

How to Measure Your Blood Pressure

When your heart beats, it pumps blood to the arteries and creates pressure within them. The higher (systolic) number represents the pressure while the heart is beating. The lower (diastolic) number represents the pressure when the heart is resting between beats. A high blood pressure (hypertension) increases the risk of stroke, congestive heart failure, kidney failure and heart attack.



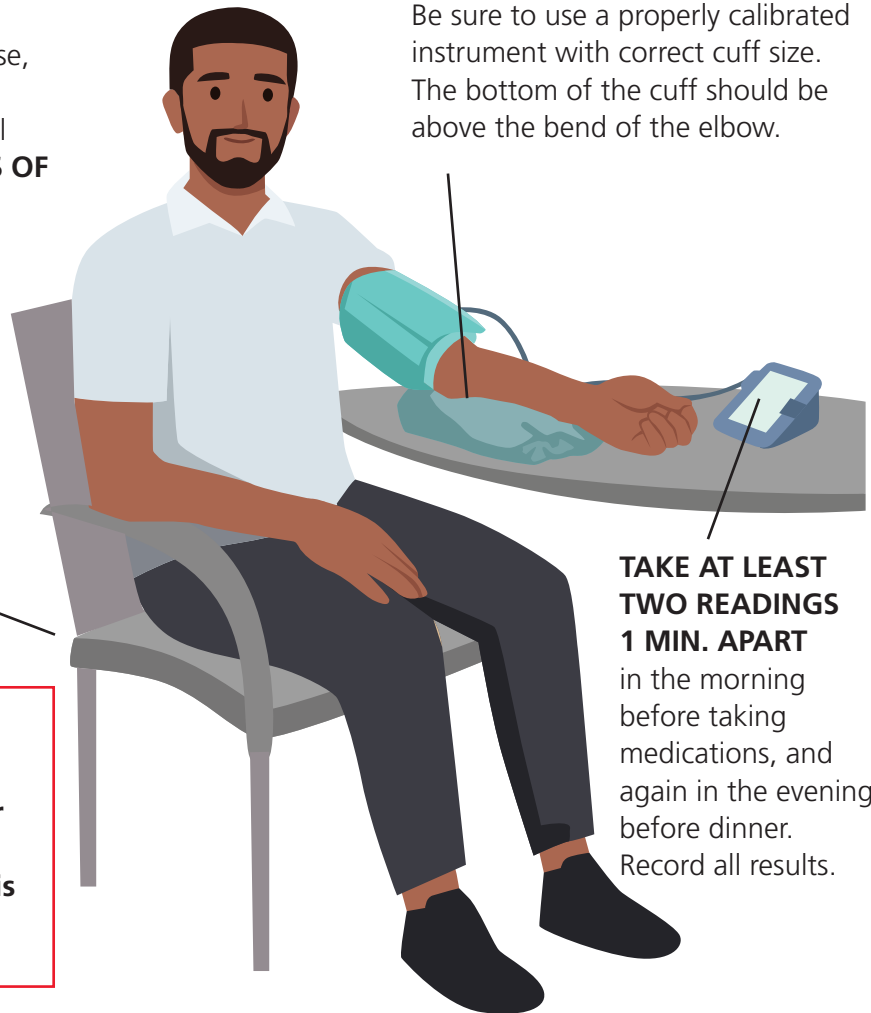
Don't smoke, exercise, drink caffeinated beverages or alcohol within **30 MINUTES OF MEASUREMENT.**

Make sure you are relaxed. Sit still in a chair for five minutes with your legs uncrossed and feet flat on the floor. Rest your left arm on a flat surface at heart level. Your back should be straight and supported. Do not talk.



If your blood pressure is higher than 180/120 mmHg, contact your doctor immediately, as this indicates a hypertensive crisis.

Be sure to use a properly calibrated instrument with correct cuff size. The bottom of the cuff should be above the bend of the elbow.



TAKE AT LEAST TWO READINGS 1 MIN. APART

in the morning before taking medications, and again in the evening before dinner. Record all results.

Risk Level	Blood Pressure (systolic/diastolic)	Recommendation
Normal	Less than 120 / less than 80	Routine follow-up with physician.
Elevated	120-129 / less than 80	Increase physical activity and reduce sodium in diet. Retest within two weeks and review results with physician.
Stage 1 Hypertension	130-139 / 80-89	See physician for evaluation & treatment options.
Stage 2 Hypertension	140 or higher / 90 or higher	See physician for evaluation & treatment options. If new onset: Call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest ER.