

How to measure your blood pressure at home?

What type of blood pressure monitor should you buy?

There are many blood pressure monitors for sale in Canada. Buy one with this logo (recommended by Canadian Hypertension Society) to ensure it has been tested for accuracy.



You can buy home blood pressure monitors that either inflate by pushing a

button or squeezing a bulb.

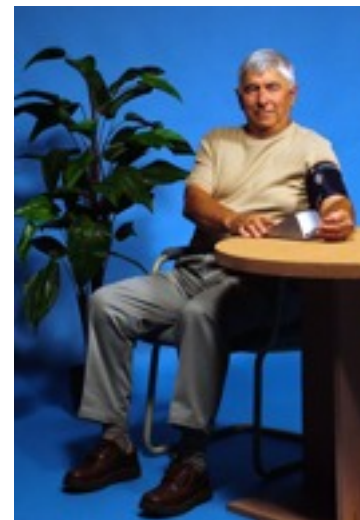
Blood pressure cuffs come in different sizes. The wrong cuff size will give incorrect readings. Ask your health care professional to help you choose the right size cuff. Measure your arm circumference mid way between the elbow and shoulder. This measurement can also help you select the right size cuff.

How do you measure your blood pressure with a home monitor?

- follow the directions that come with the device.
- only measure and record your blood pressure if you have time to do it correctly.
- wait for at least two hours after a big meal or heavy physical activity and for at least half an hour after drinking coffee or smoking.
- empty your bladder and bowels before taking a reading.
- rest and relax for 5 minutes in a quiet comfortable place with no distractions (e.g. TV or talking) before measuring your blood pressure.
- put the cuff on a bare arm.
- measure blood pressure when you are not uncomfortable, cold, anxious, stressed or in pain.
- sit in a chair that supports your back and beside a table that can support your arm. If required put a pillow or towel under your arm so that the cuff rests at heart level. Do not cross your legs (see photo on the right).
- measure blood pressure in the morning before taking medications and eating and in the evening before going to bed, bathing or taking medications.
- take at least two readings, waiting 1-2 minutes between readings, and record them with the date and time.

Measuring Blood Pressure the Right Way

- comfortable with no distractions
- arm supported at heart level
- seated with back support
- feet uncrossed on the floor



To help your health care professional make a diagnosis of high blood pressure measure your blood pressure twice in the morning and evening for seven days and average the last six days of readings.

Measure your blood pressure twice in the morning and twice in the evening for several days before each visit to a health care professional and after a change in blood pressure medication.

Every year have the accuracy of your home monitor checked and check the instructions for measuring blood pressure to make sure you are still measuring your blood pressure properly.

For most people the target or “healthy” HOME blood pressure is less than 135 mm Hg systolic (top number) and less than 85 mmHg diastolic (bottom number). If you have diabetes or kidney disease lower targets are required.