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Your heart rate

Your heart rate (also known as your pulse rate) is the number of times your heart beats per minute (bpm). Everyone's heart rate is different and can change over time.

We also have this information available in [Bengali](#), [Polish](#), [Punjabi](#), [Romanian](#) and [Urdu](#).

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Listen to this information

You can listen to an audio version of this information:



With the help of our cardiac nurses, we created this audio using our voices and an AI tool. For more information on how we use AI at the BHF, [get in touch](#).

What's a normal heart rate?

A normal adult heart rate is between 60 and 100 bpm while resting. Your heart rate can change every minute and what's 'normal' is different for everyone because of their age and health. Your lifestyle - such as whether you [smoke](#), exercise and how much [alcohol](#) you drink - also affects your heart rate.

You can find your normal resting heart rate by counting the number of times your heart beats in a minute. Sitting still for 5 - 10 minutes before counting makes sure your heart is in its resting state. Knowing your normal heart rate when living with your heart condition can help you feel more confident and improve your quality of life.

What's a dangerous heart rate?

[An arrhythmia](#) (or heart rhythm issue) is when the heart beats too slowly, too quickly, or irregularly. An arrhythmia can be dangerous because blood isn't pumped well enough around the body causing symptoms like dizziness, fainting and shortness of breath. An abnormal heart rate could also increase the risk of stroke.

It's estimated that more than 2 million people in the UK experience heart rhythm issues. Most of them will be able to lead normal lives.

Fast heart rate (tachycardia)



A resting heart rate above 100 bpm is too fast for most people. A fast heart rate, also known as tachycardia, can be caused by health conditions. These conditions can include infection, anaemia (a lack of red blood cells carrying oxygen in your blood) and an overactive thyroid (where too many hormones are made).

If you are experiencing symptoms or have a fast resting heart rate you should make an appointment with your GP. Symptoms to look out for include:

- fainting
- feeling very tired
- dizziness
- palpitations (noticing your heartbeat which can feel like a pounding or fluttering sensation).

Slow heart rate (bradycardia)

A heart rate below 60 bpm while resting is too slow for most people. A slow heart rate, also known as bradycardia, can be normal for people like athletes who are very fit.

If you have a slow heart rate and are experiencing symptoms like fainting and tiredness, you should make an appointment with your GP.

Exercise and your heart rate

Your heart, like any other muscle, needs physical activity to keep it healthy. Regular exercise improves overall health by helping manage many of the risk factors for heart and circulatory diseases, such as diabetes. Regular exercise also boosts energy and mood, as well as quality of sleep.

It's normal for your heart rate to increase while exercising. During exercise, you should aim to stay within your target heart rate (THR) to increase your fitness safely. Your THR is between 50% and 70% of your maximum heart rate and can be calculated using our [free tool](#).