

# LiUNA!

## MIDWEST REGION



### Retiree Newsletter - June 2022

#### Suicide and Older Adults: What You Should Know

Suicide is more than a preventable tragedy—it's a major public health problem affecting men and women of all ages.

##### Among older adults in particular, suicide is a significant concern:

- While older adults comprise just 12% of the population, they make up approximately 18% of suicides.
- Older adults tend to plan suicide more carefully. They are also more likely to use more lethal methods.
- Among people who attempt suicide, one in four seniors will succeed, compared to 1 in 200 youths. Even if a senior fails a suicide attempt, they are less likely to recover from the effects.
- Men 65 and older face the highest overall rate of suicide.

##### Why is suicide higher in older adults?

Suicidal behavior is common in older adults for a number of reasons. Loneliness is at the top of the list. Other reasons include:

- Grief over lost loved ones.
- Loss of self-sufficiency.
- Chronic illness and pain.
- Cognitive impairment
- Financial troubles.

The many struggles faced by older adults can lead to feelings of depression, which over time can evolve into clinical depression. Clinical depression is characterized by prolonged feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and loss of interest in activities. While most people with clinical depression do not commit suicide, having major depression does increase the risk.

##### What are the warning signs of suicide in older adults?

An important first step in preventing suicide is knowing the warning signs. In addition to an explicit expression of suicidal intent, there are certain behaviors that can indicate an older adult is thinking about self-harm. These include:

- Loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy.
- Giving away beloved items or changing their will.
- Avoiding social activities.
- Neglecting self-care, medical regimens, and grooming.
- Exhibiting a preoccupation with death.
- Lacking concern for personal safety.

#### How to support someone with suicidal thoughts?

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline outlines five action steps you can take if you know an older adult who is thinking about suicide.

1. **Ask - Start the Conversation.** Don't be afraid to be direct. Ask "Are you thinking about suicide?" and "How can I help you?" **Talking about suicide does not put the idea in someone's head.** It gives them permission to talk about it and they are usually relieved.
2. **Be there - Listen, Express Concern, Reassure.** If you're able to, be physically present for the person in order to ease feelings of isolation and provide a sense of connectedness. If a face-to-face visit is not possible, be there for them via phone or video calls. Work with the individual to identify others who may be willing to help. Do not make any promises that you are unable to keep.
3. **Keep them safe - Create a Safety Plan.** Ask what will help keep them safe, make sure they do not have access to any lethal means, and ask if they will refrain from using drugs or alcohol. Get a verbal commitment that the person will not act upon thoughts of suicide until they have met with professional help. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline can serve as a valuable resource for helping you determine the next steps.
4. **Help them connect - Get Help.** It is important to establish support systems they can rely on now and in future moments of crisis. This includes suicide prevention hotlines such as the Lifeline, as well as resources available in their local community including mental health counselor. If you feel the situation is critical, take the person to a nearby Emergency Room or call 911.
5. **Follow-up.** Studies have shown that following up can reduce suicide-related deaths. Once you've had an initial conversation with the vulnerable person and helped them establish a support network, make sure to check in. This can be done with a quick phone call, text message, or even a card. Ask if there is anything else you can do to help them get through this difficult time. The simple act of reaching out and showing you care can truly mean the difference between life and death.

Source: National Council on Aging

**If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, help is available. Learn more about suicide prevention at [SuicidePreventionLifeline.org](https://www.SuicidePreventionLifeline.org)**

**NATIONAL**  
**SUICIDE PREVENTION**  
**LIFELINE**  
**1-800-273-TALK (8255)**  
[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

## Hearing Health and Medicare

Medicare covers ear-related medical conditions, but original Medicare and Medigap plans don't pay for routine hearing tests or hearing aids.



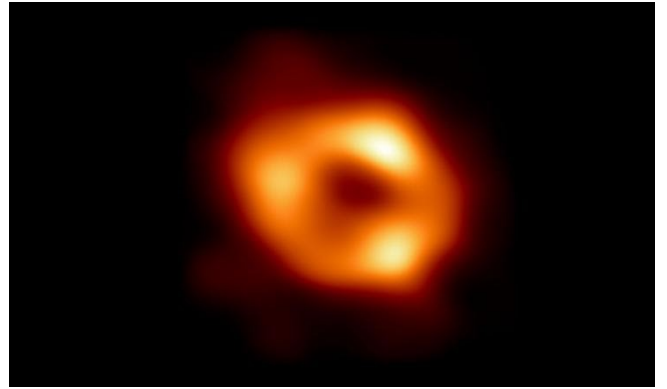
**Solution:** If you are in a Medicare Advantage plan, check your policy to see if it covers hearing-related needs. If it doesn't, or if you have original Medicare, consider Amplifon for your hearing health care.

