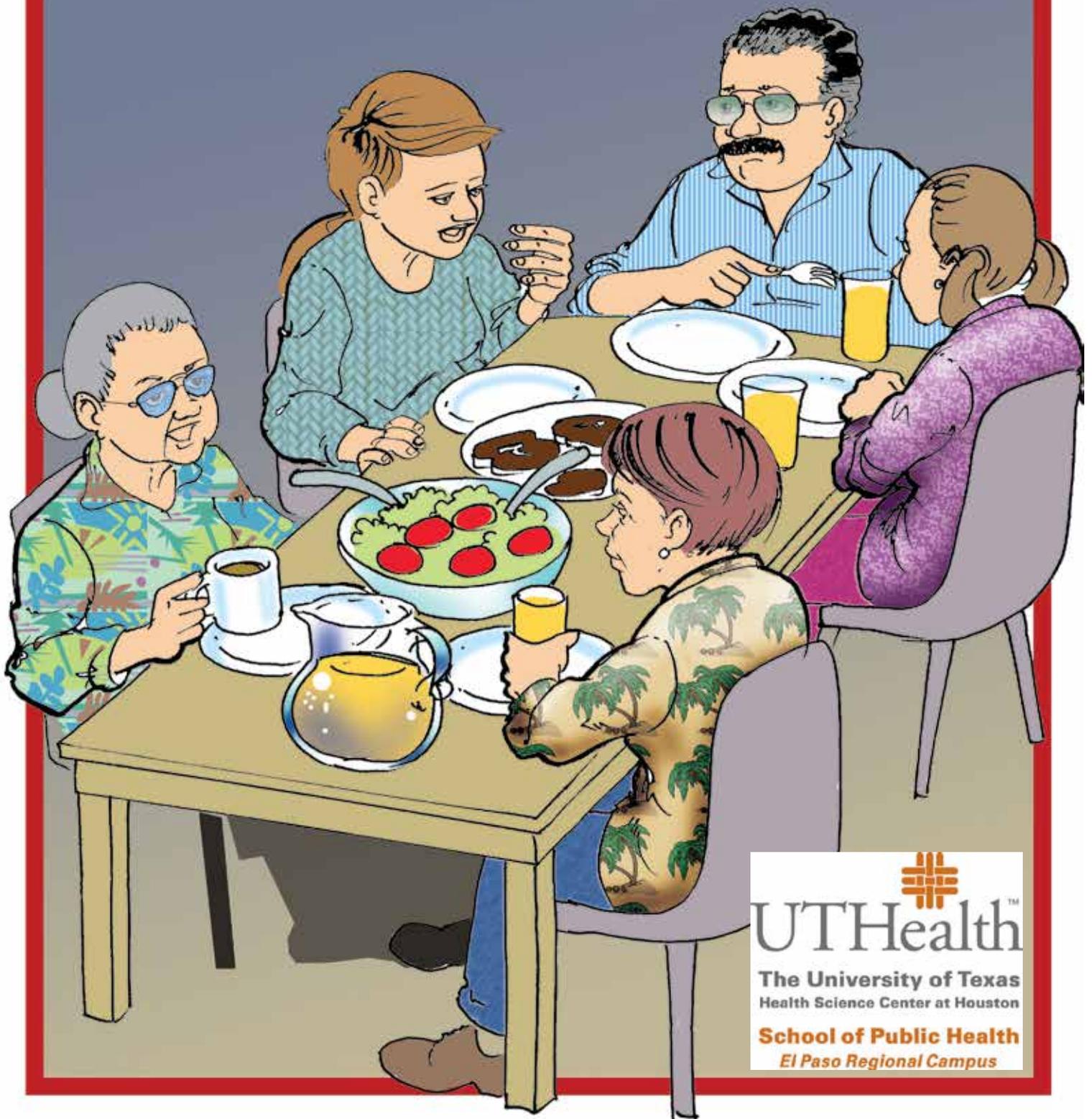


HOW TO CONTROL YOUR HYPERTENSION




UTHealth[™]
The University of Texas
Health Science Center at Houston
School of Public Health
El Paso Regional Campus

Dear reader:

We hope that this photonovela will help you and your family to improve your health related to high blood pressure. This photonovela is part of the Ramirez Family which we had introduced to you previously in the guide titled "An Ounce of Prevention" from the "Health For Your Heart" program.

This photonovela is dedicated to you. We hope that it will be of great use to you. The Community Health Workers for the "Health for Your Heart" Program wish you a healthy life.

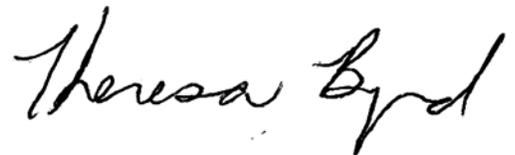
We would like to thank the "AYUDA" organization for their collaboration with this project. At the same time, we also like to thank the sponsor of this project the "CDC" (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Division of Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention) and the "CDC" official Dr. Carma Ayala for their support.

The translation of this photonovela to English does not represent an official translation of the content authorized for the Spanish version released by the CDC.

Sincerely,



Dr. Héctor Balcázar



Dr. Theresa Byrd

C O N T E N T

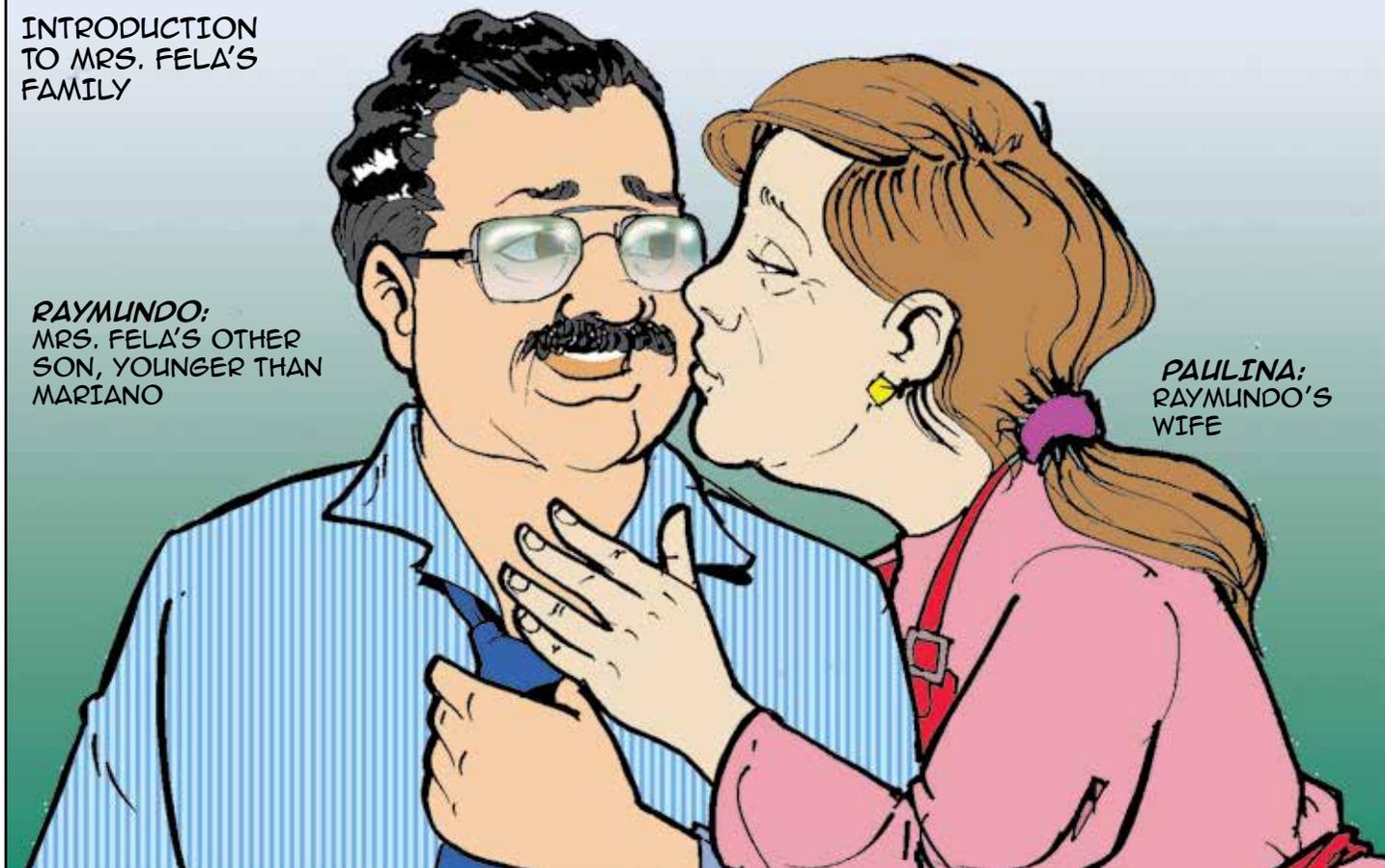
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CONTROL OF HYPERTENSION AND MEDICATIONS

