

How to Check Your Heart Rate

Your heart rate is the number of times your heart beats each minute.

You may need to check your heart rate for different reasons.

But these are the three most likely.

First, when you exercise.

Knowing your heart rate can help you maintain a target level during workouts.

Second, when you experience certain symptoms, like feeling your heart racing, feeling dizzy, or feeling tired.

Knowing your heart rate can help find the cause.

Third, when resting.

Your resting heart rate can be used to track your health or to see if your medicines are working right.

Here's how to check your heart rate.

You'll need a phone, a timer, or a watch with a second hand.

If you're measuring your heart rate while exercising, stop exercising, find a safe place, and check it immediately.

If you are experiencing symptoms, you'll also want to check your heart rate as soon as possible.

But if you're measuring your resting heart rate, find a quiet place where you can sit down and won't be distracted.

Wait 5 minutes to let your heart slow down.

Using either hand, place two fingers on the inside of the opposite wrist below your thumb.

Find the pulse on your radial artery.

Your pulse is the throb you feel that's caused by the flow of blood through the body.

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If you can't easily find your pulse at your wrist, you can check it using the carotid artery.

To find it, put your fingers on your windpipe and slide them into the groove next to it.

Make sure not to press too hard, and only check one side—not both.

Otherwise, you could feel faint and might fall.

Count the beats for 30 seconds.

Then double that number to get the beats per minute.

This number is your heart rate.

Your heart rate changes from minute to minute.

Many things affect it.

For example, it will be faster when you exercise, have a fever, or are under stress.

And it will be slower when you are resting.

Be sure to write down your heart rate if you need to tell it to your doctor later.

That's it.

Checking your heart rate is a skill that's easy to learn.

And it's one that can tell you and your doctor more about your overall health.