LIUNA Midwest Region has teamed up with Amplifon to provide you with discounts on quality hearing health. This self purchase program provides the following hearing health benefits:

- Hearing Aid Lowest Price Guarantee – a lower price by 5%
- One year free follow up care with provider
- Two years free batteries which equates to 160 cells (for one hearing aid) and 320 cells (for two hearing aids)
- Three-year loss and damage warranty & 60-day risk-free trial period with each new model
- 12 month interest-free financing options (spread the cost over 12 months with no interest charges)

To learn more about Amplifon call 1-888-408-5943 or visit: <https://www.midwestlaborers.org/benefits-plus/>

## A Look at the Center of the Milky Way



We have finally looked into the heart of our galaxy and uncovered a "gentle giant."

For the first time, astronomers **captured an image of the supermassive black hole**, called Sagittarius A\*, at the center of the Milky Way.

The presence of an immense object at the galactic center has been suspected for years, but this is the only direct visual evidence.

The feat, achieved by more than 300 astronomers using a global network of eight telescopes, has been years in the making.

The unprecedented image could pave the way for documenting the true motion of black holes, which could change our understanding of these extreme cosmic objects.

Source: CNN Science

## Worst Foods & Drinks Before Bedtime

- **Alcohol.** Alcohol of any kind is terrible for sleep. It metabolizes quickly in your system and causes you to wake up multiple times during the night.
- **Fried food.** Skip the fast food line if you're eating dinner late. Fat stimulates the production of acid in the stomach, which can spill up into your esophagus, causing heartburn.
- **Spicy food.** Heavily spiced foods can be tough to digest and may cause heartburn, making it difficult to lie down and relax. Bypass curries and hot sauces at dinner and opt to enjoy them at lunchtime instead.
- **Herbal Chocolate.** Keep your hand out of the candy jar as bedtime approaches. Chocolate contains theobromine, a stimulant that can increase heart rate and sleeplessness.
- **Coffee.** As delightful as a warm cup of coffee may be, drinking caffeine too close to bedtime can wreak havoc on your slumber. Effects on the body vary by individual, but generally caffeine effects can last three to seven hours, so time your last cup of the day accordingly. Decaf coffee also contains a small amount of caffeine, so depending on your body's caffeine sensitivity, enjoy your last cup of decaf two hours before going to bed.



# Thank You!

**for Protecting Construction Workers' Pay by  
Supporting the Department of Labor's Updated  
Wage Rules on Federal Construction**



## Regional Retiree News - In Union There is Strength

*The years of experience our retirees have as union activists, make them the most qualified to advocate and protect the interest of union retirees and working families.*

**Valparaiso Indiana:** Local 81 retirees continue to stay involved in their local union after retirement. "We are thankful to have the retirees back in the swing of things post-pandemic." Mike Campbell, Business Manager



**Front Row:** Patrick Hill (Retiree Council Recording Secretary), Leonard Cooper, Wilson Hunt, Donald Lewandowski (Retiree Council Trustee), Wayne Sovich

**Back Rows:** Clifford Vctor, Filemon Chavez, David Brewer, Dale Patterson, Timothy McGhee, Randall Weddington (Retiree Council Secretary-Treasurer), Michael Fisher, Steve Barncord (Retiree Council President), Danny Mc Glothin (Retiree Council Vice-President), Michael Campbell (Business Manager), August Voye, Douglas Moser, Brian Waldo, Randall Darnell, Charles Hershman, Corey Campbell (Field Representative), Ramon Mendoza, Jr. (Field Representative), Ronald Dillingham, (Field Representative)