INTRODUCTION
TO MRS. FELA'S
FAMILY

RAYMUNDO:
MRS. FELA'S OTHER
SON, YOUNGER THAN
MARIANO

PAULINA:
RAYMUNDO'S
WIFE



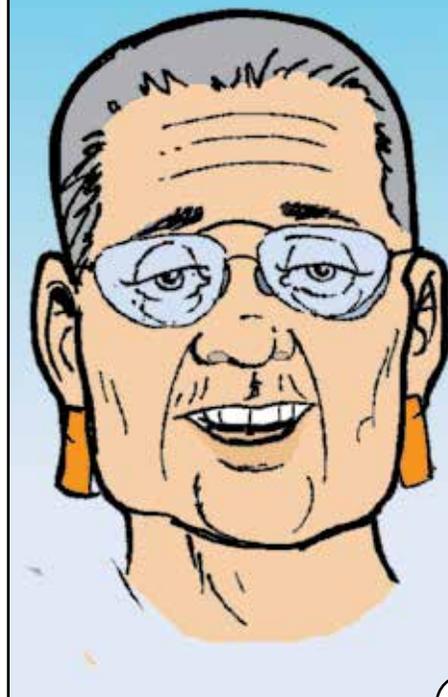
LAURA:
RAYMUNDO'S OLDEST
DAUGHTER



CARLA:
RAYMUNDO'S YOUNGEST
DAUGHTER



THE GRANDMOTHER:
MRS. FELA



THE FAMILY IS HAVING DINNER WHEN MRS. FELA ARRIVES

GRANDMOTHER YOU'RE FINALLY HERE

FORGIVE ME FOR BEING LATE I WAS AT MARIANO'S HOUSE

ON TIME MRS. FELA

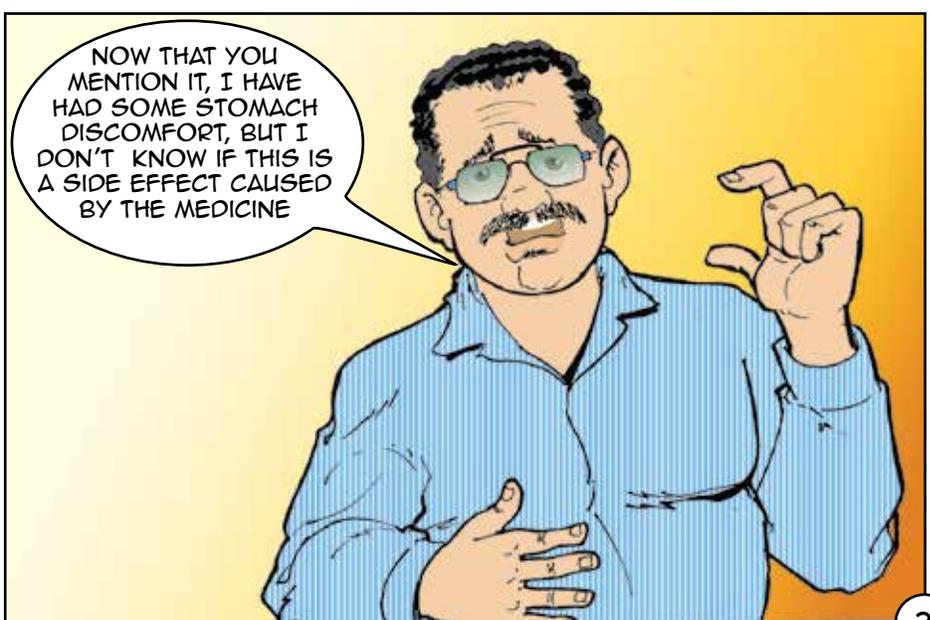
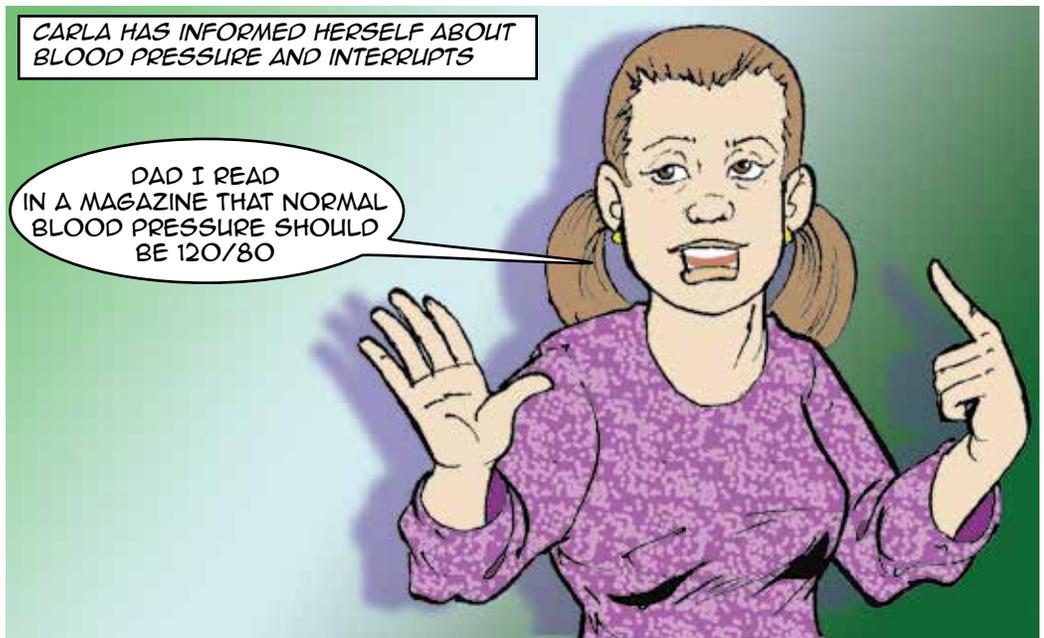
HOW'S MY BROTHER?

IT'S GREAT THAT YOU'RE HERE GRANDMA

YOUR BROTHER IS FINE BUT HIS FRIEND IS NOT SO WELL. HE HAD A STROKE, HE ALSO HAS HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

THAT'S AWFULL! DEAR, DID YOU TAKE YOUR MEDICINE?

