

HOME BLOOD PRESSURE MEASUREMENT

Why should you measure your blood pressure at home?

Measuring your blood pressure at home helps you and your health care provider to understand how well controlled your blood pressure is on a day-to-day basis. It also shows how lifestyle changes and blood pressure medications help to control your blood pressure.

Your health care provider may ask you to measure and record your blood pressure twice a day for at least 7 days one week before each appointment. This shows how well your blood pressure is controlled during your daily routine.

What type of blood pressure monitor should you buy?

There are many blood pressure monitors for sale in Canada.

You will ask your health care provider which blood pressure monitor is right for you. To ensure you buy an accurate monitor, you will look for this logo.

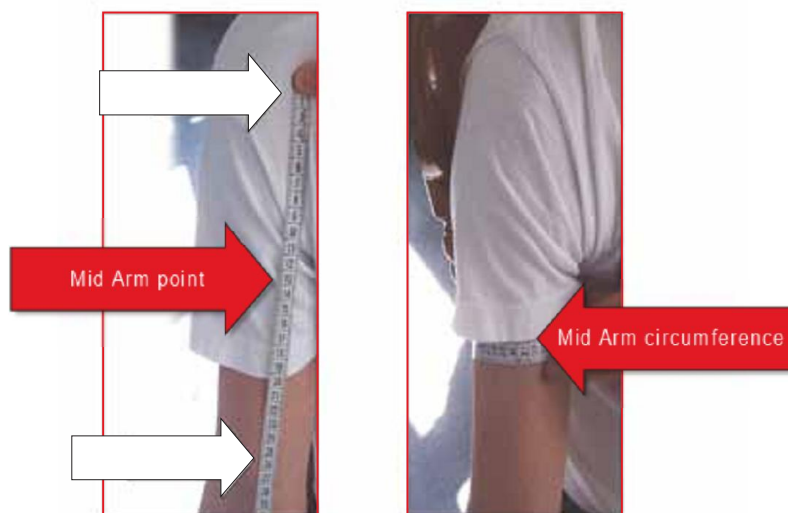


The presence of the logo indicates that the device meets an established standard for accuracy, that test results have been published in a peer reviewed journal, and that the validation data has been assessed by a committee of Hypertension Canada.

You will buy a validated automated blood pressure monitor.

Blood pressure cuffs come in different sizes. It is very important that the cuff fits your arm properly. The wrong cuff size will give you incorrect readings. It is important to measure arm circumference to buy the right cuff. Ask your health care provider to measure your arm at midway between the shoulder and elbow. Ask the pharmacist to help you choose the right size cuff.

FIGURE 1: Choosing the Right Cuff Size for Blood Pressure Measurement



Your arm circumference is _____ cm/in
(midway between your shoulder and your elbow)

FIGURE 2: Measuring Blood Pressure The Right Way



ADVICE TO MEASURE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE WITH A HOME MONITOR

- DO take all clothing off upper arm and put cuff on.
- DO sit on a chair, back supported, arm on a table at heart level, feet flat on the floor.
- DO wait for 5 minutes before taking the first measurement.
- DO wait one minute before taking the second measurement.
- DO record date and time of both measurements on BP log.
- DO measure twice a day, morning and evening, on same arm, same time for 7 days before visit to your health care provider.
- DO NOT cross your feet.
- DO NOT take your BP if you are in a hurry.
- DO NOT smoke or drink caffeine 30 minutes before measuring BP.
- DO NOT eat a big meal for 2 hours before measuring your BP.
- DO NOT talk or watch TV during a measurement.
- DO NOT measure your pressure if you are uncomfortable, anxious, stressed or in pain.

Every year, you will bring your home monitor to your health care provider to have it checked for precision and review the instructions for measuring your blood pressure properly.

