

# Exercise Helps Lower Blood Pressure

*“High blood pressure can lead to stroke, heart attack, heart failure and even kidney issues”. (Gray, 2022)  
Resource: Cleveland Clinic—Health Essentials Jan 31, 2022*

If you have been diagnosed with hypertension or are at risk of developing high blood pressure, your doctor may recommend increasing your exercise. Medication may not be avoidable, at least initially to get your blood pressure under control. However, incorporating regular exercise is an excellent way to lower your blood pressure, eventually reducing or eliminating the need to take medication! Making your heart stronger is key to reducing blood pressure. Exercise plays a huge part in achieving that!

If you have been contemplating starting an exercise routine, here are some things to keep in mind:

- Be mindful of your breath—holding your breath is something you want to avoid.
- Be sure to incorporate a 5-10 minute warm up and cool down. This helps your body get acclimated to exercise, helping to avoid dramatic changes in your blood pressure all at once. Cooling down is just as important to avoid venous pooling in the legs from your blood pressure dropping too quickly.

## Best Exercises to Lower Blood Pressure

As you do more cardio and strength training activities, your heart will get stronger, allowing it to work with less effort to pump more blood through your body. It's important to start off slowly if you are new to exercise. Even 10 minutes a day of intentional movement can result in noticeable improvements in your blood pressure and overall health.

Here are some exercise ideas that are great at lowering your blood pressure. It's important that the activity you choose is fun and something you will enjoy so you will be consistent to reap the benefits.



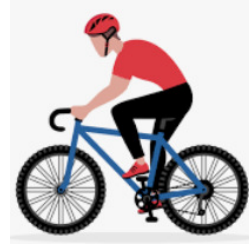
**Water Aerobic Classes:** join a local YMCA or gym that has an indoor pool. Taking a class can be lots of fun. And don't think it's going to be easy. The water provides A LOT of resistance yet without putting strain on your joints!



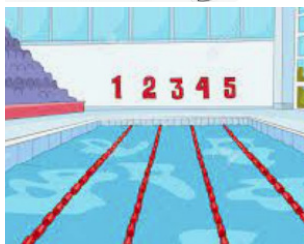
**Gardening or other yard work:** mowing the lawn, raking leaves, planting flowers, pulling weeds all count. Aim for 30-45 minutes.



**Brisk Walking/Hiking/Jogging:** Walking faster than you normally walk so your breathing rate increases. Start with a trail that is not too challenging and look for more challenging ones as you get stronger and conditioned.



**Cycling:** Riding your bike for at least 10 minutes counts. Maybe try a spin class at your local gym if one is provided.



**Swimming:** If aqua aerobics isn't your "cup of tea", doing laps or jogging in the pool is an awesome workout and a great way to stay cool.



**Strength Training:** Good options include—body weight squats, jumping jacks, bent-over rows, resistance band workouts, lunges, pushups, planks, and more! Strengthening your muscles along with cardio is a great combo for lowering BP!

## Incorporate exercise at work!

- Walk at lunch
- Walking meetings
- Implement an exercise "challenge"
- Get up and move every hour
- Do a few minutes of exercise every time you refill your water bottle
- Create a Team for an upcoming race
- Leave sneakers, resistance bands or dumbbells at your desk for a quick workout

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