NOOOOO, I DON'T NEED TO TAKE IT I FEEL FINE



RAYMUNDO WORRIES ABOUT HIS HEALTH AND VISITS HIS DOCTOR

DOCTOR I HAVE BEEN HAVING STOMACH ACHES AND I DON'T KNOW IF THIS IS BEING CAUSED BY MY HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE MEDICINE

IT IS POSSIBLE, I WILL CHANGE YOUR PRESCRIPTION. WE'LL SEE IF THIS STOPS YOUR STOMACH ACHES. IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT THAT YOU DON'T TAKE YOUR MEDICATION ON AN EMPTY STOMACH

STORE YOUR MEDICINES IN YOUR NIGHTSTAND OR IN YOUR BATHROOM'S MEDICINE CABINET SO YOU DON'T FORGET TO TAKE THEM WHEN YOU GO TO BED OR AFTER YOU WASH YOUR TEETH

EXCELLENT IDEA DOCTOR, THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUGGESTIONS I WILL PUT THEM IN PRACTICE

NEXT DAY RAYMUNDO DIDN'T FORGET THE DOCTOR'S ADVICE

IT'S EASIER TO REMEMBER IF THEY ARE STORED WHERE YOU CAN SEE THEM

THAT DAY RAYMUNDO GETS A PHONE CALL

HI MOM

HI SON. HOW HAVE YOU BEEN FEELING?

BETTER MOM. THE DOCTOR CHANGED MY PRESCRIPTION AND HE GAVE ME SOME IDEAS THAT I HAVE STARTED DOING

ACTIVITY



What do you think is the normal blood pressure?
Choose the one you think is the right one.

120/80

135/95

130/90

140/99

Stress Reduction

Write 3 things that cause you stress:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What do you think would be different ways to deal with each one of them?

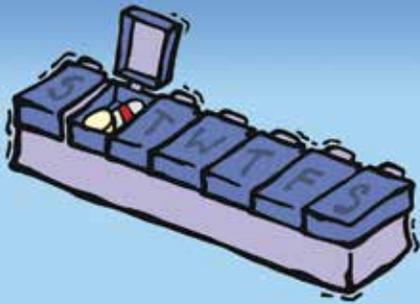
1:

2:

3:

WAYS TO REMEMBER TO TAKE YOUR MEDICINE

Place your pills on your weekly pillbox



Organize with a friend or another family member that also takes medications a system to remind each other



Place your medicine on your nightstand along with a glass of water so you don't forget to take them



Ask a family member to call you to remind you to take your medicines



If you use a daily planner, write a note on it reminding you to take your medicine



Place a photograph of a loved one on your refrigerator door with a note reminding you to take your medicine



Set the alarm on your clock at a certain hour to remember to take your medicine



Try to set up a routine. E.g., take your medicine after breakfast or if it's necessary after lunch



Post notes in visible places around your home



CONTROLLING STRESS

RAYMUNDO COMES BACK LATE FROM THE OFFICE, TIRED AND FRUSTRATED



HIS FAVORITE WAY TO HAVE FUN: WATCHING TELEVISION, BUT THIS RELAXING TIME DOESN'T LAST LONG



DEAR, CAN YOU TAKE THE TRASH OUT?



CARLA ALSO NEEDS RAYMUNDO

DAD, CAN YOU HELP ME WITH MY HOMEWORK? IT'S VERY DIFFICULT



LAURA DOESN'T FALL BEHIND

DAD, DAD, YOU'RE OFF TOMORROW. CAN YOU TAKE CARE OF THE KIDS?



SUDDENLY SOMEBODY RINGS THE FRONT DOOR BUT NOBODY PAYS ANY ATTENTION, THEY ARE ALL BUSY

DING DONG!

CAN SOMEBODY OPEN THE DOOR?



OK, DON'T ANYBODY MOVE I'LL GET IT



IT'S GRANDMA THAT CAME TO VISIT



HI, HOW'S EVERYBODY?

THERE'S A LOT OF NOISE

AT WHAT TIME ARE YOU TAKING ME TO THE DOCTOR TOMORROW? AND SUPPOSEDLY YOU WERE PICKING ME UP TODAY

OH NO! NOT TOMORROW

DAD, HAVE YOU OPENED THE DOOR?

NAAAAAAAAA!

CARLAAAAAAAA!

HAVE YOU SEEN THE DIAPERS?

IF IT'S FOR ME I'M NOT HERE!

CAN YOU ALL QUIET DOWN?

WHAT'S HAPPENING SON? CALM DOWN

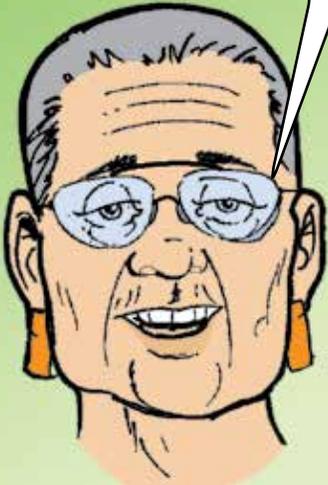
THINGS AT WORK DIDN'T GO VERY WELL, AND WHEN I GOT HOME EVERYBODY NEEDED MY HELP, I'M VERY STRESSED

GRANDMA TRIES TO MAKE RAYMUNDO UNDERSTAND

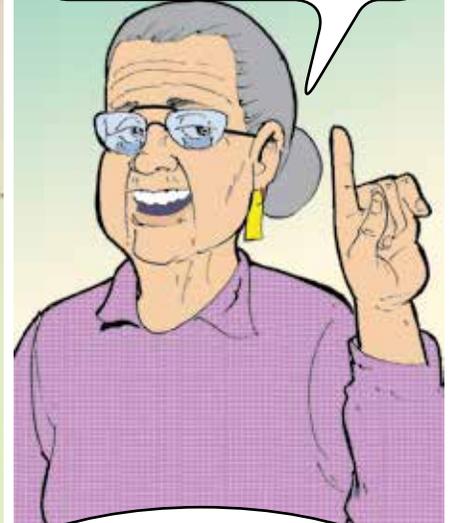
CALM DOWN SON YOU NEED TO CONTROL YOUR STRESS, IT'S NOT GOOD FOR YOUR HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, IT COULD MAKE IT WORSE

I KNOW MOM. IT'S JUST THAT EVERYTHING PILES-UP AND I CAN'T FIND THE WAY OUT

THERE ARE PEOPLE THAT HAVE THEIR LIVES FULL OF THINGS TO DO AND DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO DO THEM. THE CONSEQUENCES CAN BE GRAVE



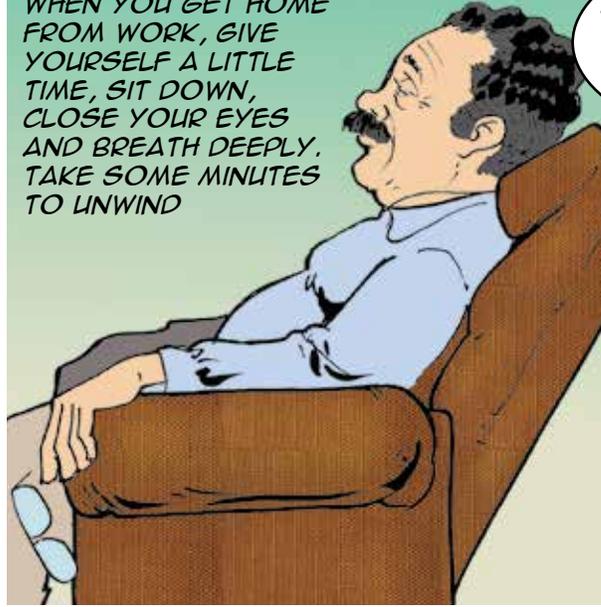
I CAN TELL SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO TO TRY TO REDUCE YOUR STRESS



