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**Blood Pressure
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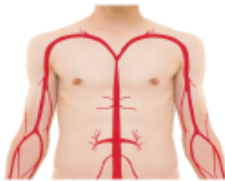
Measuring your blood pressure at home

An easy read guide

What is blood pressure?



Your heart is a muscle that pumps blood around your body.



When your heart beats, the blood is moving around your body through tubes.

The tubes are called arteries.



The blood presses on the side of the arteries when it moves.

This is called blood pressure.



It is normal for your blood pressure to

- change at different times in the day
- go up and down when you are moving around.

What is high blood pressure?



High blood pressure means your heart has to work harder to pump blood around your body.



It is normal to have high blood pressure when

- you exercise
- you are excited.



But if you have high blood pressure all the time it can cause problems for your health.



High blood pressure can be treated by

- having a healthier lifestyle
- taking medicines.

What can we do?



It is important to know if you have high blood pressure so that you can look after yourself properly.



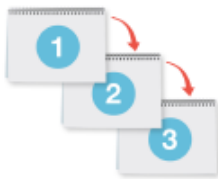
**Blood Pressure
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Blood Pressure UK want to get everyone measuring their blood pressure at home.



You can check your blood pressure using a quick blood pressure test.

Checking your blood pressure at home



These guidelines will tell you how you can check your blood pressure at home.

You might want to ask a supporter to check your blood pressure with you.



You will need an upper arm monitor that has been tested to make sure it measures blood pressure properly.



There is a list of upper arm monitors that you can use on this website bihsoc.org

The website is not in easy read, so you might like to ask a supporter to help you.

Important things to remember



1. Measure your blood pressure at the same time every day.



2. Make sure you are comfortable
 - Your legs should not be crossed
 - Your back should be supported.



3. Be still and quiet when the reading is being taken.
Talking and moving can mean that the reading is wrong.



4. Try to go to the toilet before you measure your blood pressure.



5. In the 30 minutes before you measure your blood pressure, you should not
 - exercise
 - eat a large meal
 - smoke
 - have caffeine, like in tea or coffee.



6. Wear loose clothes on your upper arm.



7. It does not matter which arm you use, but try to use the same arm every time you check your blood pressure.

How to check your blood pressure



The upper arm monitor has a cuff that wraps around your upper arm.

2 to 3cm



The cuff should be placed 2 to 3cm above the elbow.



The cuff should be placed straight onto your skin or over thin fabric.



Your arm should be at the same level as your heart.

You might need a cushion to rest your arm on.

If your arm is above or below your heart, the reading might not be right.



Take your reading by turning on the monitor and pressing start.



After a few minutes, take another reading.

This is because the first reading is normally a bit high.

The second reading is normally a better measure.



Two numbers will show on the screen.

Write these numbers down.



You can use these numbers to check how your blood pressure is.



If the numbers are less than 115/75 mmHg

Your blood pressure is normal.
Check again in 5 years or sooner.



If the numbers are between 115/75 and 134/84 mmHg

Your blood pressure is on the high side of normal.
Check again in 1 year or sooner.



If the numbers are between 135/85 and 164/104 mmHg

You might have high blood pressure.
Check again in 5 minutes.

If the reading is still high, get another measurement from your pharmacy.
They will tell you what to do next.



If the numbers are over 165/105 mmHg

You might have very high blood pressure.
Check again in 5 minutes.

If the reading is still high and you have headaches or your eyes feel blurry you should see your GP within 2 days.

If you do not have headaches or blurry eyes, you should get another measurement from your pharmacy, a nurse or a GP as soon as possible.
They will tell you what to do next.

Find out more about blood pressure



**Blood Pressure
UK**

Blood pressure UK is the UK's blood pressure charity.



The charity has information about blood pressure, including how you can look after yourself.



Visit www.bloodpressureuk.org for more information.

The website is not in easy read so you might like to ask a supporter to help you.