



September 19, 2015 – Grand Rapids, MI

Blood Pressure: Lifestyle First

Today I'm going to share a caution from one of the lead authors in the Mayo Clinic arm of the study and tell you what I think is the biggest mistake the researchers made in announcing the preliminary results of the SPRINT Study.

The Mayo Clinic posted a [video](#) from Dr. William Haley, a lead researcher in the SPRINT Study; remember there were 102 different clinical sites that provided data for this study. What he said was significant. Here's my interpretation: The results of a large study such as SPRINT are important but we need to proceed with caution; the results indicate what happened to a large group of people but can't tell us what it will do for a single individual.

He suggested there may be some as-yet-unknown factors for individual patients that could make the additional meds to lower the SBP worse than the high blood pressure itself.

The Bottom Line

In my opinion, the researchers skipped a critical step. The study should have included a third group: a group that was treated with lifestyle changes in addition to the two medications to attempt to get their SBP lower than 120. That would have given the scientists a chance to see how diet, exercise, and stress management worked in addition to medications for a comparison with the three or more medication groups. Without it, they're adding medication when a less costly possible alternative is available.

I don't mean just monetary costs; I mean the cost in side effects to the individual as well. The researchers' view was limited to treating the symptoms of high blood pressure, not necessarily the causes. Even if they found that subjects would not change their lifestyles, that would be important to know. Dr. Haley came closest to saying it correctly. An individual is not just a bundle of symptoms to remedy; there's a person to work with in order to get well. It takes time and effort to do it right.



If your blood pressure is consistently high, getting it down is critical to your health. If you're concerned about your blood pressure, make sure you join me in my [High Blood Pressure: Getting It Down](#) webinar next week. The approach is all about lifestyle. Ask yourself: do you really want to rely on medications if you might not need to? Your body. Your choice.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

Reference: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZED_pRUEvEI



Straight Talk on Health

Hear Dr. Chet's take on the latest health news and research—listen to *Straight Talk on Health* Sunday at 7:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. in the Eastern Time Zone on WGUV-FM 88.5 or 95.3, or listen live via the Internet by going to www.wgvu.org/wgvunews and clicking on "Listen Live" at the top.

The health information in this message is designed for educational purposes only. It's not a substitute for medical advice from your healthcare provider, and you should not use it to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease. It's designed to motivate you to work toward better health, and that includes seeing your healthcare professional regularly. If what you've read raises any questions or concerns about health problems or possible diseases, talk to your healthcare provider today.

Subscribe to the Message from Dr. Chet at DrChet.com — © Chet Zelasko PhD LLC