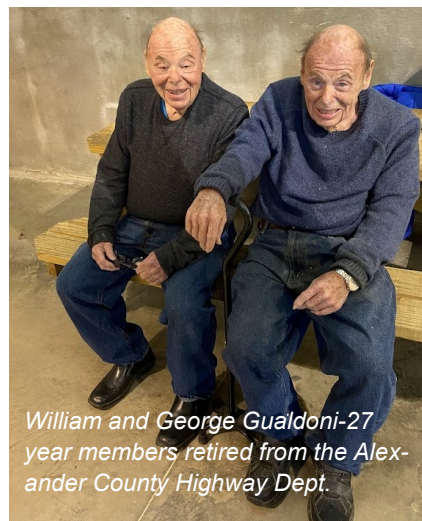


*Call the Local Union..  
..join the Retiree Council!*



## Regional Retiree News - Local 773 Marion Illinois Hosts Retiree Fish Fry

Local 773 members served fish and all the fixins to show their gratitude and support. Retirees were treated to food, prizes, live music, a health fair, presentations by Ed Smith, President and CEO at Ullico and information about Illinois Icash services from Illinois Treasurers Office representatives.



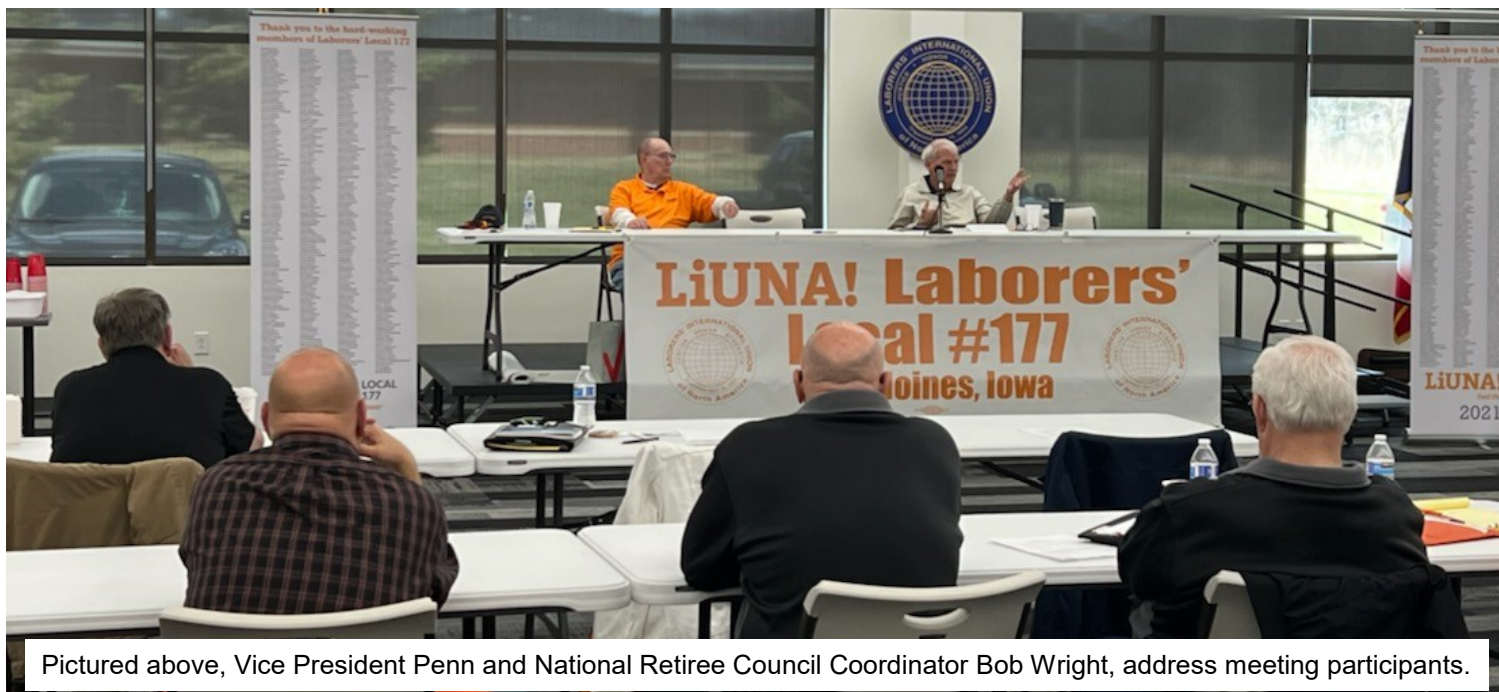
*William and George Gualdoni-27 year members retired from the Alexander County Highway Dept.*





## Regional Retiree News

### Vice President Penn Sponsors Multi Local/Retiree Councils Meeting Retired Admiral Mike Franken Receives Unanimous Endorsement for U.S. Senate



Pictured above, Vice President Penn and National Retiree Council Coordinator Bob Wright, address meeting participants.