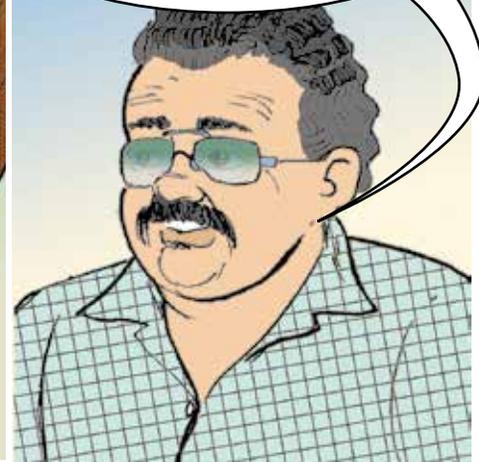
PLEASE MOM, I NEED THEM



WHEN YOU GET HOME FROM WORK, GIVE YOURSELF A LITTLE TIME, SIT DOWN, CLOSE YOUR EYES AND BREATHE DEEPLY. TAKE SOME MINUTES TO UNWIND



THEY DON'T LET ME! AS SOON AS I COME THROUGH THE DOOR THEY START TELLING ME WHAT WENT WRONG DURING THE DAY OR WHAT I HAVE TO DO THE NEXT DAY



MAYBE A FAMILY MEETING WOULD HELP. THAT WAY YOU CAN TELL THEM HOW YOU FEEL

THAT'S A GOOD IDEA. MAYBE MY FAMILY CAN HELP ME



WITH THAT IDEA AND TO IMPROVE HIS HEALTH AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP THE FAMILY GETS TOGETHER

AS YOU PROBABLY HAVE NOTICED, I FEEL VERY STRESSED WHEN I GET HOME FROM WORK AND WHEN ALL OF YOU START ASKING ME QUESTIONS, I FEEL LIKE I AM ABOUT TO EXPLODE! DO YOU THINK YOU CAN HELP ME?

OH RAYMUNDO THAT'S WHY YOU DON'T LOOK WELL

OF COURSE DAD! WE WANT WHAT IS BEST FOR YOU. WHAT CAN WE DO?

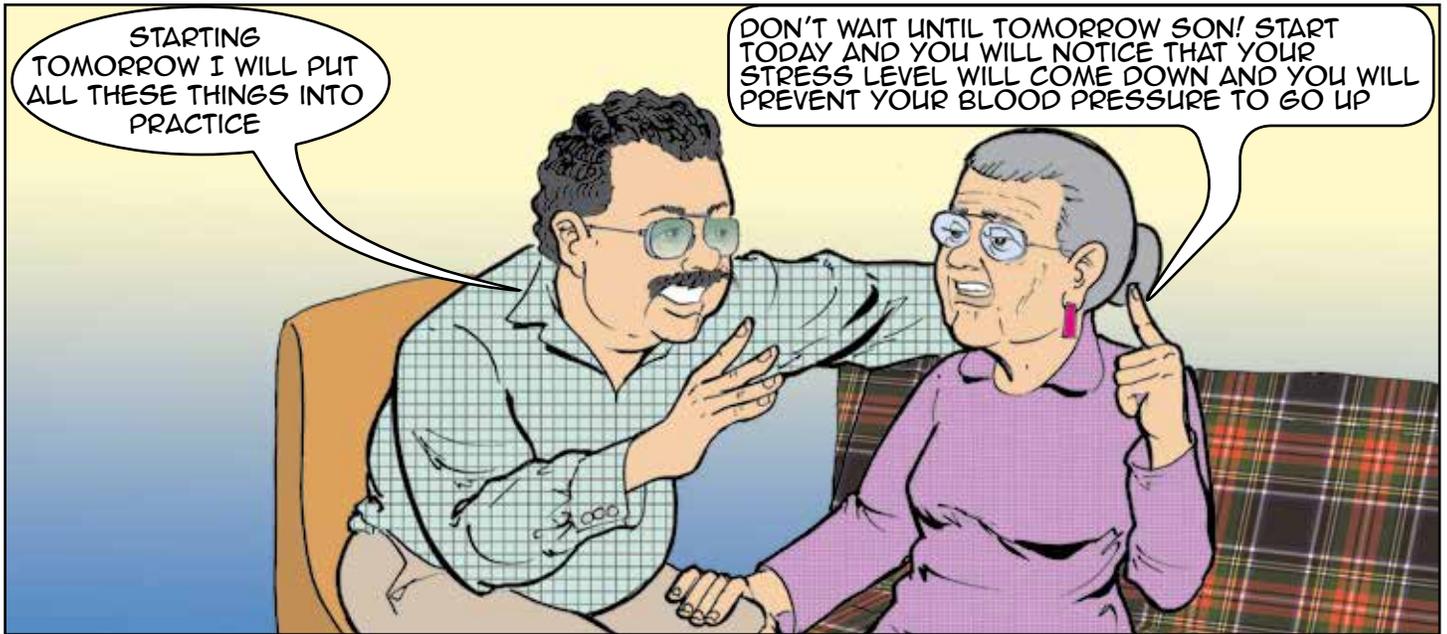
WELL, IF YOU CAN GIVE ME SOME MINUTES BY MYSELF WHEN I GET HOME, ONLY ENOUGH TIME TO SIT DOWN AND RELAX, IT WOULD HELP ME A LOT. THAT WAY I WOULD BE MORE WILLING TO HELP YOU WITH THE THINGS YOU NEED

I LEARNED FROM SCHOOL THAT EXERCISING, LIKE WALKING CAN HELP YOU REDUCED STRESS. BREATHING DEEPLY SEVERAL TIMES UNTIL YOU FEEL CALM CAN ALSO HELP YOU TO RELAX

GREAT MAYBE YOU AND I CAN GO OUT WALKING AFTER DINNER

I HAVE HEARD THAT TAKING SOME TIME DURING THE DAY TO COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS ALSO HELPS. IF A LOT OF NEGATIVE THINGS HAPPEN, THINKING ABOUT ALL POSITIVE THINGS THAT YOU HAVE IN YOUR LIFE HELPS VERY MUCH

TALKING ABOUT YOUR PROBLEMS, WORRIES OR YOUR DIFFICULT SITUATIONS OF THE DAY ALSO HELPS. IT WOULD MAKE ME VERY HAPPY TO LISTEN TO YOU



