

What to know before taking your own blood pressure

At times, your doctor may ask you to measure your blood pressure outside of the doctor's office or health care setting, usually at home. They may ask you to take your blood pressure:

- Between visits
- At different times of the day

You will use a blood pressure device that is fitted for your upper arm, unless instructed differently by your doctor or care team. You will need a quiet place with no distractions to take your blood pressure.



How can taking my own blood pressure help my health?

Taking your blood pressure outside of your doctor's office can:

- Give your doctor a more complete picture of your blood pressure because you're taking it over time
- Help you understand your blood pressure numbers
- Help you talk with your doctor and health care team about a treatment plan for your blood pressure

What do my blood pressure numbers mean?

- **Blood pressure** is shown as 2 numbers:
 - **Systolic blood pressure (SBP or SYS)** is the top number. It is the pressure on your arteries when your heart beats (pumps blood).
 - **Diastolic blood pressure (DBP or DIA)** is the bottom number. It is the pressure on your arteries when your heart rests between beats.
 - **Pulse** is the number of times your heart beats each minute.



Tips for taking your own blood pressure

→ Learn how to take your blood pressure, including:

- How to prepare to take it at home
- How to position yourself before you take it

→ Find a validated blood pressure device:

- Ask your doctor or care team for a list of devices that are validated (validated devices have been tested by experts and shown to measure blood pressure the right way).
- Use a device with an upper arm cuff that fits your arm, unless instructed differently by your doctor or care team.

→ Ask your doctor and care team:

- What are my ideal blood pressure numbers?
- Which numbers are too high or too low?
- When and how should I share my measurements with you?
- What should I do if my blood pressure is too high or too low?
- What should I do if I have symptoms like chest pain, dizziness, or shortness of breath?

Notes
