

Measuring Blood Pressure

Wrist Best Practices



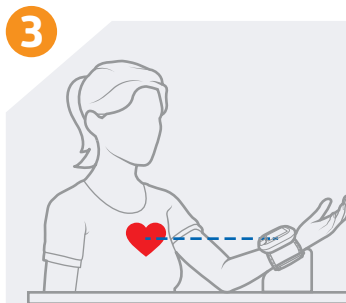
Use your non-dominant arm for the reading.

Note: Failure to do so may vary your blood pressure measurement.^{1,2}



Place the cuff on bare skin only. Remove all accessories from your wrist.

Note: Failure to do so may raise or lower blood pressure by 5–50 mmHg.^{4–6}



Place your elbow on a table so that your wrist and the cuff are level with your heart.

Note: Failure to do so may raise or lower blood pressure measurement by 2 mmHg for each inch above/below heart.^{2,4}



Position the cuff about 1–1.5 cm from the wrist joint. The palm and monitor should face upward.

Note: Failure to do so may vary your blood pressure measurement.³



Use a properly-sized cuff. Cuff should be snug, permitting 2 fingers.

Note: Failure to wear a cuff that fits correctly may increase BP by 10–20 mmHg with a cuff that is too large, or lower BP by 4 mmHg with a cuff that is too small.^{4,6,7}



Make sure to use the bathroom before taking a reading.

Note: Failure to do so may raise or lower blood pressure measurement by 10 mmHg.^{4,5}



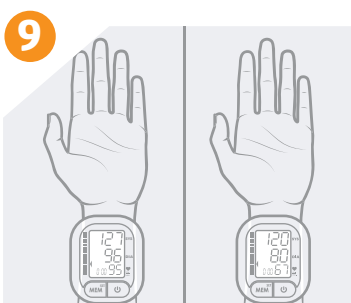
Do not smoke, exercise, use tobacco, or consume alcohol or caffeine within 30 minutes of measurement.

Note: Failure to do so may raise or lower blood pressure measurement by 6–20 mmHg.^{2,4}



Do not talk (even on the phone) while taking a measurement.

Note: Failure to do so may raise or lower blood pressure measurement by 8–15 mmHg.^{4,5,11}



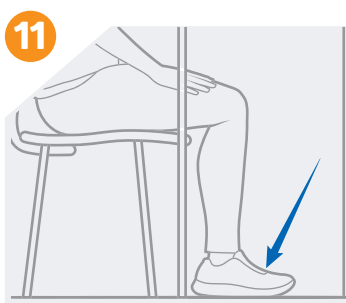
For accurate results, take at least 2 measurements and find the average value.

Note: Single measurements may be inaccurate as the first measurement may be higher than subsequent measurements.¹



Wait 5 minutes before and after readings.

Note: Failure to wait 5 minutes between measurements may result in higher values for the first measurement.¹



Place your feet flat on the ground and do not cross your legs.

Note: Failure to do so may raise blood pressure measurement by about 6 mmHg.^{2,5}



Sit comfortably with your back and wrist supported.

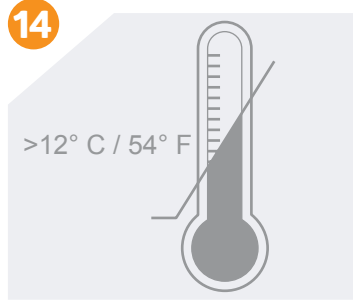
Note: Failure to do so may raise or lower blood pressure measurement by 6–10 mmHg.^{1,4,5}

More tips on other side.



Remain calm when taking a measurement.

Note: Feeling anxious during a measurement may raise or lower blood pressure by 10 mmHg.^{4,10}



Take measurements in a normal temperature room (warmer than 54°F/12°C).

Note: Failure to do so may increase blood pressure measurement by 8–15 mmHg.¹¹



Be aware of medications you take. Ask your doctor for more information.

Note: Failure to do so may result in inaccurate measurements. Results can skew high or low, depending on the medication.



Take measurements when you are not experiencing any pain.

Note: Failure to do so may increase blood pressure measurement by 10–20 mmHg.^{2,4}

Additional Factors

- For most accurate results, try to take daily measurements and take measurements at the same time and under the same conditions
- Be aware that measurements can vary depending on if taken at home or taken in a clinical setting

What the numbers mean¹⁰

BP Classification	Systolic (mmHg)	Diastolic (mmHg)
Optimal	Less than 120	Less than 80
Normal	120–129	80–84
High–Normal	130–139	85–89
Hypertension–Stage 1	140–159	90–99
Hypertension–Stage 2	160–179	100–109
Hypertension–Stage 3	180 or higher	110 or higher

Ask your doctor what your optimal BP should be.

Learn more. Contact a Medline Representative, call 1–800–MEDLINE, or go to [medline.com](https://www.medline.com).

References: **1.** Pickering TG, Hall JE, Appel LJ, et al. Recommendations for blood pressure measurement in humans and experimental animals: Part 1: blood pressure measurement in humans: a statement for professionals from the Subcommittee of Professional and Public Education of the American Heart Association Council on High Blood Pressure Research. *Hypertension* 2005;45:142–61. **2.** O'Brien E, Asmar R, Beilin L, et al. European Society of Hypertension recommendations for conventional, ambulatory and home blood pressure measurement. *J Hypertens* 2003;21:821–48. **3.** Medline MDS4003 Automatic Wrist Blood Pressure Monitor User Guide, Approved 5/04/2023. **4.** Handler J. The importance of accurate blood pressure measurement. *Perm J* 2009;13:51–4. **5.** Avoid these common blood pressure measuring mistakes. Harvard Health Publishing; 2019. Accessed from: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/heart-health/avoid-these-common-blood-pressure-measuring-mistakes> on 8/1/2020. **6.** Foley A, Branson S, MacPherson–Dias R, et al. Emergency Nurses Association Clinical Practice Guideline: Non–Invasive Blood Pressure Measurement. Emergency Nurses Association; 2018. **7.** Ishigami J, Charleston J, Miller ER 3rd, Matsushita K, Appel LJ, Brady TM. Effects of Cuff Size on the Accuracy of Blood Pressure Readings: The Cuff(SZ) Randomized Crossover Trial. *JAMA Intern Med.* 2023 Aug 7:e233264. doi: 10.1001/jamainternmed.2023.3264. **8.** van Groningen LFJ, Adiyaman A, Elving L, Thien T, Lenders JWM, Deinum J. Which physiological mechanism is responsible for the increase in blood pressure during leg crossing? *Journal of Hypertension* 2007;26:433–7. **9.** Sato T, Ichise N, Terashima Y, Kato A, Yamazaki H, Jimbo S, Tohse N. Response to exercise–induced blood pressure elevation is blunted in wrist–cuff automated oscillometric measurement in healthy young college students. *Physiol Rep.* 2020 Sep;8(17):e14570. doi: 10.14814/phy2.14570. **10.** Townsend R, Cohen J. Out–of–office blood pressure measurement Ambulatory and self–measured blood pressure monitoring. UpToDate: Wolters Kluwer; 2020. **11.** Thomas G, Pohl M. Blood pressure measurement in the diagnosis and management of hypertension in adults. UpToDate/Wolters Kluwer; 2019.

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