LIUNA Vice President and Midwest Regional Manager, John Penn, recently sponsored an exceptionally well-attended gathering of a number of Business Managers and Officers and Representatives of Local Union Retiree Councils within the Midwest Region.

Held in Des Moines on April 14, 2022, the meeting was hosted by Local Union #177 and included Business Managers Danny Hemming, L.U. #43, Cedar Rapids, IA; Mike Weckman, L.U.#177, Des Moines, IA; Brad Long, L.U. #309, Quad Cities, IL and IA; and Sam Renshaw, L.U.#1140, Omaha, NE and Council Bluffs, IA.

Also invited but unable to attend were Business Managers, Mike Tuthill, L.U.#538, Galesburg, IL, and Southeast IA; and Pete Bardeson, L.U.#620, Sioux Falls, S.D., and Sioux City, IA.

Since the primary purpose of this meeting was to focus on issues pertaining to Retirees and Retiree Councils, each Local Union in attendance was represented by at least four (4) of the Officers of the Retiree Council of each respective Local Union.

The meeting was chaired by LIUNA National Retiree Council Coordinator, Bob Wright, who noted that the meeting was intended to include each of those Local Unions affiliated with the Great Plains Laborers' District Council with jurisdictions in Counties within the State of Iowa.

Brother Wright also stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss common issues, problems and concerns related to Retirees and Retiree Councils of each respective Local Union.

Providing necessary and appropriate assistance to each Retiree Council, either from LIUNA's National Retiree Council, the Midwest Regional Office, and/or the Great Plains Laborers' District Council could also be one of the positive results of this meeting.

Vice President Penn noted that Retirees constitute 20% of our Membership within the Midwest Region, and that he is extremely proud of the contributions made to LIUNA and to our Local communities by our Retirees and their Spouses.

During the meetings which included a catered working lunch, each of

the respective Local Union Business Managers and Retiree Council Officers reported on the status of their Retiree Membership as well as their individual programs and activities.

Local Union #43 explained that Retiree Council meetings are up and running after Covid, and that we must recapture Retirees institutional knowledge now or we may never have that opportunity again. A big shout out was given to LU#177 Business Manager, Mike Weckman, for putting together the [iowa-worker.com](http://iowa-worker.com).

L.U.#177, noted the invaluable assistance from Retirees on the picket line, and in other organizing activities, as well as other civic and social activities. Appreciation was also extended to the Sisters of Union Laborers (S.O.U.L.) for all the work these ladies do, which is so much more than most people are aware of.

L.U.#309 reported that Retirees are serving in legislative capacities, including on the Rock Island County Board, as well as an Alderman for the City of Moline IL. (cont. page 6)



### ***Iowa Meeting continued.***

L.U.#1140 explained that its Retiree Council had only recently been re-constituted, but that very competent and committed Officers had been elected and that attendance at their Retiree Council Meetings had been steadily increasing every month.

Brother Dylan Gramlich, Political Coordinator for the Great Plains Laborers' District Council provided a detailed report on the devastating effects of anti-worker, anti-union and anti-family Republican controlled Iowa Legislature.

He explained that the entire Kim Reynolds administration had guided that Legislature to enacting laws which gutted collective bargaining rights; defunded public education; weakened Workers' Compensation Laws and disastrously cut unemployment benefits unfairly affecting all Iowa workers, union and non-union alike.

He again emphasized the importance of voting for pro-worker, pro-union candidates at every level. He also addressed related issues dealing with geo-fencing; eminent domain; and the CO 2 pipeline.

L.U.#177 Retiree Council Recording Secretary and S.O.U.L. President, Darlene Navin, reported that S.O.U.L. had recently been awarded the Terrence J. O'Sullivan Out-

standing Volunteer Service Award Plaque.

She also noted a number of annual S.O.U.L. activities including the Easter Event for L.U.#177 children at the Labor Park; the yearly college Scholarship Award and the Adopt-A-Family for Christmas program.

