



# Being Active When You Have HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

## Prescription for Improving Healthy Body Status

### Exercising when you have high blood pressure is as easy as 1, 2, 3

Being active is one of the best ways to help control your high blood pressure and help reduce your risk of having a heart attack or stroke. Did you know that for every 10 points you lower your blood pressure, your risk of having a heart attack or stroke is reduced by 20%\*

\*National Institute for Health & Care Research

### Getting Started

**Keep it Simple:** Sit less and move more. You don't have to do big things to get big benefits from exercise. You can walk to your mailbox, dance in the kitchen, take the stairs instead of the elevator. Any movement you make counts.



## 1 Get Moving

### What

Any continuous activity (biking, walking, water exercises)

### When

5-7 days/week

### How Hard

Start very light and continue to work up as your blood pressure allows. The overall goal should be for you to talk while exercising, but not sing.

**On a scale of 1-10 you should aim to move between a 4-8.**

1=short walk to get the mail  
4-6= walking around the block, dancing in the kitchen.  
10=hard running.

### How Long

When you first start out, only exercise for a few minutes at a time. Aim for 3 minutes of exercise at a time. As you exercise more, increase your time by 3 minutes.

Example:

**Week 1:** Walk around your block. Walk between 2-6 intensity level.

**Week 2:** Walk around your block and then add another 3 minutes of walking. Walk between 3-6 intensity.

**Week 3:** Walk around your block and add another 6 minutes of walking.

Keep this going for the next 2-3 months. Eventually you want to work up to 30 minutes of exercise at a time.

### PERCEIVED EXERTION CHART

10	<b>Very, Very Hard Activity</b> Completely out of breath, unable to talk
9	<b>Very Hard activity</b> Can speak only one word at a time
7-8	<b>Hard Activity</b> Out of breath, can speak a sentence or two
4-6	<b>Moderate Activity</b> Can talk but not sing
2-3	<b>Light Activity</b> Breathing is easy, can talk and sing
1	<b>No Activity</b>

**Special Considerations:** Check your blood pressure before you start your exercise. If your BP is over 160/100 talk with your doctor before starting. Drink plenty of fluids before and after your exercise, especially during warmer weather.



# 2 Get Strong

## What

**Start by using your own body weight.** Do each of the following:

**Sit & Stands:** Sit in a steady chair – using a kitchen chair is ideal and then stand up.

**Calf Raises:** Stand with your feet flat on the floor and shoulder-width apart. Raise yourself onto your toes and then lower your heels back to the floor. If you need to, stand near a countertop and hold onto it for extra balance.

**Knee Lifts:** In a standing position raise one knee. Lower your foot flat to the floor and raise the other knee.

**Do each of these exercises 10 times.**

**Rest 1 minute in between exercises if you need.**

*Example: 10 sit and stands, rest 1 minute, 10 calf raises, rest 1 minute, 10 knee lifts, rest 1 minute.*

As you get stronger, you can add hand weights and resistance bands.

## When : How Hard

**2-3 days/week.**  
Rest at least one day in between

**Start slowly.** On a scale of 1-10 you should be working at 4-8.

*1=sitting on the couch*

*4=just able to feel your muscles being used*

*8=sweating during the exercise*

*10=can't do the exercise*

## How Long

**10 repetitions to start. Build up as you can.**

**Special Considerations:** Avoid straining or holding your breath when you strength train. This can cause strain on your heart.



# 3 Get Stretching

## What

Stretching is a great way to make you more mobile. You should stretch before and after every exercise session.

**Do each of the following:**

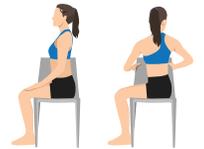
### Arm Circles:



### Toe Touches:



### Waist Twists:



## When

**You should stretch before and after every exercise session.**

## How Hard : How Long

**Stretch as far as you can until you feel muscle tightness.**

Don't overstretch, this could hurt your muscle. If you can't quite touch your toes, aim for your calf or your knees.

**Do 5-10 of each stretch before and after every exercise session.**

Stretch before you walk and after your walk is done. Stretch before you do your knee lifts, sit to stands and calf raises, and stretch when you are done.

**Performing these exercises, including the suggested frequency, intensity and duration will help you meet the American College of Sports Medicine Guidelines for exercise participation and improve your health and fitness.**

## Local Resources

**Free:** Footprints for Fitness (Saginaw Center Courts), Walk with a Doc (YMCA)

**Paid:** Scan QR code for additional resources

