

# How to Measure Your **Blood Pressure**

Getting an accurate blood pressure reading is a quick and easy way to help you stay on top of your heart health and catch any issues early. Start by using a blood pressure monitor that is approved by your healthcare provider, or is medical grade, and by making sure that it fits properly.

## **Step 1. 30 minutes before your blood pressure is taken:**

- No smoking
- No exercise
- No caffeinated beverages
- No alcohol

## **Step 2. 5 minutes before your blood pressure is taken:**

- Rest for at least 5 minutes
- Sit calmly and do not talk

## **Step 3. Prepare to take your blood pressure:**

- Rest your arm comfortably on a flat surface at heart level
- Sit upright, back straight and supported
- Keep legs uncrossed and feet flat on the floor
- Place the bottom of the cuff above the bend of the elbow
- Wrap it against your bare skin (not over clothing)
- Take at least 2 readings, 1 minute apart
  - Preferably in the morning before taking medications
  - Preferably in the evening before going to bed
  - If you notice that one arm shows a higher reading than the other, use the arm with the higher reading



## **How to Read Your Blood Pressure Measurements:**

**120**

### **Systolic**

When your heart **beats** and heart muscle contracts.

**80**

### **Diastolic**

When your heart is **resting** between beats.



A normal blood pressure reading is less than 120/80 mmHg. Talk to your provider about your blood pressure goal. **Scan the QR code to learn more.**

**If your blood pressure is higher than 180/120 mmHg it is considered an emergency.**

- Wait a few minutes and take your blood pressure again
- If your blood pressure is still high and there are no other signs or symptoms, contact your healthcare professional immediately
- If you are experiencing signs and symptoms of chest pain, shortness of breath, back pain, numbness/weakness, change in vision, or difficulty speaking, call 911

**My Blood Pressure Log**

Name:
My Blood Pressure Goal:            /            mmHg
<b>Instructions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Measure your blood pressure twice a day - morning and evening - at about the same times every day</li><li>• Record your blood pressure in this log to show your doctor at every visit</li></ul>

Date	Morning			Evening		
	Time	Reading 1	Reading 2	Time	Reading 1	Reading 2
		/	/		/	/
		/	/		/	/
		/	/		/	/
		/	/		/	/
		/	/		/	/
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**Resources:**

American Heart Association: <http://heart.org/hbp>

CDC: [https://www.cdc.gov/heart-disease/docs/My\\_Blood\\_Pressure\\_Log.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/heart-disease/docs/My_Blood_Pressure_Log.pdf)

Beth Israel Leahy Health “At-Home Blood Pressure Monitors:”  
[https://www.bilhpn.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/34915\\_Performance\\_Network\\_Blood\\_Pressure\\_Flyer\\_8.5x11\\_final.pdf](https://www.bilhpn.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/34915_Performance_Network_Blood_Pressure_Flyer_8.5x11_final.pdf)