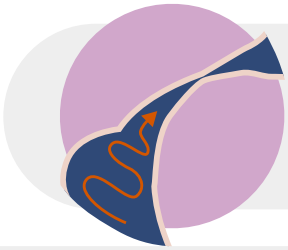
What is Pulmonary Hypertension?

LEARN LIVE BREATHE PH
Helping you navigate living with pulmonary hypertension

The term pulmonary hypertension (PH) refers to high blood pressure in the arteries in the lungs affecting the function of the right side of the heart. It is important to remember that PH can occur for a variety of different reasons and can affect patients across their lifespan, from infancy to adulthood. Common symptoms to all types of PH are: shortness of breath, especially with exertion (feeling out of shape without a reason for it), feeling lightheaded, chest pressure, palpitations, and/or swelling in the legs or abdomen. Some people may have shortness of breath when laying flat.

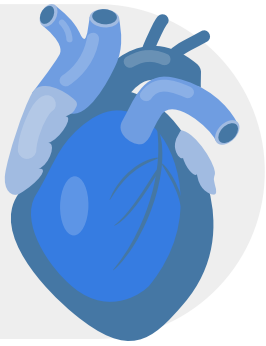
Experts divide PH into 5 groups, each representing a broad category of causes of PH.



Group 1: Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension (PAH)

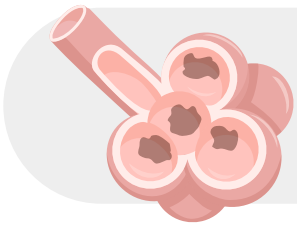
In PAH, the primary problem is narrowed and stiff arteries in the lungs, which increases the blood pressure and stresses the right side of the heart.

Group 2: PH Due to Left Heart Disease



This is the most common type of PH, where the left side of the heart (which receives blood from the arteries in the lungs) does not work as efficiently as it should because of any of the following:

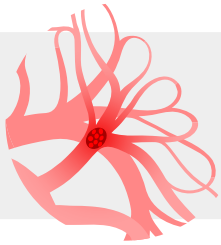
- Heart failure
- Diastolic dysfunction (abnormal relaxation/stiffness of the left side of the heart)
- The valves that allow blood to flow between the chambers of the heart are either too "leaky" or too "tight."



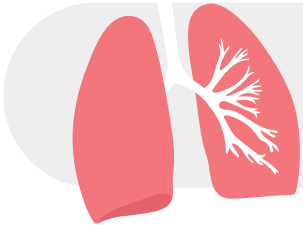
Group 3: PH Due to Lung Disease

Another more common type of PH caused by underlying lung disease, such as pulmonary fibrosis, COPD, and/or prolonged low levels of oxygen in the blood from sleep disorders like sleep apnea.

Group 4: PH Due to Chronic Blood Clots in the Lungs



This occurs when the lung arteries are blocked, most commonly chronic thromboembolic pulmonary hypertension (CTEPH) caused by blood clots in the lung that never dissolved.



Group 5: Miscellaneous

This group includes other diseases and conditions associated with PH (such as sarcoidosis, sickle cell anemia, removal of the spleen and certain metabolic conditions).