

Postural Hypotension



Patient information leaflet

Produced in partnership: Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust
and The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

What is Postural Hypotension?

Postural hypotension (also known as orthostatic hypotension) is a drop in blood pressure on standing from a seated or lying position caused by a reduced blood supply to the brain. This may cause symptoms such as dizziness or light-headedness, unsteadiness, changes in vision such as blurring, weakness, and sometimes blackouts. It is strongly linked to a risk of falling and can impact on a person's quality of life. Postural hypotension can also cause no symptoms, but might be identified when a medical practitioner checks your lying and standing blood pressure.

What causes Postural Hypotension?

It can occur at any age, but is more common in older people and can be caused by:

- Not drinking enough fluids or being dehydrated
- Certain medications
- Prolonged bed rest
- Heart conditions
- Damage to the nervous system
e.g. Parkinson's Disease, diabetes
- Overheating or warm environments.



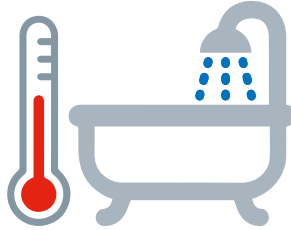
How is it diagnosed?

It can be diagnosed by measuring your blood pressure whilst you are lying down and then again when you are standing.



How can I reduce or manage my symptoms?

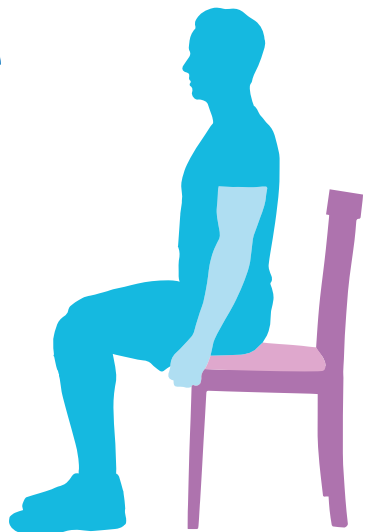
- Take care when getting up, particularly in the morning - avoid standing up quickly
- Avoid sitting or standing for long periods of time
- Avoid very hot baths and showers
- Avoid alcohol
- Eat little and often - avoid large meals
- Ensure you are drinking an adequate amount of fluid - this is an area that your healthcare practitioner can advise you on further.



If the above measures do not completely help, then a pharmacist or doctor can review your medication in detail to identify if any need adjusting or discontinuing.

What should I do if I feel the symptoms coming on?

- Stop what you are doing
- Sit down or lie down
- When the symptoms have settled, get up slowly.



For further information, please refer to the NHS website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/low-blood-pressure-hypotension>

Help us get it right

If you have a complaint, concern, comment or compliment please let us know by speaking to a member of our staff. We learn from your feedback and use the information to improve and develop our services.

If you would like to talk to someone outside the service contact:

Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust

Patient Experience Team

Tel: 0113 220 8585 (Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm)

Email: lch.pet@nhs.net

We can make this information available in Braille, large print, audio or other languages on request.

The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Patient Experience Team

Email: patientexperience.leadsth@nhs.net