



spotlight on health

Feeling Pressured About High Blood Pressure?

(NAPSA)—There are steps you can take to lower blood pressure and reduce your risk of getting heart disease or having a stroke, but first, it's a good idea to learn more about this dangerous condition.

High blood pressure can be especially dangerous because it often has no warning signs or symptoms. Regardless of race, age or sex, anyone can develop high blood pressure.

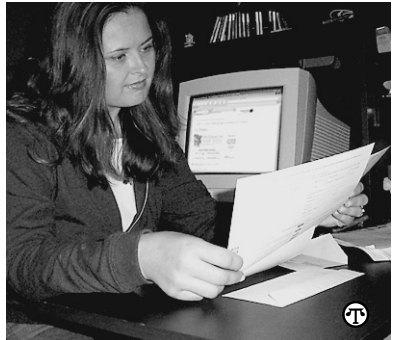
It is estimated that one in every four American adults has high blood pressure. Once high blood pressure develops, it can last a lifetime. However, you can prevent and control high blood pressure by taking action.

These steps include maintaining a healthy weight, being physically active, following a healthy eating plan that emphasizes fruits and vegetables and low-fat dairy foods and choosing and preparing foods with less salt and sodium.

Getting the facts is a good place to start. To help people learn more about high blood pressure and how it can be treated, the American Heart Association created Heart Profilers.

"Heart Profilers is not just another medical or health Web site," said Dr. Clyde Yancy, associate professor of medicine/cardiology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. "It's a major advance in online technology that has the potential to change the way patients and physicians interact with each other."

Patients can read side effect descriptions for particular drugs, learn how their treatment compares to others, and download questions to ask their physicians. The site includes an integrated index of medical terminol-



Lowering your blood pressure may be easier with a helpful new Web site.

ogy to ensure that patients understand their condition and all treatment options. The tool also can connect interested patients, at their request, to nearby clinical trials so that they learn about qualifying for experimental treatment programs.

High blood pressure management is imperative to reduce the incidence of coronary heart disease—the single largest killer of Americans. About one-half of people who have a first heart attack and nearly two-thirds who have a first stroke have blood pressures higher than 160/95 mm Hg. A 10-percent decrease in blood pressure levels may result in an estimated 30 percent reduction in the incidence of CHD.

The American Heart Association also offers an online treatment management tool for health-care professionals. Like the tool for consumers and patients, the version for nurses and physicians provides customized treatment management information for individual patients, all based on the latest accepted medical science.

For more information, visit americanheart.org/heartprofilers.