

## How to Measure Blood Pressure at Home

### Which Monitor?

- Wrist or finger monitors are not suitable. Most chemists will stock approved brands. To check them-The British Hypertension Society has a list of approved monitors: <https://bihsoc.org/>. Most monitors need calibrating every 1-2 years (instructions will be in the leaflet). Old machines that have not been regularly calibrated can be inaccurate.

### Before you measure your blood pressure

- Avoid things that can raise your blood pressure in the short term. Don't measure your blood pressure within half an hour of eating, smoking, drinking caffeinated drinks such as coffee, or exercising. These can all raise your blood pressure temporarily. If you need to use the toilet, go before you measure your blood pressure.
- Wear loose-fitting clothes. Wear a short-sleeved t-shirt or something with sleeves you can push up easily, nothing tight. This is so that you can fit the cuff around your arm. Tight clothing can alter the measurement.
- Rest for at least five minutes before you take your reading.

### Arm Position and Cuff Size

- Make sure you are seated (unless you have been told to take a standing blood pressure), with your back supported, and both feet on the floor (don't cross your legs).
- Make sure your upper arm is supported and at the same level as your heart. Position yourself so that your arm is resting on a surface and is at the same height as your heart. Keep your arm and hand relaxed, not tensed. Support the arm with a pillow if needed.
- Make sure you place the cuff around your upper arm, just above your elbow.
- Make sure you have the right cuff size for your arm. It should wrap snugly around your upper arm, with just enough space to slide two fingertips underneath. Most home blood pressure monitors will come with a medium-sized cuff. If your upper arm is particularly larger or smaller than average, you may need to buy a different sized cuff separately.
- To make sure you have the right cuff size, follow the instructions that came with your monitor. Alternatively have a look at the "Blood Pressure UK" website: <http://www.bloodpressureuk.org/>.
  - SMALL CUFF-upper arm circumference <23 cm
  - MEDIUM CUFF- upper arm circumference 23-33 cm.
  - LARGE CUFF-upper arm circumference 33-50cm.

### Take the Readings

- Don't talk while taking a reading.
- Measure your blood pressure in both arms when you first start. They will give slightly different readings. From then on, always use the arm that gave you the higher reading each time.
- Take readings at the same time each day. For example, first thing in the morning or last thing at night.
- Remember to do 2 or 3 readings (discard the first reading if it is much higher than the others).
- Don't round your measurements up or down. Record your readings as they're displayed.
- Blood pressure readings naturally vary. Don't worry if you get an unexpected high reading. A one-off high reading is usually nothing to worry about, rest for five minutes and take the reading again. If it's still high, measure your blood pressure again another day. If the upper reading (systolic) is repeatedly >180, or < 100; or if the lower (diastolic reading) is repeatedly > 100, then contact the surgery for advice.

**Home Blood Pressure Readings**

**Name:**

**Date of Birth:**

**Date of readings:**

- Take two or three readings, taken 1 minute apart, morning and evening.
- Write down the 2 lowest. (If the first reading is higher than the others, discard this one and use the next 2).
- We will contact you if the result needs further action.

	<b>Morning systolic BP (top number)</b>	<b>Morning diastolic BP(bottom number)</b>	<b>Pulse Rate</b>		<b>Evening systolic BP</b>	<b>Evening diastolic BP</b>	<b>Pulse Rate</b>
Example	154	78	72		163	87	85
Day 1							
Day 2							
Day 3							
Day 4							
Day 5							
Day 6							
Day 7							
<b>TOTAL</b>							

**For TOWNHEAD SURGERY STAFF:**

**Total Systolic=**

**Total Diastolic=**

**Number of Readings=**

<b>AVERAGE BLOOD PRESSURE=</b>
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