



Measuring Your Blood Pressure At Home

Taking blood pressure measurements at home can help you take an active role in controlling your blood pressure. It can also help your doctor to compare your home readings to those taken in the office, to make a diagnosis of blood pressure, or to see how well your treatment is working.

Which machine should I use?

When purchasing a home blood pressure monitor, choose one:

- that measures from the top of the arm, rather than the wrist or finger
- that has been approved by the Canadian Hypertension Society and/or tested to meet the validation requirements of the Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation, the British Hypertension Society or the International Protocol for validation of automated blood pressure measuring devices.
- that is the right size. Inside the cuff is a bladder (the part that inflates and deflates)—it should cover at least two thirds of the distance around your arm and should not overlap.

How do I use a home blood pressure monitor?

Home blood pressure monitors usually come with instructions. Be sure to read them carefully. Here a few key tips to keep in mind.

- Rest for 5 minutes before taking your blood pressure.
- Use the same arm for readings, preferably the same arm used for measurements at your doctor's office.
- Sit with your feet flat on the floor, with your back and arm supported by a cushion, and arm at heart level.
- Keep still and silent while the reading is being taken.
- Take 2 or more readings at least 2 minutes apart. Take an average of these readings and record it on a computer or paper.
- Try to take blood pressure readings at the same time of day—first thing in the morning and right before bed may work for you.
- Do not smoke or have caffeine for 30 minutes before measuring your blood pressure. Make sure that your bladder is empty and that you have not just eaten a meal.
- Avoid wearing tight clothing while taking measurements.

Ask your doctor or nurse if you have any questions about buying or using a home blood pressure monitor.

Looking for credible online resources? Visit www.hypertension.ca
This website provides links to relevant healthcare organizations
and patient information on hypertension.

