

What is postural hypotension?

Postural (orthostatic) hypotension is when your blood pressure drops after you change position, such as when you move from lying to sitting, or sitting to standing.

What symptoms may I experience?

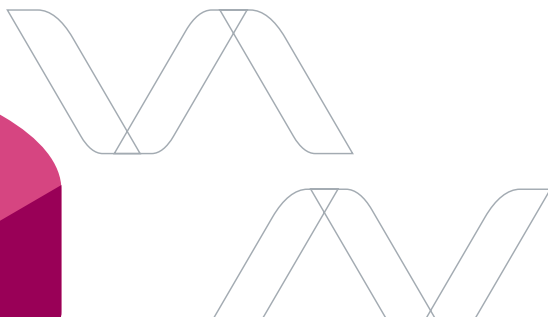
When your blood pressure drops less blood flows to your organs and muscles.

The common symptoms include:

- Dizziness or light-headedness
- Feeling like you are about to faint, pass out or fall
- Blurry or tunnel vision
- Feeling nauseous, 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 such as 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 health care 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 you feel dizzy while walking
- Avoid very hot baths or showers
- Sleep with extra pillows to raise your head.
- A) Drink six to eight glasses of water or low-calorie drinks each day*
- B) Have a glass of water prior to activities where you will be standing for a long time.*

*** If you have a kidney condition or are on prescribed fluid restrictions it is essential you adhere to fluid restrictions prescribed by your doctor. Points A and B above do not apply to you.**

