

High blood pressure:

# how to stay safe when active

## Various physical activities can help you manage and improve your blood pressure.

**Aerobic activities** work your heart and lungs. Aim for 150 minutes of aerobic activities each week, such as brisk walking or swimming.

**Resistance activities** strengthen your muscles and your ability to push, pull, or lift. Aim to do resistance activities for 2 to 3 times each week.

**Balance activities** help to keep you on your feet and reduce your risk of falling.

**Flexibility activities** lengthen and stretch muscles that are tight and can help prevent injuries and muscle and joint pain. Aim to do balance and flexibility activities for 2 to 3 days a week.

It is important to be safe when you are active. Here are some safety tips for you to follow.

This handout for adults provides some safety tips for you to follow.

## Medications and your safety

Are you on medication for your blood pressure, such as a diuretic, beta blocker or similar medication? Check with your healthcare provider to find out.

You can still be physically active, but you will need to follow a few safety steps.

- 1) Stay cool. Your medication may make it harder for your body to cool itself when you are active. Keep your body cool by:
  -  drinking lots of water while being active,
  -  being active in the morning or evening when it is cooler (if the weather is hot or humid), and
  -  decreasing the intensity (how hard you push yourself) and/or the length of time you are active when the weather or workout location is hot or humid.

2) Your medication may affect your blood sugar levels. This may make you feel a bit light-headed. If you feel light-headed or dizzy:

-  stop your activity, or slow down,
-  take a glucose tablet, or eat a piece of candy, and
-  do not resume your activity until you feel well.

## General safety tips

Here are some general safety tips to keep in mind when you are physically active:

- do not hold your breath,
- start with light- or moderate-intensity sessions,
- listen to your body and take breaks as needed, and
- always warm-up and cool-down.

## Remember:

Aerobic, resistance, balance and flexibility physical activity can help you manage and improve your blood pressure. But make sure you stay safe and have fun when being physically active.

*Drink lots of water before, during and after physical activity.*



- Topics in this toolkit:
- A. Taking the first step: deciding to be physically active
  - B. Making a physical activity plan
  - C. Setting goals for physical activity
  - D. What stops you from being physically active?
  - E. Benefits of physical activity
  - F. Physical activity and your blood pressure
  - G. High blood pressure safety
  - H. Physical activity and Type 2 diabetes
  - I. Diabetes safety
  - J. Healthy weight and physical activity
  - K. Physical activity and anxiety
  - L. Anxiety safety
  - M. Physical activity and chronic heart failure
  - N. Chronic heart failure safety
  - O. Physical activity and stroke
  - P. Stroke safety
  - Q. Physical activity and Parkinson's Disease
  - R. Parkinson's Disease safety
  - S. Physical activity and dementia
  - T. Dementia safety

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