

Studies show exercise is safe, improves quality of life for pulmonary hypertension patients

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Dr. Jarett Berry, Associate Professor of Internal Medicine and Clinical Sciences, and Dedman Family Scholar in Clinical Care at UT Southwestern. Credit: UT Southwestern Medical Center

Exercise training for patients with pulmonary hypertension was shown to be safe and to improve quality of life, according to an analysis by UT Southwestern Medical Center cardiologists of studies involving more than 400 participants.

Pulmonary hypertension is a type of [high blood pressure](#) that affects the lungs and heart, making it hard to breathe, or making one weary or dizzy. The prevalence of [pulmonary hypertension](#) is estimated to be 10 to 15 cases per million with a mortality rate of 15 percent annually. Left untreated, it can lead to heart failure. Left untreated, it can lead to heart failure. Researchers found that [exercise training](#) can reduce pressure in the arteries and increase exercise tolerance, all without compromising safety.

"Clinicians have traditionally been skeptical about prescribing exercise for patients with chronic pulmonary hypertension due to concerns that training might put further strain on the heart," said senior author Dr. Jarett Berry, Associate Professor of Internal Medicine and Clinical Sciences, and Dedman Family Scholar in Clinical Care at UT Southwestern. "Our analysis found those concerns may be misplaced. More importantly, exercise had a positive effect on several measures of heart function as well as overall quality of life."

The new findings do not mean those with pulmonary hypertension should jump on a bike, start jogging, or launch into some other [exercise regimen](#) without first consulting their physician, said Dr. Berry. Most of the studies the team examined had supervised exercise training and involved lower levels of exercise intensity than traditionally prescribed for [heart failure](#) patients.

"It is important for patients with pulmonary hypertension to consult their doctor before starting any exercise regimen, particularly for pulmonary hypertension patients," said Dr. Ambarish Pandey, a cardiology fellow at

UT Southwestern Medical Center and first author on the paper.

The meta-analysis appears in *Circulation: Heart Failure*.

More information: [circheartfailure.ahajournals.o ...
.115.002130.full.pdf](https://circheartfailure.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1155.002130.full.pdf)

Provided by UT Southwestern Medical Center

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