STARTING TOMORROW I WILL PUT ALL THESE THINGS INTO PRACTICE

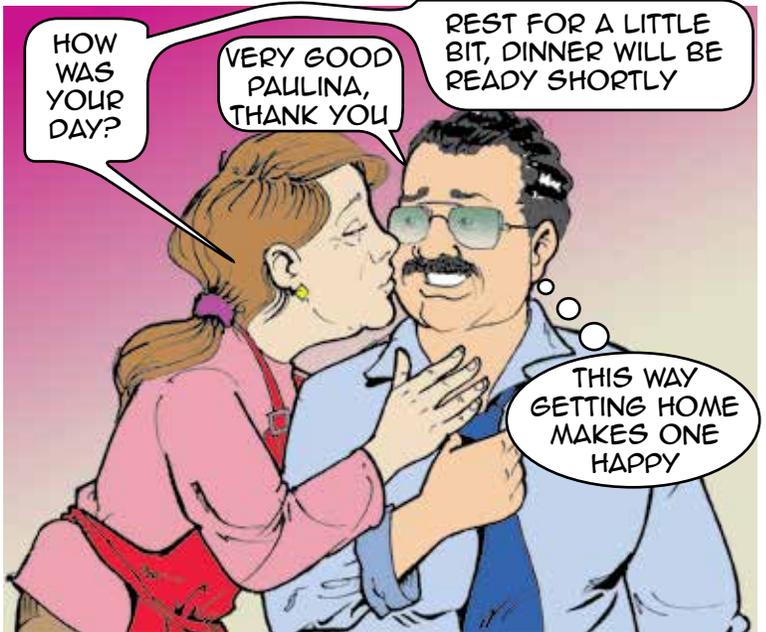
DON'T WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW SON! START TODAY AND YOU WILL NOTICE THAT YOUR STRESS LEVEL WILL COME DOWN AND YOU WILL PREVENT YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE TO GO UP



NEXT DAY RAYMUNDO GETS HOME

REMEMBER WHAT WE AGREED ON WE HAVE TO LET HIM REST

SHHHHHH!

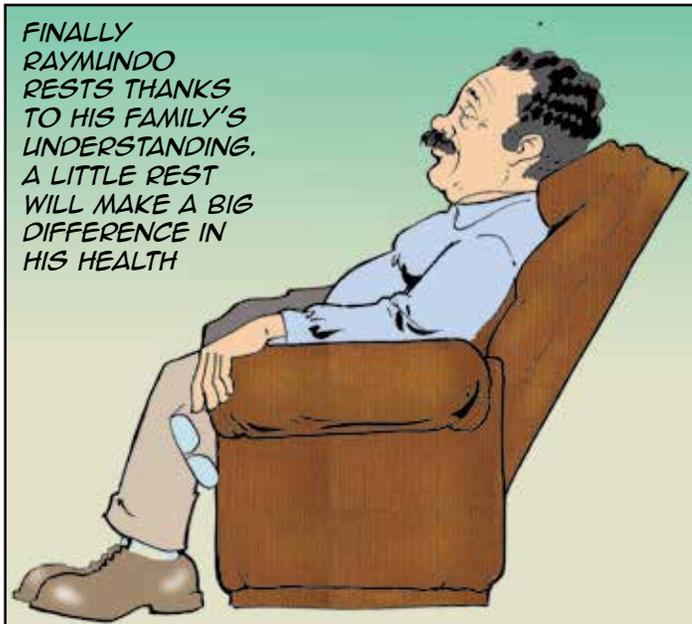


HOW WAS YOUR DAY?

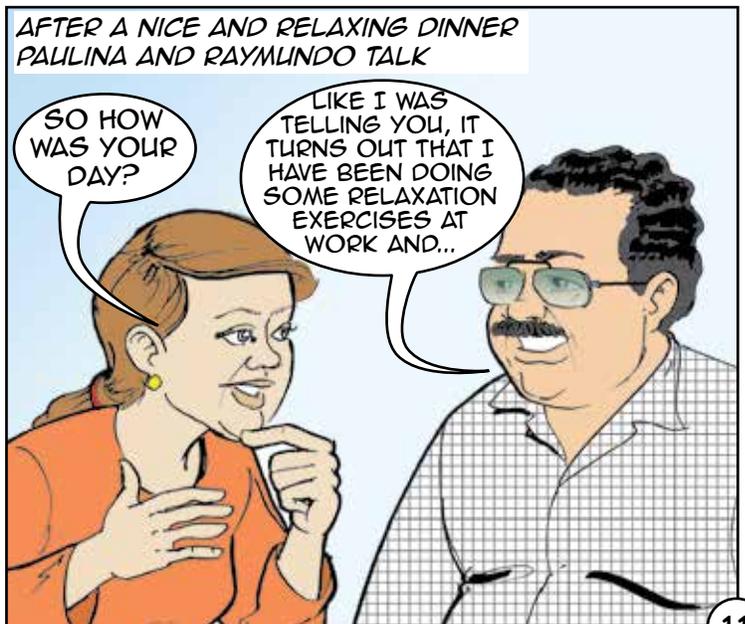
VERY GOOD PAULINA, THANK YOU

REST FOR A LITTLE BIT, DINNER WILL BE READY SHORTLY

THIS WAY GETTING HOME MAKES ONE HAPPY



FINALLY RAYMUNDO RESTS THANKS TO HIS FAMILY'S UNDERSTANDING. A LITTLE REST WILL MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE IN HIS HEALTH



AFTER A NICE AND RELAXING DINNER PAULINA AND RAYMUNDO TALK

SO HOW WAS YOUR DAY?

LIKE I WAS TELLING YOU, IT TURNS OUT THAT I HAVE BEEN DOING SOME RELAXATION EXERCISES AT WORK AND...

AFTER THAT PAULINA AND RAYMUNDO GO OUT TO WALK

IT'S GOOD THAT YOU DECIDED TO GO OUT TO WALK RAYMUNDO. YOU WILL SEE THAT YOU WILL FEEL BETTER AFTER ALL THIS

I'M ALREADY FEELING BETTER. WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT THIS IS THAT ALL OF YOU ARE HELPING ME. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WOULD DO IF I DIDN'T HAVE ALL OF YOUR SUPPORT

SOME DAYS LATER RAYMUNDO TAKES HIS MOTHER TO THE DOCTOR AND THEY TALK AT THE WAITING ROOM

THINGS ARE MORE RELAXED AT HOME. EVEN THE KIDS HAVE STARTED TO TAKE SOME TIME WHEN THEY GET HOME. WE ARE GOING OUT TO WALK AT NIGHT AND I HAVE STARTED TO SHARE MY WORRIES WITH PAULINA

FANTASTIC SON!

THINGS ARE GETTING BETTER. I DIDN'T THINK THIS WAS GOING TO WORK, BUT THE FAMILY MEETING HELPED ME A LOT TO EXPLAIN TO THEM MY NEEDS AND THAT THEY COULD DO SOMETHING FOR ME TO HELP ME FEEL BETTER

...NOW I EXPECT FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY TO KEEP TALKING ABOUT THESE THINGS FOR YOUR WELLBEING AND THEIRS

ACTIVITY:

THE GARDEN OF VIRTUES

These virtues are tools to help you make lasting changes in your lifestyle for a healthy heart. Use them daily, you will enjoy a longer and healthier life.

HOPE

- To have hope means that you have expectations and trust.
Like the fertile soil, hope helps us to prepare for change.
- It helps you to trust in your skills to break with old habits and to wait for new and more positive ones that get rooted even when sometimes we fail on our first attempts.
- Hope protects you against negative thoughts, frustrations and helps you have more success and trust in yourself.
- It helps you not to put aside your commitment to change to have better health.
- It is helpful when you are trying to stop smoking.

SILENCE

- Silence helps you have serenity and to reflect.
- The way water refreshes and gives life to gardens, silence helps you reduce stress and to understand what is most important in your life.
- Silence will help you obtain peace despite your problems and worries.
- It helps you to manage your stress and anger, that a lot of times cause our heart attacks and strokes.

PERSEVERANCE

- Perseverance means determination and persistence.
- It helps you to develop a routine that will maintain you focused on your objective to improve your health.
- Perseverance encourages you to increase your physical activity; it helps you to be firm in your determination and to start again in case you fail to keep your commitment.
- Like the tools you use to help your garden flourish, the use of your virtues will help you make the changes you want to make.

