



How do I Self-Monitor My Blood Pressure?

Monitoring your own blood pressure can be unfamiliar, but it can be made much easier by following these few things when you are taking your blood pressure at home.

1. When do I take my blood pressure (BP)?

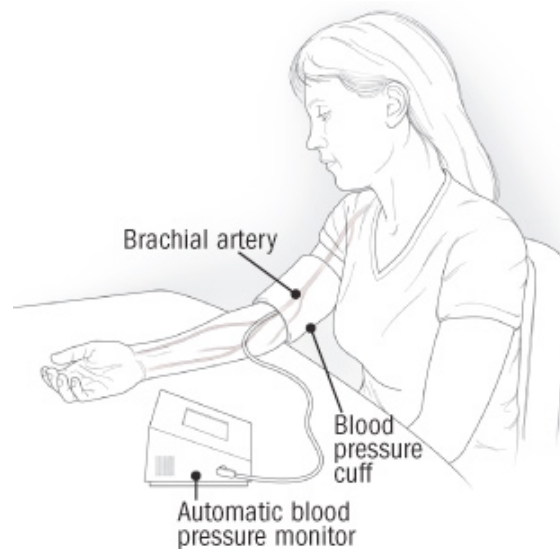
You should measure your BP two times a day or as your doctor directs. Try measuring your BP when you first wake-up and again in the evening (try for around 8pm).

2. What should I do before I take my BP?

Avoid caffeinated drinks, cigarettes, or performing strenuous activities or exercise for a half hour before you measure your BP. You should also take your BP when your bladder is empty. Finally, you should be sitting down and resting for five minutes before you measure your BP. Ensure that when you take your BP your feet are flat on the floor, your arm and back are supported by the chair you are sitting in and that your arm is on a flat surface that allows it to be level with the heart.

3. Where should I place the BP cuff?

The BP cuff should be placed on your non-dominant hand (the hand you don't use to write), unless you have a health complication that would cause an inaccurate reading (an example includes obstructive arterial disease, or if you've had exploratory surgery on that side of your torso). The artery marker on the cuff should be aligned with the centre of the bend in your flexed elbow (your brachial artery, see the diagram below).



4. What should I do with my results?

Record all of your results in the chart provided. It is very important that you write down the value the monitor displays. Writing down a value different from that seen on the monitor could prevent detection of a problem, or suggest a problem that doesn't exist. Your monitor also records your blood pressure readings, so we can check the records in case you forget to write a value down.

5. What should I do if my BP is really high or there is protein in my urine?

If your systolic blood pressure (top or first number) is greater than 150 mm Hg or your diastolic blood pressure (bottom or second number) is greater than 90 mm Hg you should try another reading in about half an hour. If either measurements are still greater than 150 and 90 mm Hg, respectively, and you feel otherwise well, you should call and make an appointment with your healthcare professional. While there may be nothing wrong, an elevated blood pressure like that should be brought to your Doctor's attention. If you notice a large amount of protein in your urine (equivalents to 1+x) on two urine samples on the same day, four hours apart, you should also call and make an appointment with your healthcare professional. The presence of protein in the urine is a sign of worsening gestational hypertension with possible complications, which can be potentially dangerous and should be closely monitored. If you have any of the following then you need to be seen on the day that you notice:

* BP greater than 150/90 twice or with any of:

- A headache
- Unusual upper Right abdominal pain
- Changes in your vision
- Sudden increase in swelling of your face, hands or legs
- Urine with protein of 2+ or more

In the daytime please call our clinic (705-741-1191), on a weekend or evening however you can go to the labour and delivery at PRHC for a BP recheck and assessment.

6. How can I keep my BP down?

There are a few different things you can do to help keep your BP lowered throughout pregnancy and increase the overall health of your pregnancy. Eating 6-8 servings of fruits and vegetables a day, increasing your dairy intake (to get more calcium) and taking a prenatal vitamin can all help decrease your risk of hypertension. Although moderate exercise is also something to do to increase the overall health of your pregnancy we do recommend stopping exercise and increasing your rest if your BP has increased and we are asking for you to do home monitoring. Be sure that if you are not feeling well, please, contact your doctor.