

Steps to Measuring Your Blood Pressure



Step 1

Make sure the cuff fits. Measure around your upper arm, and choose a monitor that comes with the correct size cuff.

Step 2

Don't smoke, drink caffeinated beverages, or exercise within the 30 minutes before measuring your blood pressure. Also, use the bathroom first. A full bladder can increase blood pressure slightly.

Step 3

Be still. Do not talk while taking blood pressure readings.

Step 4

- Sit correctly, with your back straight and supported (on a dining chair, for example, rather than a sofa).
- Place feet flat on the floor, with legs uncrossed.
- Support your arm on a flat surface (such as a table) with your upper arm at heart level. Make sure the middle of the cuff is placed directly above the eye of the elbow and approximately one inch above the elbow.
- Place the cuff on bare skin. Check your monitor's instructions for an illustration, or have your pharmacist show you how.

Step 5

Follow directions on the blood pressure device to start the reading.

Step 6

Take multiple readings. Each time you take your blood pressure, do it two or three times, one minute apart, and record all results.

Step 7

Measure your blood pressure twice daily, once in the morning (before breakfast and medications) and once at night, or as recommended by your health care provider. It is also important to take the readings at the same time each day.

Step 8

Record all of your readings, including the date and time taken. Share your blood pressure records with your health care team.



A single high reading of blood pressure is not an immediate cause for alarm. However, if you get a high reading, take your blood pressure several more times. If readings remain high, consult your health care professional to determine if a medical intervention is needed or your blood pressure monitor is malfunctioning. **When blood pressure reaches a systolic (top number) of 180 or higher OR diastolic (bottom number) of 110 or higher, emergency medical treatment is required.**

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