MODERATION

- Moderation means balance.
- The same way an exact amount of fertilizer helps the plants grow stronger, moderation helps you balance life's demands and pressures.
- Moderation helps you find out how excesses in food and alcohol affect your life.
- It helps you organize your priorities and to reduce the consumption of foods high in salt and sodium.

SELF-CONTROL

- Self-control means taking control of your eating habits.
- Self-control helps you limit yourself on foods high in fat, saturated fat and cholesterol.
- Increases your ability to decide and be responsible for the changes in behavior you need to do to have a healthier heart.
- Self-control helps you limit yourself on your food portions and on not going back for seconds.
- This virtue will help you turn yourself in an excellent role model to follow, to show your family how to balance your diet and to enjoy the flavors of healthier food.

*Thank you
Matilde Alvarado from
NHLBI-NIH*

HONESTY

- Honesty means that you can feel free and open from your struggles keeping a healthy weight.
- This virtue will help you to value who you are with all of your talents and limitations.
- Like the clipping shears, honesty is very helpful to recognize and prune the bad habits that harm you.
- Honesty helps you to look for support from your love ones, to have a healthy weight and to keep your commitment to have a healthy heart.
- Honesty will help you see what are the causes of your overeating, like boredom, stress, frustration or anger.

ENTHUSIASM

- Enthusiasm means happiness.
- Like the seed when it germinates and grows, enthusiasm can be contagious.
- It keeps you happy and strong in the changes that you make.
- This virtue can replace boredom, indifference and depression with a positive perspective.
- Enthusiasm motives you to prepare healthy meals.
- With enthusiasm you can be the best Community Health Worker in your home and in your community.

GRATITUDE

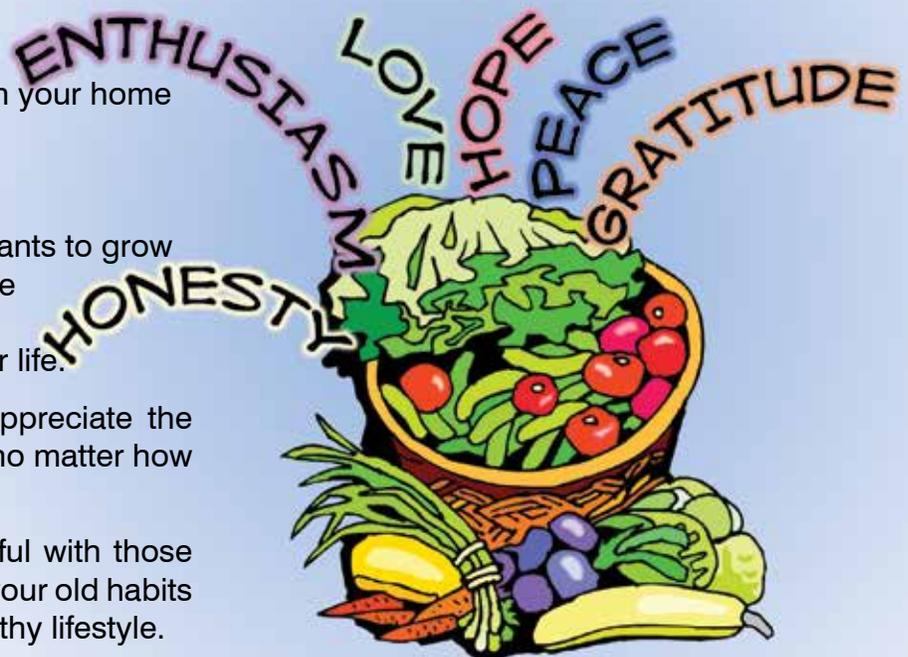
- The same way water helps the plants to grow and to develop, showing gratitude helps you to grow your ability to appreciate ordinary things in your life.
- This virtue makes it easier to appreciate the efforts that you make to change no matter how small they are.
- Gratitude helps you to be thankful with those who have helped you to change your old habits and it teaches you to have a healthy lifestyle.

PEACE

- The same way the sun nourishes the plants, your internal peace nourishes your soul. It takes away your doubts about your ability to make changes in your behavior.
- It helps you to trust in yourself and to be an optimist despite the challenges you will face.
- Being at peace helps you to overcome the fears that block your progress while breaking with your bad habits, like smoking.

LOVE

- Like the beauty of a rose, love gives you the ability to appreciate the positive things in you and in those who surround you.
- Love is very effective in reviving you and your soul.
- Love helps heal all wounds and to give rise to optimism.
- This virtue is essential to making positive changes and to have a healthy heart.
- Love can inspire you to share with your family, friends and co-workers what you have learned in this program.



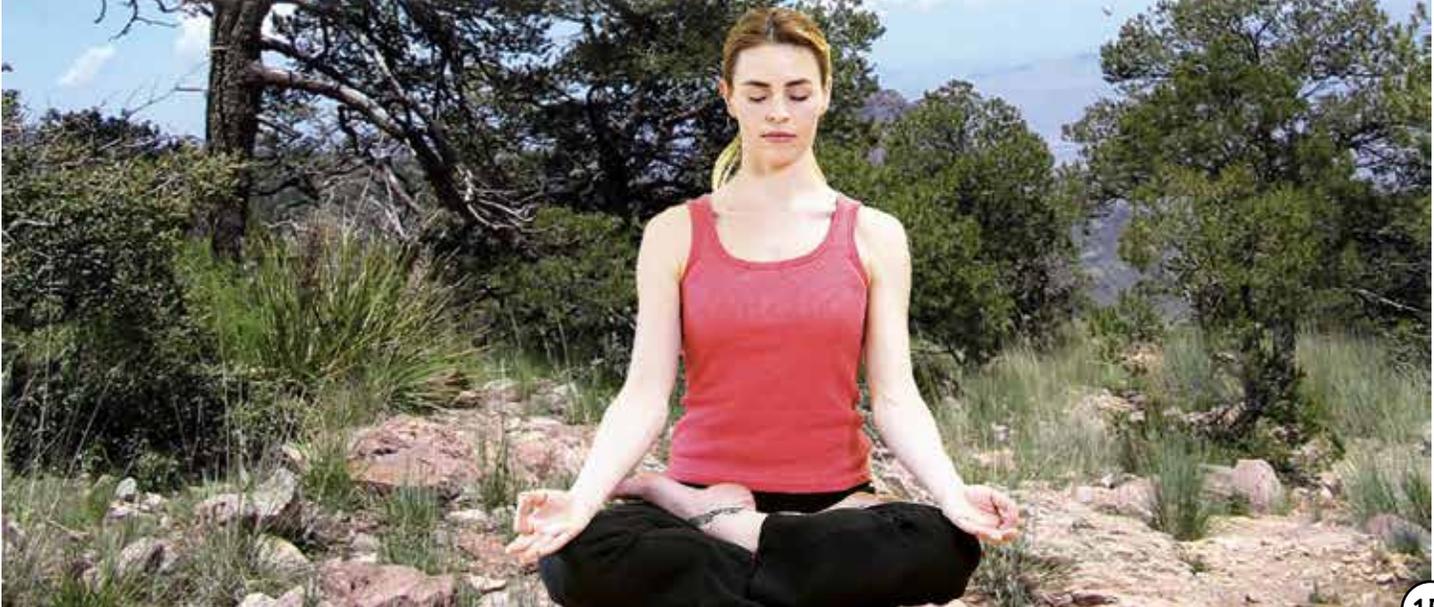
Now take the fruits from your garden of virtues and make an excellent salad. Instead of using a salad dressing that has a lot of salt and fat, add a little bit of self-esteem and optimism and be prepared to feel your heart beat faster with joy. To keep this portion of control, share your salad with your family and friends and you will see how it helps other people to take seriously into consideration the health of their hearts.

