

Welcome to Heart Health Classroom

Heart health is an important public health issue and by creating awareness you can bring valuable lessons into your classroom, including understanding basic and advanced functions of the heart, and enriching your health, science, and social studies lessons. Through information and education you will be working to help your students gain a greater understanding of the effect high blood pressure can have on overall health and how to maintain a healthy heart.

Teaching your students about heart health and high blood pressure can be a rewarding educational experience.

Whether your students are ready to learn a bit of the science of cardiology or simply need to know how to talk to their parents/grandparents about the importance of looking after their heart, here you can find the information and teaching tools you need to explore heart health and high blood pressure in your classroom.

When teaching your class about heart health and high blood pressure, please keep the following points in mind:

- **Maintaining a healthy life style, eating healthily, exercising regularly and not smoking can promote heart health**
- **Emphasise that high blood pressure is a condition that can be controlled with medications and lifestyle adjustment**
- **Regular monitoring can help people to keep on top of their blood pressure, and control it**

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Heart Health Classroom: Lesson plan for 14 – 17 year olds

This activity should take approximately 1 hour.

Activity - GET WITH THE BEAT! competition

Create a public service announcement/video commercial aimed at parents/grandparents.

Learning objective

Raise awareness of high blood pressure and how its proper management can maintain heart health.

Introduction

- Discuss information about high blood pressure and the damage it can cause to the heart (refer to resources at the end of this kit to access information to include in this discussion)
- Explain about other serious medical conditions of which high blood pressure is one of the risk factors such as, heart attack, heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease
- Explain that high blood pressure can be easily controlled by leading a healthy lifestyle, eating well/exercising regularly and taking blood pressure medication

Activity

Students should use the webcam provided to produce a short (approx. 30 seconds to one minute) public service announcement/video commercial to highlight the impact high blood pressure can have on every day life and how it can be easily controlled.

The aim is to create a public service announcement/video commercial that:

- Is informative, interesting, and creative!
- Is aimed at family members to show how maintaining healthy blood pressure can positively impact on them
- Includes advice in simple terms on how to learn more about controlling high blood pressure

Competition guidelines

- *Get with the beat!* is an opportunity for your students to use their imagination and make a cool and gripping short video commercial talking about the importance of high blood pressure, especially for their families and loved ones. The videos they create can help to educate their families and tell them how important it is to be aware of their blood pressure.
- Feel free to use animation, computer effects, and any sort of camera you choose. Your students can approach high blood pressure from any angle; emotional, scientific – anything goes and anything could win! For a good place to start, use the enclosed quick facts on high blood pressure, frequently asked questions and links, as well as the website www.getwiththebeat.com, which should give some direction for the content of the videos.
- The competition closes on ~~31 January~~ 2009 and the judges' decision will be based on:

- Creativity
- How well the importance of managing blood pressure is addressed
- Persuasiveness

Winners will be informed by email. There will be one winner (either an individual or a group) worldwide for each age category (10-13 years, 14-17 years, 18+ years). If your students enter the competition as a group, then enter the category that best describes the most members of your group.

For the official rules of the competition, please refer to the website, www.getwiththebeat.com

Review and follow-up

- Use a brainstorming exercise to see what each student can remember from the commercial on high blood pressure
- Students submit their public service announcement/video commercial for the competition via the website www.getwiththebeat.com
- Students may try to find public places that will play their public service announcement/video commercial for example GP surgeries / hospital waiting rooms, sports centres, etc

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Heart Health Classroom: Quick facts about high blood pressure

- Nearly one billion people worldwide - one in four adults - suffer from high blood pressure¹
- Each year high blood pressure accounts for seven million deaths per year²
- Elevated blood pressure damages people's hearts, eyes, brains, and kidneys³
 - High blood pressure is one of the main contributors of heart disease⁴
 - High blood pressure is so damaging that people who suffer from it are three times more likely to develop heart failure⁵
 - Those who have a more severe form of the disease are four times more likely to suffer a stroke than people who do not have high blood pressure⁵
- Up to 65% of people with high blood pressure do not get it under control even though it can be easily measured and successfully treated⁶

Proper blood pressure management can promote heart health and should be part of a healthy lifestyle.

