

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PULMONARY HYPERTENSION

In the Clinic
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What is pulmonary hypertension?

- Pulmonary hypertension (PH) means high blood pressure in the lungs.
- It occurs with narrowing of the arteries in the lungs, which carry blood from your heart to your lungs to pick up oxygen.
- Medical conditions that can lead to PH include heart and lung diseases or blood clots and connective tissue disease (such as lupus or scleroderma).
- Rarely, an inherited form of PH runs in families.

How is it diagnosed?

- Your doctor will conduct a thorough physical examination to look for signs of PH.
- Your doctor may order tests, such as an echocardiogram to estimate the pressure in your pulmonary arteries or a pulmonary function test to measure how your lungs are working.
- If these tests indicate that you may have PH, you will undergo cardiac catheterization, which directly measures the pressure in your heart and lungs and shows how your heart is pumping blood to the rest of your body.

What are the signs and symptoms?

- Tiredness and shortness of breath during routine activities.
- Chest pain and pain on the upper right side of the abdomen.
- Racing heartbeat and decreased appetite.
- Fainting or feeling lightheaded.
- Leg and ankle swelling.
- Blue tinted lips and skin.

How is it treated?

- Treatment may include medications, supplemental oxygen, lifestyle changes, and surgery.



- Your doctor will aim to reduce your symptoms and to address underlying diseases or conditions that exacerbate PH.
- Patients with advanced PH may undergo lung transplantation.
- PH has no cure, but earlier treatment can make it easier to control.

For More Information

www.phassociation.org/homepage
www.phassociation.org/page.aspx?pid=428

The Pulmonary Hypertension Association provides information about the disease, including information for newly diagnosed patients.

www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/HighBloodPressure/AboutHighBloodPressure/What-is-Pulmonary-Hypertension_UCM_301792_Article.jsp

Information about pulmonary hypertension, including how pulmonary hypertension differs from high blood pressure, from the American Heart Association.

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