Menu of Actions for a Happy Heart

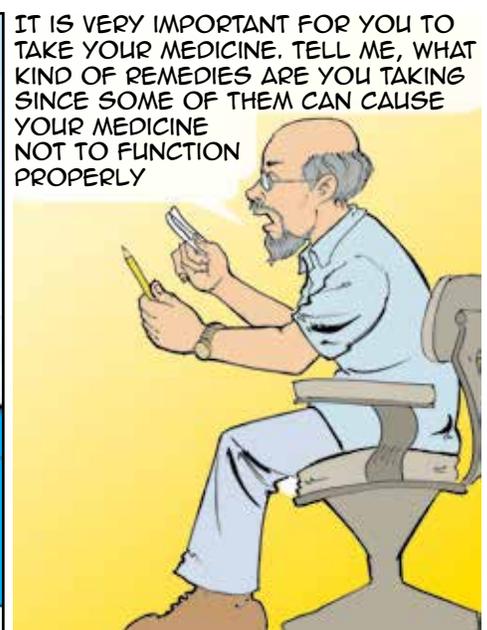
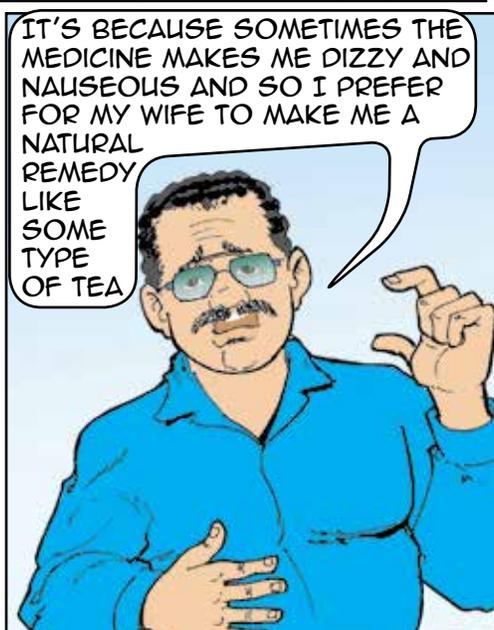
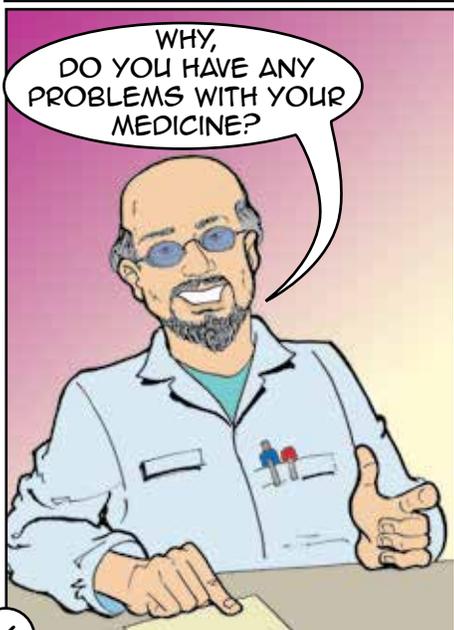
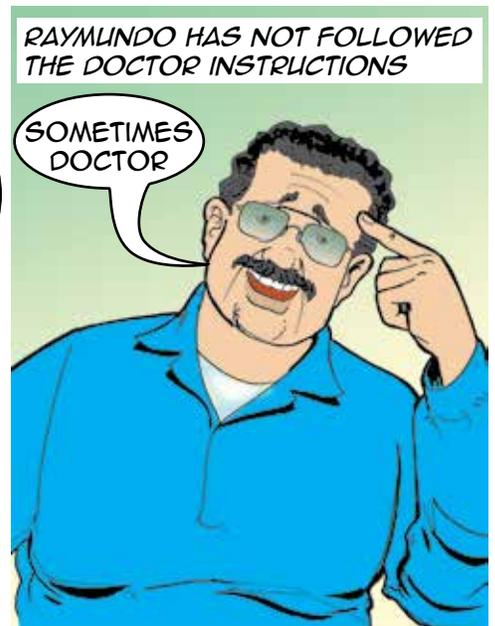
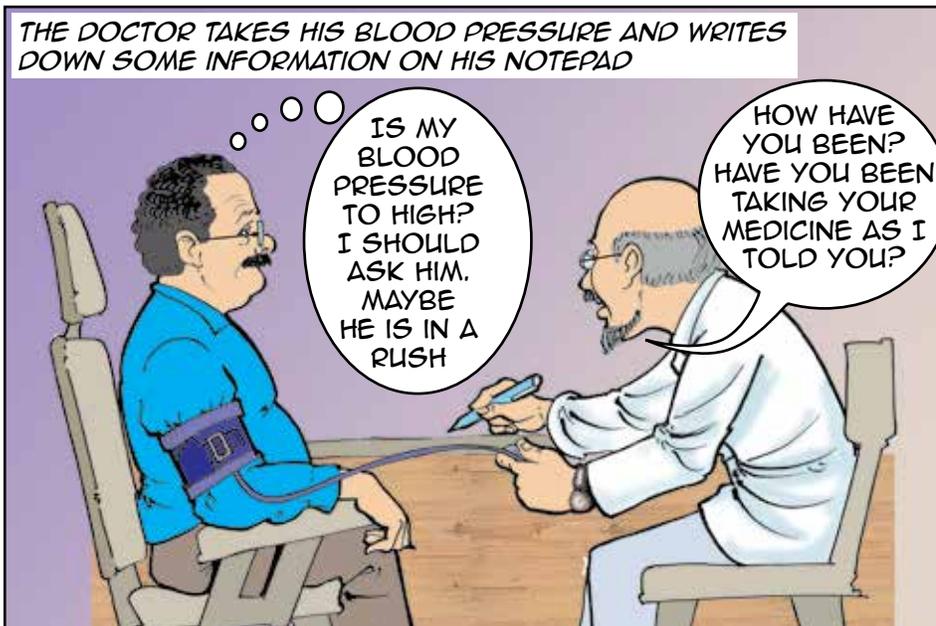
For your health say yes to a change in attitude!

Date: _____

- Say something good, positive or something uplifting for someone
- Find a pastime like gardening or martial arts
- Seek an activity that helps you make new friends
- Show gratitude to at least five people
- Tell your love ones how much you love them
- Do something good for somebody
- Think about three things that make you happy
- Value what you have and try to see the positive side to all things
- Do something special for yourself
- Laugh, be positive and if you know a joke tell it to somebody
- Call a friend that you have not seen for sometime
- See yourself in the mirror and say "I am unique and special"
- Write down your thoughts
- Meditate every day and reflect in what has been good and on what can be improved
- Rest. Go to bed one hour earlier than usual
- Listen to soft music to relax
- Help somebody in need
- Read an inspiring uplifting book
- Be grateful with your family
- Seek support in your church group
- Speak softly; keep your voice at a low level
- Take 15 minutes to breathe profoundly and relax
- Be nice with someone you have had difficulty getting along with



