blood, the pressure is highest. This pressure is called the **Systolic pressure**. After pumping, the heart relaxes and the pressure drops to its lowest point just before a new beat. This measurement is called **Diastolic pressure**.

The measurement of an individual's blood pressure is expressed as systolic pressure and diastolic pressure. As an example, 120/80 is considered to be normal blood pressure for an adult. Here 120 mm of Hg is systolic pressure and 80 mm of Hg is diastolic pressure. Both systolic and diastolic blood pressure parameters are important.

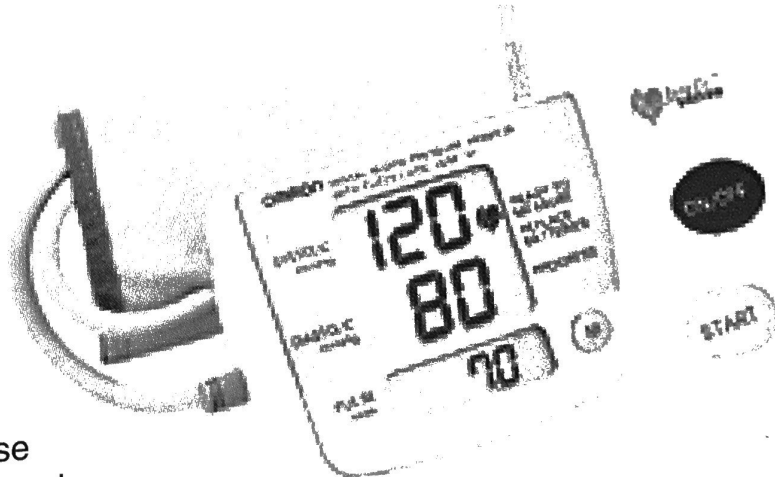
Interestingly a higher percentage of men under the age of 55, have High Blood pressure, when compared to women of the same age. yet the percentage of women getting High Blood Pressure increases after 55 years. In adults, a diastolic pressure below 85 mm of Hg is considered to be normal; between 85 to 89 is high normal; 90 to 104 is mild hypertension; 105 to 114 is moderate hypertension; 115 to 139 is severe hypertension; or greater is severe hypertension. Generally, Blood pressure above 140/90 mm of Hg is considered high for adults, and blood pressure under 90/60 is regarded to be low for an adult.

Is High Blood Pressure Dangerous?

Yes, High Blood Pressure is dangerous. High Blood Pressure is the most important public health problem in developed and developing countries. It is a common, readily detectable and usually easily treatable condition, yet often leads to fatal complications if left untreated. High Blood

Pressure is often called a silent killer because mild to moderate levels usually go unnoticed by the patient until it causes some serious damage. Left untreated, High Blood Pressure gradually continues to rise causing damage to heart, kidneys, brain and eyes.

The Framingham heart study says that, 50% of people who have first their heart attack and two third of those who have a first stroke have blood pressure higher than 160/95 mm of Hg.



Patients who have higher blood pressure are at increased risk for developing the following diseases:

- Heart Disease (e.g. heart attack, congestive cardiac failure, sudden cardiac death, cardiomyopathy)
- Stroke or Paralysis
- Athrosclerosis (Hardening of arteries)
- Kidney failure
- Retinopathy (loss of vision)

To clarify the risk factors, high blood pressure can be ranked according to risk categories, ranging from "normal" to "stage 4".



Stage	Systolic pressure		Diastolic pressure
Optimal	Under 120	And	Under 80
Normal	Under 130	And	Under 85
High Normal	130 - 139	Or	85 - 89
1	140 - 159		90 - 99
2	160 - 179		100 - 119
3	180 - 209		110 - 119
4	210 or Over		120 or over

Source: US National High Blood Pressure Education Program

What are the symptoms of High Blood Pressure?

The majority of the people who have mild to moderate hypertension may not know that their Blood pressure is high and are identified only in the course of a routine checkup. Therefore after 35 years of age we should go for routine checkups at regular intervals.

In fact, about one third of Hypertensive people are not aware of their condition. Patient may experience chest pain (Angina pectoris), shortness of breath or other symptoms related to heart disease or other diseases which hypertension may cause.

Hypertension may cause the following symptoms:

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Palpitation (strong, fast or obvious irregular heart beat)
- Fatigue
- Confusion
- Vision changes or problems
- Excessive sweating
- Anxiety or nervousness
- Nose bleed
- Confusion

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It is always best to find out the causes of blood pressure and take steps to control and maintain it rather than ignoring it and assuming the mild to moderately high blood pressure does not cause any problem. Left untreated, it is very dangerous and will keep on damaging various organs of body silently.

What methods one can apply to reduce and control High Blood pressure?
 Life style changes can significantly improve patient's blood pressure. The application of definite steps will help lower and control high blood pressure. These methods have very positive role.

1. Lose weight
2. Quit Smoking
3. Diet modification
 Reduce the total amount of fat intake and particularly saturated fat intake.
 Increase the amount of vegetables, fruits and low-fat dairy products in your diet
 Limit salt intake to about 2 gm to 3 gm per day. (No added salts)
4. Exercise
5. Use stress management techniques.

The majority of hypertensive patients will need to take medications for the rest of their lives in order to control the condition. However research has suggested that some patients with only slightly elevated blood pressure may be able to stop taking medications and control their high blood pressure through lifestyle changes alone. The most important lifestyle changes tracked by the study were weight loss and maintaining low salt diet.
 (American Journal of Hypertension 2001) ①

Ten commandments to help control high Blood Pressure

- Know about your Blood Pressure. Have it checked regularly
- Know what your weight should be. Keep it normal or below.
- Don't use excessive salt in cooking. Limit your salt. Avoid salty food.
- Eat a low fat diet.
- Don't smoke cigarettes or use tobacco products.
- Take regular aerobic exercises.
- Manage your stress effectively by yoga, meditation or other technique.
- Take your medicines regularly.
- Make sure that your parents; brother; sister and children get their blood pressure checked regularly.
- Keep appointments with your doctor.

