

# Swimming improves vascular function, BP in older adults

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Swimming exercise is associated with a decrease in blood pressure and improvements in vascular function in older adults with early hypertension, according to a study published in the April 1 issue of *The American Journal of Cardiology*.

(HealthDay) -- Swimming exercise is associated with a decrease in blood pressure (BP) and improvements in vascular function in older adults with early hypertension, according to a study published in the April 1 issue of *The American Journal of Cardiology*.

To investigate the effect of regular swimming sessions on arterial BP and vascular function, Nantinee Nualnim, Ph.D., of the University of Texas at Austin, and associates randomly assigned 43 adults (>50 years) with [prehypertension](#) or stage 1 hypertension but not on medication to 12 weeks of swimming or an attention time control group.

The researchers observed a significant decrease in casual systolic BP in the swimming group, from 131 to 122 mm Hg. Ambulatory and central BP measurements also showed a significant decrease in systolic BP. There was a significant (21 percent) increase in carotid artery compliance in the swimming group as well as significant improvements in flow-mediated dilation and cardiovascular baroreflex sensitivity. The control group that performed gentle relaxation exercises did not experience any significant changes in any measurements.

"Swimming exercise elicits hypotensive effects and improvements in [vascular function](#) in previously sedentary [older adults](#)," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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