VISIT TO THE DOCTOR

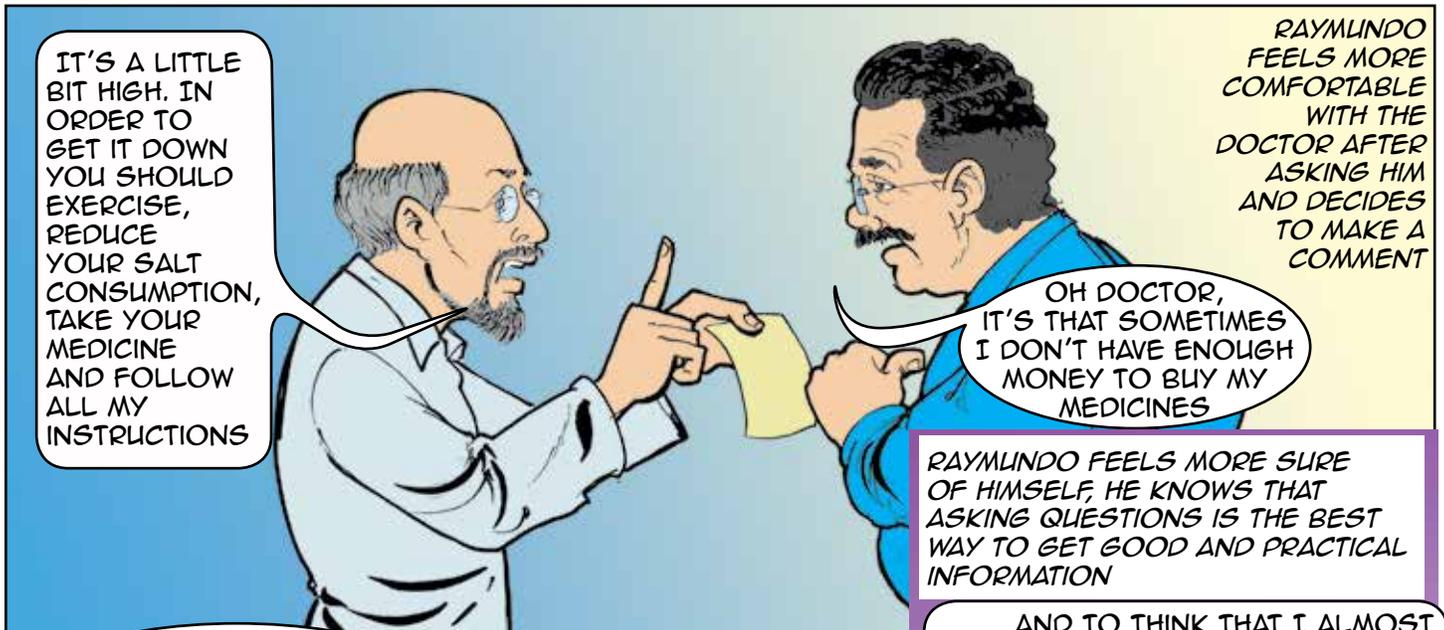




ALSO LET ME KNOW IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING ANY SIDE EFFECTS BECAUSE WE CAN CHANGE YOUR PRESCRIPTION FOR ANOTHER ONE THAT DOESN'T CAUSE THESE SIDE EFFECTS. DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?

SHOULD I TELL HIM MY DOUBTS? I HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE AND AT THE END IT'S MY HEALTH!

HOW IS MY BLOOD PRESSURE? AM I OK?

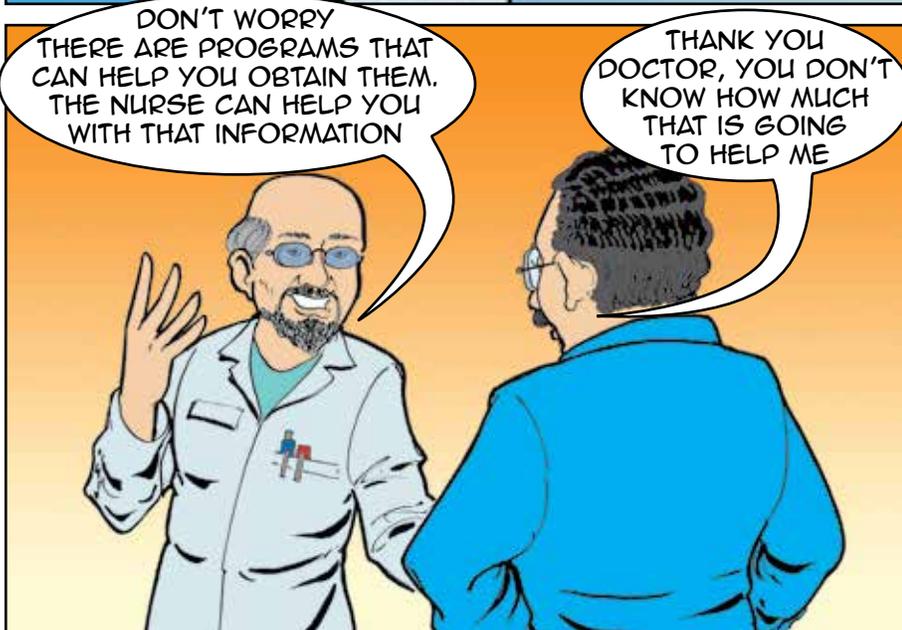


IT'S A LITTLE BIT HIGH. IN ORDER TO GET IT DOWN YOU SHOULD EXERCISE, REDUCE YOUR SALT CONSUMPTION, TAKE YOUR MEDICINE AND FOLLOW ALL MY INSTRUCTIONS

RAYMUNDO FEELS MORE COMFORTABLE WITH THE DOCTOR AFTER ASKING HIM AND DECIDES TO MAKE A COMMENT

OH DOCTOR, IT'S THAT SOMETIMES I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO BUY MY MEDICINES

RAYMUNDO FEELS MORE SURE OF HIMSELF, HE KNOWS THAT ASKING QUESTIONS IS THE BEST WAY TO GET GOOD AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION



DON'T WORRY THERE ARE PROGRAMS THAT CAN HELP YOU OBTAIN THEM. THE NURSE CAN HELP YOU WITH THAT INFORMATION

THANK YOU DOCTOR, YOU DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH THAT IS GOING TO HELP ME

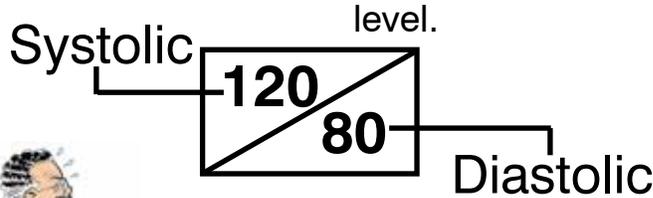
AND TO THINK THAT I ALMOST STAYED QUIET AND DIDN'T ASK ANY QUESTIONS. GOOD THING THAT HE GAVE ME THAT INFORMATION!



Activity

Know your Numbers!

Do you know your blood pressure? Write it in the space bellow.
To be in control the objective is to lower your blood pressure and to maintain it at that level.



START

Write down your blood pressure when you visit your doctor or when your blood pressure gets taken every week.



FINAL
Objective

Activity

Explanation

Now write down your blood pressure the one they just took at the beginning of this session.

Do you remember your number for your blood pressure? Very well, write them down on the block that says **START**. Write down your systolic pressure on the above corner of the square and the diastolic on the inferior corner.

Then on the last square write down your objective blood pressure, that is the one you think you are going to have at the end of this program.

Now take this sheet home. Every time you have your blood pressure taken at home or at the doctor's office write on the squares. Bring this sheet of paper the next time you come to class and that way we will see if you were able to reach your objective or if you were close to doing it.

Good luck.



*Thank you Matilde Alvarado and your
NHLBI/NIH group and promoters for the
inspiration of "The Garden of Virtues"
that we now share with our
community*

*Thank you Mónica Chávez for
your work on these photonovelas*

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