

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MONITORING YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE AT HOME

It is important that your blood pressure is well controlled, and low enough to prevent long term damage to the circulation.

The gold standard for diagnosis, now also recommended by [NICE](#), is ambulatory blood pressure monitoring, but a cost effective alternative is to use an suitable home blood pressure monitor. It is recommended that you purchase or loan an accurate device as recommended by the [British Hypertension Society](#) at a cost of between £35-100. There are various sorts, but we have found the most reliable involve a cuff rather than a wrist measurement. If you have a large arm, it is important that you use a large cuff. Ideally the nurse at your GP practice or at our clinic should check the device to make sure it is accurate by taking a manual recording of blood pressure at the same time as recording the pressure on the device.

Rather than take multiple blood pressure recordings throughout each day, which can be confusing as there is much variation, it is best that you take the average of recordings **at the same time** every morning and evening, usually shortly after rising or retiring to bed. Sit at a table with the arm relaxed. Because of variations in machine accuracy and variation in blood pressure during the day, the pressure should be recorded at the *same time every day for 4-7 days*.

Three readings should be taken with a few minutes interval between. Discard the first, and work out the average for the 2nd and 3rd recording. Repeat each day, and then work out the weeks average (see example below) or download our spreadsheet template. At this point the blood pressure machine can be put away, usually for three months. (There is evidence that if you take it all the time, every day, there is a risk of cardiac neurosis!)

The target blood pressure (average at home) for a non-diabetic patient is 135/85 mmHg and for a diabetic patient is 130/80 mmHg.

Day	Systolic reading 1	Diastolic reading 1	Systolic reading 2	Diastolic reading 2	Systolic reading 3	Diastolic reading 3	Systolic Average	Diastolic average
Mon	169	55	150	90	160	90	155	90
Tue	188	67	160	90	160	90	160	90
Wed	155	55	158	85	150	90	154	87.5
Thur	190	43	175	82	164	90	169.5	86
Fri	177	66	160	66	155	84	157.5	75
	Ignore	Ignore					159.2	85.7

Average the second and third systolic and diastolic value $(150+160)/2 = 155$ and $(90+90)/2 = 90$ each day. Then, average the average to calculate the average systolic and diastolic BP .. In this example, the average systolic BP for the week is $(155+160+154+169.5+157.5)/5 = 159$ mmHg and the average diastolic BP for the week is $(90+90+87.5+86+85.7)/5 = 86$ mmHg

For more details and contemporary articles on this subject, search our website hasteacademy.org or our [blog section](#)

If your blood pressure is not adequately controlled you may be at increased risk of vascular disease. You should therefore discuss the results with your GP or Specialist.

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