



mercy care

# LIVING WELL WITH HYPERTENSION

Spring/Summer 2021

## 5 easy ways to work out indoors

One of the best gifts you can give your heart is to move more. If you have high blood pressure, regular exercise can help lower it — and keep it in a healthy range. Most adults should aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity a week.

What if you can't get outside for a fresh-air workout? Maybe the weather is ugly — or the air quality is bad. Maybe being outdoors just isn't convenient that day.

There are lots of ways to get the exercise you need indoors:

**Get your groove on.** Crank up your favorite music and dance. It's OK to make up your own steps — nobody's looking.

**Head to the library.** Check out an exercise video. It's like having your own personal trainer for free.

**Step it up.** If you have access to stairs, climb up and down.

**Go online.** See if your local community center streams free or low-cost fitness classes.

**Design your own workout.** For an at-home circuit workout, mix brief bursts of cardio (like jumping jacks and marching) with strength moves (like situps and squats).

*Sources: American Heart Association ([www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)); Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans ([health.gov/paguidelines/second-edition](http://health.gov/paguidelines/second-edition))*

## 4 ways to take charge

If you have a chronic condition, take it step by step:

1. Learn all you can about it.
2. Work with your doctor on a care plan.
3. Take your medications.
4. Aim for healthy habits.

*Source: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality ([www.ahrq.gov](http://www.ahrq.gov))*

## Need to limit sodium? Here's how

Is your blood pressure creeping up? To lower it — and protect your heart — your doctor may suggest cutting back on sodium. That's a mineral found in salt.

Most of the sodium in our diets comes from packaged and restaurant foods. These simple steps can help you scale back:

**Shop smart.** Always take a few moments to compare food labels. Then choose the product with the least amount of sodium per serving.

**Be choosy with condiments.** Sauces, dips and dressings are often packed with sodium. Look for reduced-sodium versions — or use herbs and spices for flavor instead.

**Rinse away sodium.** Run water over canned veggies and beans before cooking.

**Go for fresh.** Pick fresh poultry, fish or lean meat instead of cured or smoked foods.



**Speak up when dining out.** Ask if your food can be made without extra salt.

**Watch for red flags on menus.** Foods described as *pickled*, *brined* or *barbecued* tend to be high in sodium.

**A final tip**  
Food isn't the only source of sodium. Some over-the-counter meds are high in it too. Check their labels — and leave anything with *sodium* or *soda* on the shelf.

*Source: American Heart Association (www.heart.org)*

## Know the risks of opioids

Opioids are strong pain medicines. They're easy to get addicted to.

If you need help with pain, talk to your doctor about safer options. If you use an opioid, take the smallest dose you can for the shortest time, and ask about Narcan. It could save your life.

Want to be drug-free? Call the National Helpline at **1-800-662-HELP (1-800-662-4357)**.

*Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov); Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (www.samhsa.gov)*

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**Did you know that you may be able to get Lifeline cell service plus a smartphone at no cost to you? Go to [www.MercyCareAZ.org](http://www.MercyCareAZ.org) or call Member Services at **1-800-624-3879 (TTY: 711)** and ask about the Assurance Wireless Lifeline program.**

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**Need help? A care manager can tell you more about your condition. They can connect you with a provider too. Call Member Services and ask for the Care Management Department.**

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Contract services are funded under contract with the State of Arizona. This newsletter contains general health information that should not replace the advice or care you get from your provider. Always ask your provider about your own health care needs.

If you would no longer like to receive this mailing, please call Member Services and ask for the Care Management Department.

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### Contact us

Mercy Care, 4755 S. 44th Place, Phoenix, AZ 85040  
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Monday through Friday, 7 AM to 6 PM

24-hour nurse line: **602-263-3000** or **1-800-624-3879**

**[www.MercyCareAZ.org](http://www.MercyCareAZ.org)**

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