

Important information to remember

Postural Hypotension is when your blood pressure drops when you change position. You may feel dizzy, faint or light headed. There are many causes of Postural Hypotension. Speak to your Healthcare Professional if you are concerned as they may be able to provide you with advice that can assist your condition.

Specific Information for me:

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North Metropolitan Health Service
Contact:

www.nmhs.health.wa.gov.au

If you are concerned that you may have symptoms of Postural Hypotension please contact your GP or healthcare professional.

For additional information visit:

Stay On Your Feet
www.stayonyourfeet.com.au/

Healthy WA
www.healthywa.wa.gov.au

Clinical Excellence Commission - Falls Prevention
www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au

Better Health Channel
www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/

CDC Take a Stand on Falls
www.cdc.gov/



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Government of Western Australia
North Metropolitan Health Service

Postural Hypotension

A consumer guide



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What is Postural Hypotension?

Postural (Orthostatic) Hypotension is when your blood pressure drops when you change position such as lying to sitting or sitting to standing.

What Symptoms may I experience?

When your blood pressure drops less blood flows to your organs and muscles. The common symptoms include:

- ▶ Dizziness or light-headedness
- ▶ Feeling like you are about to faint pass out or fall
- ▶ Blurry or tunnel vision
- ▶ Feeling nauseated, hot and clammy
- ▶ Feeling weak and shaky in the legs



When do symptoms occur?

- ▶ When standing or sitting up suddenly
- ▶ In the morning when blood pressure is naturally lower
- ▶ After a large meal or alcohol
- ▶ During exercise
- ▶ When straining on the toilet
- ▶ When you are unwell

Am I at risk?

You may be at an increased risk of Postural Hypotension as a result of the following:

- ▶ High blood pressure
- ▶ Diabetes, heart failure or hardening of the arteries
- ▶ Medications such as Diuretics, antidepressants or medicines to lower blood pressure
- ▶ Neurological conditions like Parkinson's disease and some types of dementia
- ▶ Dehydration
- ▶ Anemia
- ▶ Excessive amounts of alcohol
- ▶ Prolonged bed rest or inactivity

What can I do?

- ▶ Speak to your healthcare provider about any symptoms.
- ▶ Discuss the risks and side effects of your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist.
- ▶ Exercise gently before getting up from a chair or bed.
 - Move your feet up and down
 - Bend and straighten your knees
 - Clench and unclench your hands
 - Get out of bed slowly.
 - Sit on the side of the bed first
 - Count to 10 slowly then stand.
- ▶ Stand up slowly when rising from a chair.
 - Make sure you have something to hold onto if required
 - Wait for a moment before walking
- ▶ Avoid standing still for long periods.
 - Wiggle toes in shoes
 - March on the spot
- ▶ Sit down immediately if dizzy when walking.
- ▶ Drink 6-8 glasses of water or low-calorie drinks each day, unless you have been told to limit your fluid intake.
- ▶ Have a glass of water prior to activities when you will be standing for a long time
- ▶ Avoid very hot baths or showers.
- ▶ Sleep with extra pillows to raise your head.