

FACTSHEET

PHA  
UK →

Pulmonary  
Hypertension  
Association UK



# Pulmonary hypertension: *Rare, serious, misunderstood*

***Pulmonary hypertension (PH for short) causes high blood pressure in the blood vessels connecting the heart and lungs (the pulmonary arteries).***

In a healthy cardiovascular system, the right side of the heart pumps blood into the lungs to pick up oxygen, and this oxygen-rich blood is then pumped around the body by the left side of the heart.

***When a person develops PH, the walls of the pulmonary arteries become stiff and thickened, or blocked by blood clots.***

This makes it difficult for them to expand; and trying to pump blood through these tightened, narrowed, scarred or blocked arteries puts increasing strain on the right side of the heart as it tries to do its job. The essential task of pumping blood into the lungs to pick up oxygen which can then be circulated to every cell in the body becomes much harder.

***Pulmonary hypertension is rare.***

Around 8,000 people are diagnosed with PH

in the UK. It can affect anyone, regardless of age or ethnic background. It is more common in women than men.

## ***Did you know?..***

PH can be associated with another medical condition such as congenital heart disease, connective tissue disease, HIV infection or sickle cell anaemia.

Some people develop it without having another medical condition – this is known as *idiopathic pulmonary arterial hypertension (IPAH)*.



***Scan here to learn more about how PH affects the body***

