

Tips for Taking Your Blood Pressure at Home

1. Take your medicine(s) at least 30 minutes before checking your blood pressure.
2. Try to avoid eating, smoking, having caffeine, exercising and drinking alcohol 30 minutes before you check your blood pressure.
3. Check your blood pressure at the same time every day.
4. Set your machine on a table in a quiet place.
5. Sit in a comfortable chair with your legs uncrossed and your feet flat on the floor.
6. Wear a short-sleeve shirt or remove your shirt. Having the cuff on bare skin will help you get an accurate reading.
7. Place the cuff on your upper arm 1 inch above the bend of your elbow.
8. Make sure your arm lies flat on the table with the palm of your hand up. Your upper arm should be at heart level.
9. Sit and rest for 5 minutes before you check your blood pressure.
10. Write down the date, time, blood pressure reading, which arm it was taken on, the heart rate or pulse and if you took your medicine.
11. If you have a blood pressure reading that is higher than you expect, rest for 5 to 10 minutes and then take your blood pressure again.
12. If your second blood pressure reading is still higher than you expected, follow the follow-up instructions in the table on the other side of this card based on your reading.



Blood Pressure for Adults

	Top number (systolic)		Bottom number (diastolic)	Follow-up instructions
Normal	less than 120	and	less than 80	Recheck your blood pressure once a year.
Elevated	120 to 129	and	less than 80	Talk with your health care provider about lifestyle changes.
High blood pressure stage 1	130 to 139	or	80 to 89	Talk with your health care provider about treatment.
High blood pressure stage 2	140 or higher	or	90 or higher	See your health care provider today.



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