Your target home blood pressure is less than _____ / _____ mm Hg

If you are diagnosed with high blood pressure you should:

1. Talk with your health care provider. Learn what your blood pressure should be and what your numbers are now.
2. Learn how to monitor your blood pressure at home.
3. Keep a record of your blood pressure and show it to your health care provider at each appointment (see My Home Blood Pressure Log)
4. Take your blood pressure medications (if any are prescribed) as instructed by your health care provider and keep a current list of your blood pressure medications with you, including the name, dose and how often you take them. Report any side effects you may experience. Show blood pressure record to your health care provider at each appointment.

Take Control

There are several things you can do to keep your blood pressure controlled.

1. Be physically active for 30 to 60 minutes on 4 to 7 days a week. Try walking, biking, swimming, cross country skiing or any other physical activity that you enjoy. Remember that even a little bit of physical activity is better than no activity. Keep active.
2. Choose the following more often: vegetables, fruits, low-fat dairy products, whole grains and lean meat, fish and poultry. Limit fast foods, canned foods or foods that are bought prepared or those that are high in salt and sugar, saturated or trans fat, such as shortening, palm or coconut oil and lard.
3. Eat less sodium (salt). In general the more processed a food is, the higher the sodium content. Try not to add salt to your cooking and remove the salt shaker from the table.
4. Limit alcohol. If you drink alcohol, limit yourself to one or two standard drinks a day, to a weekly maximum of 9 for women and 14 for men.
5. Manage your weight. If you are overweight, losing 10 pounds (5kg) will lower your blood pressure.
6. Do not smoke. Smoking increases the risk of developing heart problems and other diseases. Living and working in places that are smoke-free are also important. If you smoke, a variety of treatments can help you stop. Stopping smoking reduces your risk of dying.
7. Reduce stress. Taking steps to reduce your stress can help improve your general health, including your blood pressure.

MY HOME BLOOD PRESSURE LOG

My target home blood pressure is less than _____ / _____ mm/Hg. I use my ☐ Right ☐ Left arm
Systolic / Diastolic

REST for 5 minutes before taking the first blood pressure reading (#1).

WAIT 1 minute before taking the second blood pressure reading (#2).

MEASURE before taking your blood pressure medication & before eating or 2 hours after eating.

TAKE your blood pressure 10 to 12 hours apart when doing AM & PM measurements.

READ "Measure Blood Pressure at Home" for more information about proper home blood pressure measurements technique at www.hypertension.ca

DISCARD the readings of the first day and do the average of the last 6 days.

BRING your log and your medications to every appointment with your health care professional.

SAMPLE

DATE		TIME	COMMENTS	Heart Rate (beats per minute)	BP Reading #1 (mmHg)		BP Reading #2 (mmHg)	
					Systolic	Diastolic	Systolic	Diastolic
June 15	Sample Morning	8:00 AM	Meds at 9 AM		138	82	135	80
	Sample Evening	8:00 PM	Upset		157	92	154	90
	Day 1 Morning							
	Day 1 Evening							
	Day 2 Morning							
	Day 2 Evening							
	Day 3 Morning							
	Day 3 Evening							
	Day 4 Morning							
	Day 4 Evening							
	Day 5 Morning							
	Day 5 Evening							
	Day 6 Morning							
	Day 6 Evening							
	Day 7 Morning							
	Day 7 Evening							
	Average							

DATE		TIME	COMMENTS	Heart Rate (beats per minute)	BP Reading #1 (mmHg)		BP Reading #2 (mmHg)	
					Systolic	Diastolic	Systolic	Diastolic
	Day 1 Morning							
	Day 1 Evening							
	Day 2 Morning							
	Day 2 Evening							
	Day 3 Morning							
	Day 3 Evening							
	Day 4 Morning							
	Day 4 Evening							
	Day 5 Morning							
	Day 5 Evening							
	Day 6 Morning							
	Day 6 Evening							
	Day 7 Morning							
	Day 7 Evening							
	Average							

(This page can be ordered at www.hypertension.ca in pads of 25)