References:

1. Kearney et al. Global burden of hypertension: analysis of worldwide data. *The Lancet* 2005; 365: 217-223
2. Ezzati et al. Selected major risk factors and global regional burden of disease. *The Lancet* 2002;360: 1347-1359.
3. Statistical Fact Sheet: International Cardiovascular Disease Statistics. American Heart Association 2004.
4. World Health Organisation. The Atlas of Heart Disease and Stroke. Available at: http://www.who.int/cardiovascular_disease/resources/atlas/en. Last Accessed 26 June 08.
5. Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics - 2006 Update. American Heart Association. Available from <http://circ.ahajournals.org/cgi/content/short/113/6/e85#SEC6>. Last accessed 19 December 2006.
6. Rosamond W, Flegal K, Friday G, et al. Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics – 2008 Update. A report from the American Heart Association Statistics Committee and Stroke Statistics Subcommittee. *Circulation* 2008; 117:e25-e146.

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Heart Health Classroom: Frequently Asked Questions

What is blood pressure and what constitutes high blood pressure?

Blood pressure is measured with two numbers known as systolic and diastolic blood pressure. These are the pressures applied against blood vessel walls when the heart is pumping (systole) and at rest (diastole). High blood pressure is generally defined as a systolic pressure of 140 mmHg or higher OR a diastolic pressure of 90 mmHg or higher¹.

Which other risk factors contribute to heart disease?

Smoking, high cholesterol, and diabetes accelerate the damage of high blood pressure on the heart and blood vessels. Therefore, it is important to manage and control all of these factors².

What symptoms can be associated with high blood pressure?

High blood pressure is a silent killer. There are often no symptoms until the pressure is too high, or it causes damage to vital organs, like the heart or kidneys².

What can help prevent high blood pressure?

- **Weight reduction**
- **Eating a low sodium diet**
- **Minimizing alcohol intake**
- **Regular exercise²**
- **Regular blood pressure monitoring**

Do people have to take medication for high blood pressure?

If lifestyle changes such as diet and exercise do not control or prevent high blood pressure, then drug therapy is necessary².

How often do I need to measure my blood pressure?

Remember, high blood pressure is likely to have no symptoms. It is important for adults to have their blood pressure measured at least once a year².

References:

1. Chobanian et al. Seventh Report of the Joint National Committee on prevention, detection, evaluation, and treatment of high blood pressure. *Hypertension* 2003; 42: 1206 – 1251.
2. World Hypertension League, know your blood pressure, accessed 20 August 2008. Available at <http://www.worldhypertensionleague.org/Pages/KnowYourBloodPressure.aspx>

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Heart Health Classroom: [Useful links](#)

www.worldhypertensionleague.org -- World Hypertension League

www.world-heart-federation.org -- World Heart Federation & World Heart Day

www.eshonline.org -- European Society of Hypertension:

www.ish-world.com -- International Society of Hypertension

www.ishib.org -- International Society on Hypertension in Blacks

www.iashhypertension.org -- Inter-American Society of Hypertension

www.acc.org -- American College of Cardiology

www.americanheart.org -- American Heart Association

www.ash-us.org -- American Society of Hypertension

www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp -- National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

www.eatright.org -- American Dietetic Association



High Blood Pressure Online Commercial Competition Permission Form

Dear Parent/Guardian

As part of this week's school programme, <insert name of school> is taking part in an Online Commercial Competition which will focus on the subject of high blood pressure.

Get with the Beat! is an opportunity for students to make a short (approx 30 seconds to one minute) video commercial talking about the importance of high blood pressure, especially for their families and loved ones. We will then enter the videos into this competition by uploading them to the internet. If you wish, you can check out the website at www.getwiththebeat.com.

One in four adults around the world suffer from high blood pressure, putting their heart health at risk. Therefore the project aims to educate students about the importance of high blood pressure in a creative and original way.

For more information on this project, please see the competition website www.getwiththebeat.com.

Before uploading any videos to the competition site, all students appearing in the videos must obtain parental permission. Please sign and return this letter as evidence of your approval.

Please return the completed permission form to <insert name of teacher>.

Yours sincerely
<Insert name of teacher>

I give permission for my son/daughter to take part in the Online Commercial Competition activity and for the video they create to be uploaded to the competition website.

Child's name

Signed (Parent/Guardian)

Date

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