

Can Exercise Lower Blood Pressure?

Epidemiological studies show a direct correlation between hypertension and a lack of physical activity. The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Leuven in Belgium conducted a study on the value of exercise in preventing and treating hypertension. Special emphasis was placed on the possible effect of relative weight, or body size, on the results of exercise. They found that physical activity does contribute to the control of blood pressure in the obese as well as normal patients. Reduction in blood pressure after physical training appears to be independent of initial body size. Exercise was less effective in lowering blood pressure than diet, and adding diet to exercise did not further reduce blood pressure.

Source: Fagard RH. Physical activity in the prevention and treatment of hypertension in the obese. *Med Sci Sports Exer.* 1999(Nov);31:624-630. (Abs)