



Taking your Pulse

As your heart beats and pumps blood around your body, you can feel a throbbing (your pulse) where an artery (blood vessel carrying blood from the heart around the body) comes close to the surface of your skin.

Checking your pulse can tell you how fast your heart is beating; this is called your heart rate. The heart rate is measured in beats per minute, sometimes shortened to BPM.



Use the index and middle finger to feel the pulse, not the thumb.

To find a pulse in your neck

- 1 Put two fingers of your left hand onto the side of the windpipe in your throat.
- 2 Push down gently and you will find your pulse which feels like a small 'thump' (you can feel it going up and down). It can be a bit tricky to find this pulse, so you may have to try moving your fingers around to find the right spot.



To find a pulse in your wrist

- 1 Hold your left hand in front of you with palm facing up.
- 2 Using the pointer and middle fingers of your right hand, slide from the base of your thumb (the squishy part of your palm) to where your hand meets your wrist.
- 3 You might need to move the fingers around until you find the right spot. When you have found the pulse, count how many times you feel it while the teacher times 30 seconds. Multiply your score by 2 and this will tell you your heart rate per minute.

