

Home blood pressure monitoring

Why have I been asked to measure my blood pressure at home?

For many people, especially when we are trying to work out if they have raised blood pressure (hypertension), a one-off blood pressure reading taken in the surgery may be misleading. Often a reading in the surgery will be higher than your normal blood pressure at home; and an average of several readings taken at home is even better.

National guidance suggests that we should now decide whether or not someone has hypertension using blood pressure measurements taken at home. This can be done by continuous monitoring or by averaging readings taken twice a day over several days.

Some people who are already known to have raised blood pressure have been shown to have a big difference between their blood pressure when they measure it at home compared to when it is measured in the surgery (so-called 'White Coat Hypertension'). If this is the case, even if you are on treatment we may have asked you to measure your blood pressure at home to see how you are doing rather than just using a surgery reading.

What machine should I use?

There are many blood pressure machines that can be used at home. Not all of them are 'clinically validated' and some have many more functions and are much more expensive than is usually required. A list of approved ones can be found at http://www.bhsoc.org/bp_monitors/automatic.stm, or you can ask us at the surgery. If you have borrowed one from the surgery this will be an approved model.

How do I measure my own blood pressure?

Whatever machine you are using, there are a few simple steps that you can follow to make sure that you get an accurate measurement:

Before you take your reading:

- Many things can make your blood pressure rise for a short time. Make sure you do not use the toilet, and that you have not just eaten a big meal. Do not measure your blood pressure within 30 minutes of drinking caffeine (in tea as well as coffee and colas) or smoking.
- Wear loose fitting clothes so that you can push your sleeve up comfortably.
- Always use the same arm for readings, as each arm will give a slightly different reading. If possible use the arm that your nurse used when measuring your blood pressure.
- Before you take your readings, rest for a few minutes. You should be sitting down in a quiet place, preferably at a desk or a table, with your arm resting on a firm surface and your feet flat on the floor.

- Make sure your arm is supported and that the cuff is the same level as your heart. You may need to support your arm with a cushion to be sure it is at the correct height. Your arm should be relaxed, not tensed.

Taking your reading:

- Make sure you are relaxed and comfortable. If you are anxious or uncomfortable, this will make your blood pressure rise temporarily
- When you are taking your reading, keep still and silent. Moving and talking can affect your reading.
- Take **two** readings, each about **two** minutes apart.

What do I record?

We have provided a chart for you to record your blood pressure readings. You should take two readings each time you measure your blood pressure and we would like you to write down both readings. If possible, we would then like you to write down the lower reading in the last column. The lower one is the one with the lower first number (systolic blood pressure).

For example, if your first reading was 133/73 and your second reading was 125/70, you would record 125/70 as the lower of the two as shown below.

	First reading		Second reading		Lower of the two	
	1 st number (Systolic)	2 nd number (Diastolic)	1 st number (Systolic)	2 nd number (Diastolic)	1 st number (Systolic)	2 nd number (Diastolic)
Example	133	73	125	70	125	70

Even if your machine gives your pulse, we do not need you to record it.

When should I measure my blood pressure?

We would like you to take your blood pressure readings twice a day for 7 days. Morning and evening is probably best and you should try and take the readings at about the same time each day. This means you will be comparing like with like.

You could measure your blood pressure first thing in the morning and last thing at night before you go to bed

What should I do if I have any problems or questions?

You can call Brannam Medical Centre on 01271 329004.

Name:

Date of birth:

G.P:

Are these readings from your own monitor?

Yes

No

If yes, what is the make and model?

	First reading		Second reading		Lower of the two	
	1 st number (Systolic)	2 nd number (Diastolic)	1 st number (Systolic)	2 nd number (Diastolic)	1 st number (Systolic)	2 nd number (Diastolic)
Example	133	73	125	70	125	70

Day 1						
Morning						
Evening						
Day 2						
Morning						
Evening						
Day 3						
Morning						
Evening						
Day 4						
Morning						
Evening						
Day 5						
Morning						
Evening						
Day 6						
Morning						
Evening						
Day 7						
Morning						
Evening						

For clinic use only:

Clinic BP reading		
Average of home BP readings		
Difference		
White Coat Hypertension*?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Prior 10-year QRISK2 Score		%

* Difference > 20/10 at diagnosis