

“How To Estimate Resting Heart Rate”

- ♥ **Heart Rate:** It's important to know your average “Resting Heart Rate” (RHR). The lower your RHR, the healthier your heart. People with low resting heart rates are in better physical condition. Because their hearts are more fit, their hearts pump more blood with each beat. Their hearts are more efficient! Even at rest, an out of shape heart works really hard pumping many more times per minute but without as much volume of blood being delivered with each heartbeat. Anatomically, your heart is a mechanical pump for blood. You want your heart to deliver a lot of blood with one beat so it can rest longer in-between beats.

It's funny, but in order to give your heart a rest, you need to work it hard with exercise! The more fit the heart, the more blood per beat. The more blood per beat, the more the heart can rest. *Work hard then rest!* It's good for your heart. 😊

- ♥ **Morning Pulse:** To get the most accurate estimate of your RHR, you need to take a pulse for three days in a row BEFORE you even get out of bed. **Take your pulse for 60 seconds which is one full minute.** Heart rates are measured in “Beats Per Minute” (BPM). You'll need a stopwatch or clock with second hand to keep track of seconds.

- ♥ **How to Take Pulse:** <https://youtu.be/K2qfMYINNYo> (British Heart Foundation)

Data Collection

To take your “radial” pulse, *lightly* place the tips of your index and middle fingers across your wrist below your thumb area. There is a little spot there where the pulse can be felt easier. If you cannot feel your radial pulse, take your “carotid” pulse by lightly placing the same fingertips on the side of your neck under your chin. This is where the large carotid artery is located. After you have your three data points, add the three readings together and divide by three to get an *average RHR value* such as given in the example below.

- ♥ Raw Data Points: Day 1=75; Day 2=80; Day 3=86
- ♥ $75+80+86=241$
- ♥ $241 \div 3=80.333$
- ♥ 80 Beats Per Minute (BPM) is the *average* resting pulse.
- ♥ **Note that children normally have higher resting pulses than adults.*

- ♥ **Stress & Resting Heart Rates:** If your RHR is much higher one day than your average RHR, this can be an indication of overtraining without sufficient rest or other types of physical or psychological issues that can compromise your central nervous system. Listen to your body and either take a day of rest or just exercise at an easier pace until your RHR returns to normal. If your RHR remains higher than your *normal average*, consider seeing your doctor or health-care provider for evaluation.

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