

Checking Your Blood Pressure at Home

Checking blood pressures at home helps you and your care team know if blood pressure readings are staying within healthy ranges. When blood pressure is high, it can damage blood vessels, the heart, kidneys, and the brain. Keeping blood pressure in a healthy range can lower the risk for these problems.

Blood pressure readings include two numbers, such as 130/80 mmHg (say "130 over 80"). The first number is the systolic pressure. The second number is the diastolic pressure.

Blood pressure goal: _____

Why is this test done?

- Find out if blood pressure is high
- Track trends in blood pressure results
- Track how well medicine is working to lower high blood pressure
- Identify symptoms that may be from low or high blood pressure
- Get to know how lifestyle changes, such as weight loss and exercise, affect blood pressure

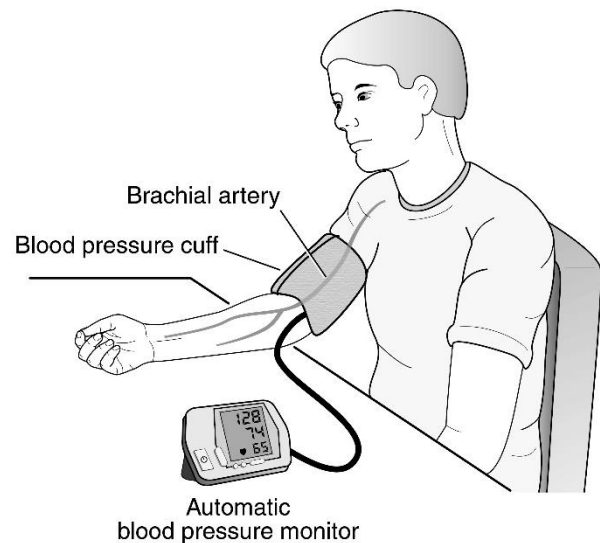
Before Checking a Blood Pressure

- Do not use caffeine, tobacco, or medicines known to raise blood pressure (such as nasal decongestant sprays) for at least 30 minutes before checking a blood pressure.
- Do not eat or exercise for at least 30 minutes before checking a blood pressure.
- Go to the bathroom before checking.

How to Check Blood Pressure

The person getting their blood pressure checked should:

1. Sit comfortably on a chair with their back supported and feet on the floor.
2. Wrap the cuff around their bare, upper arm so that the lower edge of the cuff is about 1 inch above the bend of the elbow. The arm should be resting on a table at chest height.
3. Rest quietly for 5 minutes. Do not talk, watch TV, or look at a phone or tablet during the test.
4. Press on/start button.
5. Record the results.



Choosing a Blood Pressure Monitor

The best blood pressure monitors are those with:

- Cuffs that fit on your upper arm (not wrist or finger)
- Cuffs that are not too tight
- Monitors that are digital (no pumping up bulbs or reading needles)

The list of monitors below are recommended options. Be sure you choose one that fits your arm. Size is listed after each monitor.

- Omron 5 series BP 7200 (9-17 in)
- Omron 10 Series Wireless BP7450 (9-17 in)
- Omron Evolv Wireless Monitor (9-17 in)
- A&D Medical UA-767F (8.6-16.5 in)
- LifeSource UA-787EJ – (9-17 in)
- LifeSource Advanced One Step UA-789AC (monitor and extra-large cuff) (16.5-23.6 in)
- Welch Allyn Home Blood Pressure Monitor 1700 Series (8.75-16.5 in)
- Welch Allyn Home RPM-BPACC-03 D-Ring Extra Large Cuff (Extra Large Cuff only) (15.75-21.25 in)
- Walgreen's Deluxe WGNPA-540 (9-17 in)

When to Check the Blood Pressure at Home

- At first, check the blood pressure 2 times each day at different times of day or as instructed by your clinic.
- Check in the morning and in the evening. Take 2 blood pressure measurements at least a minute apart.
- Write down the blood pressure numbers.

Follow-Up Visits

Follow-up visits are a key part of your treatment and safety. Bring the record of the blood pressure to share with your doctor. Be sure to make and go to all appointments.

Call the doctor for problems. Keep a list of the medicines being taken.

When to Call

Watch closely for changes in your health. Call your doctor if not getting better.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 1/2023 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7684

Call the doctor or seek medical care **right away** if:

- The blood pressure is above ____ for the top number or above ____ for the bottom number.
- The blood pressure is below ____ for the top number or below ____ for the bottom number.
- High blood pressure is causing symptoms such as:
 - Severe headache
 - Blurry vision

Call 911

Call 911 if you think you may need emergency care. This could include symptoms of a stroke or heart attack.

Stroke symptoms:

- Sudden numbness, tingling, weakness, or loss of movement in the face, arm, or leg, especially on only one side of the body
- Sudden vision changes
- Sudden trouble speaking
- Sudden confusion or trouble understanding simple statements
- Sudden problems with walking or balance
- A sudden, severe headache that is different from past headaches

Heart attack symptoms:

- Chest pain or pressure, or a strange feeling in the chest
- Sweating
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea or vomiting
- Pain, pressure, or a strange feeling in the back, neck, jaw or upper belly or in one or both shoulders or arms
- Lightheadedness or sudden weakness
- A fast or irregular heartbeat

Home Blood Pressure Log

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