At this point Vice President Penn began to bring the meeting to a close. He expressed his wish that LIUNA General President, Terry O'Sullivan, could have been here to witness for himself the involvement and level of commitment of each of the respective Local Union Business Managers and Retiree Council Officers, and their efforts to recruit additional Retirees and expand the work and contributions of each Retiree Council.

Immediately following the meeting, Political Coordinator, Dylan Gramlich, introduced Retired Admiral Mike Franken, candidate in the Iowa Democratic primary for United States Senator.

Mr., Franken introduced himself to Vice President Penn and to each of the Local Union Business Managers and Retiree Council Officers participating in the meeting,

He thanked those in attendance for this opportunity to meet with them and discussed his deep-seated roots within Iowa.

He explained in detail his lengthy and extensive military career, which ended with his voluntary retirement from service, when he realized, he would no longer envision taking orders from Commander in Chief Donald Trump.

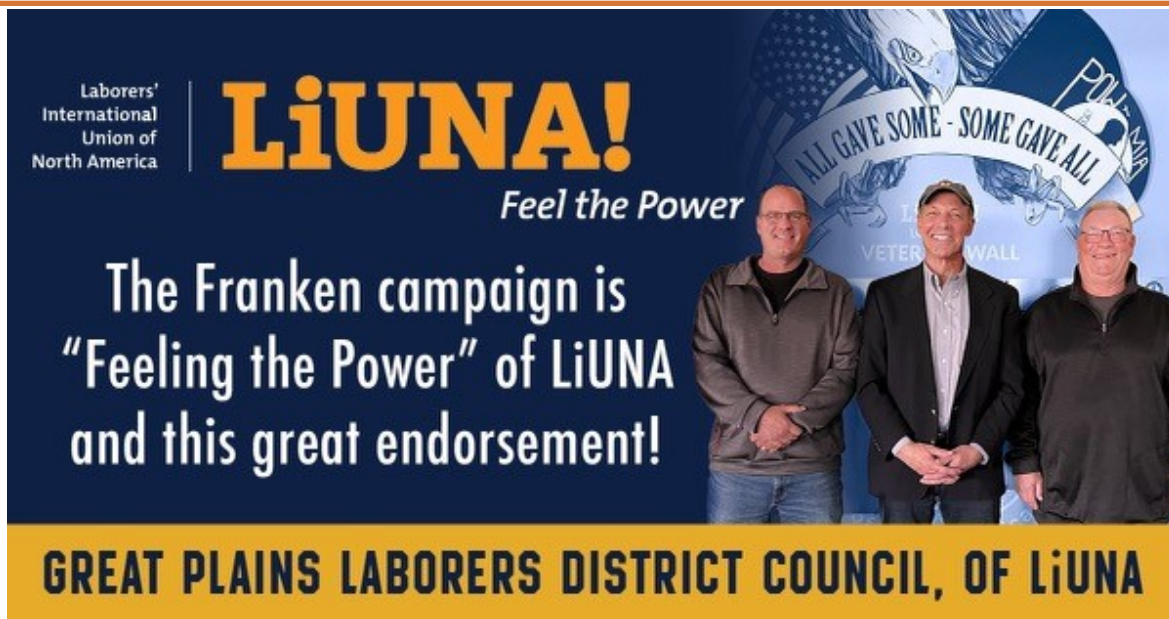
During his Naval Service, Admiral Franken pointed out that he had worked quite closely with Democrat Senator Ted Kennedy, and that his political philosophy was similar to that of Senator Kennedy in most respects.

Mr. Franken answered a number of relevant questions from those in attendance.

Mr. Franken also indicated that his positions on nearly every issue were more closely aligned with those of LIUNA Members and families than those of the other Democratic candidates.

Retired Admiral Franken concluded his remarks by stressing the vital importance of the support of LIUNA in helping him to ensure the long overdue retirement of current Iowa Senator Chuck Grassley.

Following his comments, Mr. Franken received a resounding standing ovation as well as a unanimous call for an endorsement for his candidacy for Democrat for United States Senator in the Iowa primary election.



Retired Admiral Mike Franken is flanked by LU#177 Representative Brad Gezall and LU#177 Retiree Council Officer John Baker.



## Regional Retiree News - Local 362 Bloomington Illinois

Local 362 retiree volunteers prepping for food boxes for people in need at Tinervan's Family Foundation.



