

Regular moderate to vigorous exercise such as swimming, biking or even brisk walks can lower the risk of high blood pressure in African-Americans, according to a new study. African-Americans are more likely to have high blood pressure than other racial groups in the United States. Among non-Hispanic blacks 20 and older, nearly 45 percent of men and 46 percent of women have high blood pressure, which is systolic blood pressure of 140 mm Hg or higher or diastolic blood pressure of 90 mm Hg or higher, according to the American Heart Association.

Although it often causes no symptoms, high blood pressure is a major cause of heart attack, stroke, heart failure and kidney disease.



"Instead of waiting for full-blown hypertension or abnormally high blood pressure to develop in African-Americans, health professionals should prescribe a dose of physical activity, just as they would prescribe a medication," said Keith Diaz, Ph.D., lead study author and assistant professor at the Center for Behavioral Cardiovascular Health at the Columbia University Medical Center in New York.

Researchers examined reported physical activity in 1,311 people in the Jackson Heart Study, a large, ongoing research program examining factors that influence the development of heart disease in African-Americans living in or near Jackson, Mississippi. All of the participants had normal blood pressure at the beginning of the study, but almost half had developed high blood pressure eight years later.

Compared with participants who didn't exercise, the risk of high blood pressure was 16 percent lower in those who did intermediate levels of physical activity (less than the recommended 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity exercise) and 24 percent lower in those with ideal levels of physical activity (less than 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity exercise or at least 75 minutes per week of vigorous exercise).

The researchers also found that sport or exercised-related physical activity lowered the risk of high blood pressure compared to working or doing household chores, which did not change the risk of high blood pressure.

"We think that occupational or household activity is often not done in bouts long enough to cause healthy changes in your heart, blood vessels and muscles," Diaz said. "Other research has shown that for physical activity to be beneficial, it needs to be done for at least 10 consecutive minutes at a time and at intensity levels that get you breathing harder and your heart beating faster."

Moderate-intensity physical activity requires working hard enough to raise your heart rate and break a sweat, such as brisk walking, water aerobics, biking mostly on level ground or mowing the lawn. Vigorous physical activity raises your heart rate and requires breathing hard and fast, such as running, swimming laps, singles tennis or bicycling 10 miles/hour or faster.

The study is published in the American Heart Association journal Hypertension. More information can be found at www.heart.org.

Parks and Recreation Spring Sports Registration

Anson County Parks and Recreation is offering a variety of sports programs in 2017. Registration for spring sports runs through Friday, February 10.

Here are the sports being offered:

- **Tee Ball** for ages 4-6
- **Coach Pitch** for ages 7-8
- **Minor Baseball** for ages 9-10
- **Major Baseball** for ages 11-12
- **Girls Softball** for ages 4-6; 7-8; 9-10; 11-12; 13-15
- **Micro Soccer** for ages 3-4
- **Youth Soccer** for grades K-1; 3-4; 5-6; 7-9; 10-12

The cost for these programs is \$25.

You can register at the Little Park office Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Little Park is located at 845 Airport Road in Wadesboro. You can also find registration forms online at www.co.anson.nc.us, and they can be returned via email.

Registration will also take place at the following locations:

- **Wednesday, February 1**, from 2-3:30 p.m. at Peachland Polkton Elementary
- **Thursday, February 2**, from 2-3:30 p.m. at Ansonville Elementary

For more information contact Morris Gatewood at 704-694-5751.

Scouting For Food Community Service Project

On Saturday, February 4th Anson County Boy Scouts will be participating in a national community service project called Scouting for Food. Starting now, scouts will distribute grocery bags in our local areas, churches and neighborhoods to be filled with non-perishable food items. Filled bags will then be collected the first weekend in February to be donated to Anson Crisis Ministry to help replenish their Food Pantry. The Food Pantry is generally at its lowest level in the winter months and after a holiday season.

All donations are appreciated, but the most needed items are meals in a can (such as soup, stew and chili), tuna or canned chicken, peanut butter, canned foods with pop-top lids, fruit canned in juice or water, low-sodium canned vegetables, olive or canola oil, spices, low-sugar whole-grain cereal, and healthy snacks like granola bars, nuts and dried fruit.

Monetary donations are also accepted. If your church, civic or neighborhood organization would like to help please contact Christopher Ratliff at christopher.ratliff@scouting.org or 919-441-7143.

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Anson County Prayer Gathering

Thursday, Feb 9 at 7pm

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McLeod Health Red Heart Luncheon

In support of American Heart Association National "Go Red for Women" Day

HEART DISEASE IS THE NUMBER ONE KILLER OF WOMEN. Too many women die each year because they weren't aware of this important fact. Come find out how lives can be saved when women know the risk factors for heart disease and the signs and symptoms of a heart attack.

Friday, February 3, 2017 at 2:00 pm

Please come dressed in red.



Dr. Eva Rzuclidlo
McLeod Vascular Associates

Cheraw Matheson
Memorial Library
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Cheraw, SC 29520

A light lunch will be served.