

Thoracic Aortic Aneurysms and Dissections: Do's & Don'ts

Do:

- Keep your blood pressure in a healthy range.
 - As a general rule, blood pressure numbers of 120/80 are considered normal and healthy. Your doctor can help you understand the blood pressure numbers that are right for you.
- Keep your body at a healthy weight.
- Get mild to moderate physical activity regularly, such as:
 - Walking
 - Biking
 - Swimming
 - Dancing
 - Light jogging
 - Stair climbing
- Eat a heart-healthy diet (like eating foods that are low in sodium, fat, and cholesterol).
- If you've had surgery before to repair (fix) your aortic aneurysm, take antibiotics before any dental procedure (any medical work on your teeth) or before any invasive procedure (surgery that requires large cuts or many cuts into your body).
- Follow up with your doctor regularly to monitor (watch) your aneurysm and overall health.
- Have all first-degree relatives (parents, siblings, and adult children) screened (tested) by their doctors for a thoracic aortic aneurysm.

Don't:

- Do not use any tobacco products. This includes avoiding smoking or being around other who are smoking (secondhand smoke).
- Do not push, pull, or lift anything too heavy (anything that causes you to strain or “bear down” while trying to lift it). For most patients, this means not pushing, pulling, or lifting anything heavier than 30 pounds.
- Do not get a tattoo or body piercing.
- Do not shovel snow, chop wood, dig earth, or use a sledgehammer or snow blower.
- Do not take stimulants such as ephedra, cocaine, or amphetamines.
- Do not take fluoroquinolone antibiotics such as ciprofloxacin and levofloxacin. If you are prescribed one of these, please ask your provider for a different antibiotic medication.
- Do not go on roller coasters or rides that drop you quickly at amusement parks.
- Do not participate in intense, competitive, or contact sports.
- Do not use firearms, a bow and arrow, or other hunting equipment until your provider says it's okay.

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CVC Control # 505

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