The Tinervan Family Foundation is committed to helping those in need. They have delivered over 30,000 food boxes over the course of the last three years. Local 362 members and retirees have been active in helping build, fill and distribute those boxes including delivering over 500 to our members in Texas at the start of the pandemic.



**How can I remember to take my medication?** Sometimes it's hard to keep track of your medication. But to be safe, you must take it properly. A good way to help you remember, set a reminder (alarm) on your smartphone.

### Healthier Soy Sauce



Many store bought condiments, like soy sauce, are high in salt. Lower sodium versions exist but they aren't available everywhere or may still have a lot of salt.

Soy Sauce is extremely high in salt - in fact, just 1 tablespoon provides more than half of the daily 1,500 mg amount of sodium that the American Heart Association recommends! The reduced-sodium versions are still fairly high.

Instead, try this simple recipe that mimics the savory flavor of soy sauce:

- 1 cup low sodium beef or vegetable broth
- 1 tablespoon vinegar (balsamic, cider or rice)
- 2 teaspoons molasses or brown sugar or substitute sugar-brown sugar blend
- 1/8 teaspoon of each: ginger powder, garlic powder, black pepper & salt

Whisk all ingredients in pot. Bring to a boil; cook 1 minute then reduce heat to medium. Cook for another 10 minutes. Remove from heat and cool.

**Note:** This recipe is a good substitute for other Asian condiments that tend to be high in salt like fish, hoisin, oyster and teriyaki sauces.

Source: American Heart Association



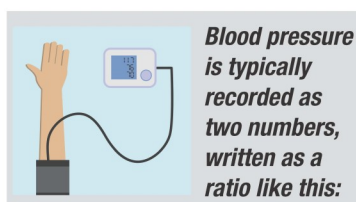
Life's Simple

# HOW TO MANAGE BLOOD PRESSURE



## 1 UNDERSTAND READINGS AND LEVELS

The first step to managing blood pressure is to understand what the levels mean and what is considered normal, elevated, high blood pressure (hypertension), and hypertensive crisis.



**117**  
**76**

Read as "117 over 76 millimeters of mercury."

### Systolic<sup>1</sup>

The top number, the higher of the two numbers, measures the pressure in the arteries when the heart beats (when the heart muscle contracts).

### Diastolic<sup>2</sup>

The bottom number, the lower of the two numbers, measures the pressure in the arteries when the heart is resting between heart beats.

### THE AHA DEFINES THESE CATEGORIES AS<sup>3</sup>:

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic mm Hg (upper #)		Diastolic mm Hg (lower #)
Normal	Less than 120	and	Less than 80
Elevated Blood Pressure	120–129	and	Less than 80
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 1	130–139	or	80–89
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 2	140 or higher	or	90 or higher
Hypertensive Crisis (Consult your doctor immediately)	Higher than 180	and/or	Higher than 120

## 2 LEARN AND TRACK LEVELS



Check.  
Change.  
Control.\*

Medical providers can take blood pressure readings and provide recommendations. Check. Change. Control. helps track and manage progress in reducing blood pressure. Track online with [ccctracker.com/aha](http://ccctracker.com/aha)

The American Heart Association recommends home monitoring for all people with high blood pressure to help the healthcare provider determine whether treatments are working. Home monitoring (self-measured blood pressure) is not a substitute for regular visits to your physician. If you have been prescribed medication to lower your blood pressure, don't stop taking your medication without consulting your doctor, even if your blood pressure readings are in the normal range during home monitoring.

## 3 TIPS FOR SUCCESS



### EAT SMART

Follow a healthy eating pattern that emphasizes fruits and vegetables and includes whole grains, low-fat dairy, and healthy proteins and fats. Limit sugary foods and drinks, fatty or processed meats, salty foods, and highly processed foods.<sup>4</sup>



### GET ACTIVE

Physical activity helps control blood pressure, weight and stress levels.<sup>5</sup>



### MANAGE WEIGHT

If you're overweight, even a slight weight loss can prevent high blood pressure.<sup>6</sup>



### QUIT SMOKING

Every time you smoke, it can cause a temporary increase in blood pressure.<sup>7</sup>



### LEARN THE SALTY SIX

Limit the amount of sodium you're eating each day. Learn the Salty Six — common foods loaded with excess sodium.

**Cold Cuts & Cured Meats**  
**Pizza**  
**Soup**  
**Breads & Rolls**  
**Sandwiches**  
**Burritos & Tacos**

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