

Checking your blood pressure

Blood pressure (sometimes called your BP) is the force of blood moving through your blood vessels. Each time your heart beats, it pushes blood through your arteries, supplying energy all over your body. Understanding how to keep track of your blood pressure can really help you on your health journey!

If your doctor suggests checking your blood pressure at home, don't worry – we're here to support you every step of the way! Your doctor can give you a prescription for a blood pressure monitor. Just take that prescription to a medical supply store that's partnered with Passport, and you'll be all set with your very own blood pressure monitor.

Before you start:

- **Take a break:** Wait for about 30 minutes if you've just had coffee, smoked or exercised. This ensures your reading is as accurate as possible.
- **Nature's call:** Empty your bladder five minutes before checking your BP. A full bladder can change your readings!
- **Find your peace:** Find a nice, quiet spot and place your monitor on a table.
- **Get comfortable:** Relax in a supportive chair for 3-5 minutes.
- **Consistent arm use:** Always use the same arm for your readings. Consistency is key!
- **Dress code:** Roll up your sleeve or remove it so your skin can breathe – tight sleeves can skew the results.
- **Arm up:** Rest your arm on the table at heart level for the best reading.

How to take an accurate blood pressure reading:

- **The right fit:** Make sure the blood pressure cuff fits you well – it shouldn't be too tight or loose once it inflates.
- **Cuff time:** Wrap the cuff snugly around your arm, just above the elbow.
- **Skin contact:** Use the cuff directly on bare skin, avoiding clothing.
- **Arm position:** Place your arm on the table, palm facing up and at heart level.
- **Sit up straight:** Relax, don't cross your legs and keep still – this helps with accurate readings.
- **Silence is golden:** Try not to talk as your blood pressure is measured.
- **Let the machine work:** Press the button to start the monitor and breathe evenly. The cuff should get tighter as it inflates. Stay calm as it works its magic!



After you take your blood pressure:

- **Let it deflate:** Allow the cuff to deflate completely before checking the results.
- **Reading time:** Your blood pressure and possibly your heart rate will show on the monitor.
- **Multiple reads:** For the most accurate results, take at least two readings, spaced 2 minutes apart. If there's a big difference (more than 5 mm Hg), try a couple more readings for consistency.
- **Cuff off:** Once you're done, remove the cuff from your arm.



Record your results:

- **Jot it down:** Write your blood pressure and heart rate, along with the date and time, in a special notebook just for your medical information. Keep this separate from your shopping lists and other notes.
- **Stay organized:** Store your notebook in a safe place so you can always find it.
- **Next visit:** Bring both your notebook and your blood pressure monitor to your next doctor's appointment for an in-depth discussion!



Discuss with your doctor:

- **Share your insights:** Bring your blood pressure readings to discuss with your healthcare provider.
- **Calibration chat:** Ask your provider to help calibrate your home blood pressure machine. Calibration means comparing your home's readings to those taken in the office, making sure you're on the right track!
- **Frequency talk:** Find out how often your doctor wants you to check your blood pressure – they're there to help guide you!

Remember, if you have any questions or need help managing your health, we're here cheering you on! Please call us at [\(800\) 578-0603](tel:8005780603) if you need help.. Stay positive and take good care of yourself!

From the American Heart Association (The rules for measuring blood pressure – and why they exist | American Heart Association)