



Things You Need to Know About Celery

Did you know celery can help you lower your blood pressure? Eating 4 -5 stalks of celery per day has been found to reduce blood pressure. Here's why.

1. Celery actually performs similarly to some of the common medicines used to treat hypertension. Vasodilators are medications that open (dilate) blood vessels. As a result, blood flows more easily through your arteries, your heart doesn't have to pump as hard and your blood pressure is reduced. Celery contains phthalide which is a natural vasodilator. It relaxes the walls of blood vessels causing them to dilate, allowing blood to flow more easily.
2. Stress hormones are known to restrict blood vessels inhibiting blood flow. Phthalide also has been found to help block stress hormones. Hippocrates prescribed it to patients suffering from "nerves" because he found that it helped calm them down.
3. Celery also acts as a natural diuretic. Although it's made up of 90% water, celery helps rid the body of excess fluid by stimulating urine production with the right combination of sodium and potassium needed. The "water pills" (diuretics) used to treat high blood pressure can have the side effect of depleting potassium. Celery has 3 parts potassium to 1 part sodium so it replenishes potassium, rather than depleting it. The roots and the leaves also add to the therapeutic benefit of celery. Roots and leaves have been used in the past and continue to be used to make a diuretic tea or tincture.
4. It is a naturally balanced, unprocessed "salt". Try substituting celery for table salt in soups and salads.

Some tips for keeping celery fresh and appetizing.

1. Separate celery stalks and clean them under cold water as soon as you purchase them. Chop some up and put in a plastic bag or other container with a little cold water for use in soups and salads.
2. Store the cleaned stalks in serving-size bags or containers. A serving size is 4-5 stalks.
3. Put a serving of celery sticks in a glass of ice water on your desk or next to your favorite chair. This will keep the celery fresh and crisp and remind you to eat it.

Important note: Do not reduce or stop taking your blood pressure medicine without the consent of your doctor or health care provider.