

Blood Pressure

Information Sheet

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE – also called hypertension, is a common problem in the modern western world. High blood pressure puts strain on the heart and other organs in the body and is therefore best kept under control.



Causes

Only 10% of high blood pressure cases can be attributed to physical causes such as kidney disease, heart disease or endocrine disorders. The remaining 90% have unknown medical causes – however they seem to be mostly related to stress, with lifestyle (diet, smoking and exercise) and genetics being secondary considerations.

Contra-indications

Because our YogaHealth classes are so gentle and always encourage students not to strain, high blood pressure would only be a consideration if it was extremely high. If this was the case then the student should firstly check with their doctor before coming to class and then at class **avoid** all:

- Strenuous exercise
- Inverted postures
- Breath retention

Jalandhara Bandha and Uddiyana Bandha are contra-indicated – this is because when practiced, classically the breath is held. The drawing in of the belly and the tucking in of the chin to the chest are fine in themselves, in fact the tucking in of the chin in Jalandhara Bandha can actually help to lower the blood pressure due to the pressure exerted on the carotid sinuses.

What you can do for high blood pressure

Breathing Techniques are really useful – the Full Yogic Breath, Ujjayi Pranayama, Alternate Nostril Breathing, and Bramhari.

Gentle exercises and postures are fine, such as rotating and bending of ankles, wrists, elbows, shoulders, hips and knees; relaxation postures – particularly Shavasana; Butterfly and Vajrasana are also useful.



Vajrasana

Any form of relaxation or meditation is very helpful - Yoga Nidra is excellent.

LOW BLOOD PRESSURE - also called hypotension is common amongst the elderly, and those who have inadequate nutrition.

Causes

A lowering of the blood pressure might occur when a person rises suddenly from a reclining or sitting position. This is due to blood accumulating in the extremities, and reducing blood flow to the brain.

In other cases, chronic low blood pressure could be a diet related factor. When a person is anaemic and has inadequate protein levels in the blood, it lowers the thickness of the blood which in turn, lowers blood pressure.

Contra-indications

Low blood pressure is not so much of a problem as far as general health goes however it can cause the sufferer to faint easily – especially when standing up quickly. So this is the main thing to remember in class – **take plenty of time to come up to standing**. If blood pressure is very low it's a good idea to avoid exercises where there is rapid lifting and lowering of the head and upper body.

What you can do **for Low Blood Pressure**

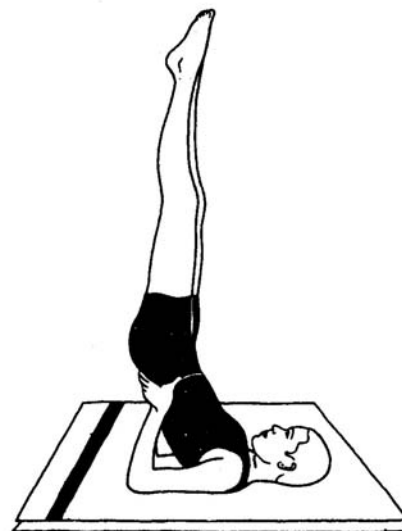
Postures:

Most dynamic exercises like Salute to the Sun are useful for low blood pressure.

Vipareeta Karani Mudra is very beneficial.

Breathing Techniques:

Except for Ujjayi Pranayama, all the breathing techniques are useful, especially Breath of Fire.



Vipareeta Karani Mudra