

High Blood Pressure and COVID-19

High blood pressure, also referred to as hypertension, may increase your risk of severe complications from COVID-19 infection. Learn how to [Love Your Heart](#) to protect yourself against COVID-19 while also managing your blood pressure to stay healthy.

Risks of High Blood Pressure and COVID-19



High blood pressure is the most common underlying condition associated with severe COVID-19 infection.

Older adults with heart disease or high blood pressure have been shown to develop more severe symptoms and face an increased risk for complications when infected with COVID-19.

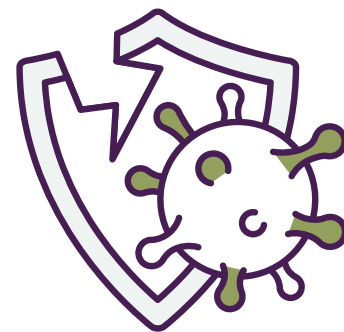
African-Americans and Hispanics/Latinx with high blood pressure also showed higher mortality rates from COVID-19.

Source: *Coronavirus precautions for patients and others facing higher risks* | American Heart Association,

What is the Link Between High Blood Pressure and COVID-19?

The exact link between COVID-19 and high blood pressure is unknown but it is believed that severe COVID-19 infection is due to long-term health conditions affecting the immune system. Having high blood pressure can weaken your immune system and make it harder to fight off the COVID-19 virus.

Source: *High Blood Pressure & Coronavirus (Higher-Risk People): Symptoms, Complications, Treatments* (webmd.com)



High Blood Pressure, COVID-19, and Physical Activity

Evidence shows that physical activity in any amount can cut the risk of severe or fatal COVID-19 infection among high-risk patients such as those with HBP or heart disease.

A recent study suggests that even something as short as a 10-minute walk per week showed better COVID-19 outcomes in patients who had high blood pressure or heart disease. The best outcomes for patients with high blood pressure were seen among those who completed 150+ minutes of at least brisk walking per week.



Source: *Associations of Physical Inactivity and COVID-19 Outcomes Among Subgroups* - American Journal of Preventive Medicine (ajpmonline.org)

Learn more about:

COVID-19 at coronavirus-sd.com

Heart health at LoveYourHeartSD.org



How to Manage Your Blood Pressure and Stay Healthy

If you have high blood pressure and/or other underlying condition(s), it is critical to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations to reduce the risk of infection. To help care for your heart health and prevent the spread of severe COVID-19 infection you should:



Get vaccinated or boosted, if eligible.



Wear a mask.



Stay 6 feet away from others.



Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces.



Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

Other helpful tips to manage your blood pressure include:



Eat Smart: Adopt the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) eating plan. This plan recommends eating fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and fat-free or low-fat dairy products.



Manage Stress: Too much stress can encourage behaviors that increase blood pressure such as poor diet, physical inactivity, tobacco use, or drinking alcohol more than usual. Consider meditation or yoga to reduce unhealthy behaviors.



Move More: Regular physical activity makes your heart stronger. A stronger heart can pump more blood with less effort. As a result, the force on your arteries decreases, lowering your blood pressure.



Manage Weight: Being overweight puts extra strain on your heart, increasing the risk for developing high blood pressure and damaging your blood vessels. Slight weight loss can reduce high blood pressure and reduce the strain on your heart.



Don't Smoke: Every time you smoke, vape, or use tobacco, the nicotine can cause a temporary increase in blood pressure. Within one year after quitting, your risk of heart disease goes down by half.



Take Your Medication Properly: High blood pressure medication only works when you take it as prescribed. If prescribed to you, continue to take high blood pressure medications as instructed according to your prescribing health care provider. Take your medications at the same time, every day.

For more information on how to manage HBP, visit [High Blood Pressure | American Heart Association](https://www.heart.org)

Learn more about:
COVID-19 at coronavirus-sd.com
Heart health at LoveYourHeartSD.org

