



American Heart Association.

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# BLOOD PRESSURE MEASUREMENT INSTRUCTIONS

## IN THE 30 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE IS TAKEN:

- NO SMOKING
- NO EXERCISE
- NO CAFFEINATED BEVERAGES
- NO ALCOHOL

## RIGHT BEFORE:

- PLACE THE BOTTOM OF THE CUFF ABOVE THE BEND OF THE ELBOW.
- WRAP IT AGAINST YOUR BARE SKIN, NOT OVER CLOTHING.

USE A PROPERLY CALIBRATED AND VALIDATED DEVICE. CHECK THE CUFF SIZE AND FIT.

REST FOR AT LEAST 5 MINUTES. SIT CALMLY AND DON'T TALK.

## WHILE YOU PREPARE TO TAKE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE:

- RELAX.
- DON'T TALK.
- 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.

TAKE AT LEAST TWO READINGS 1 MINUTE APART IN THE MORNING BEFORE TAKING MEDICATIONS, AND IN THE EVENING BEFORE GOING TO BED. RECORD ALL RESULTS.

(IF YOU NOTICE THAT ONE ARM SHOWS A HIGHER READING THAN THE OTHER, USE THE ARM WITH THE HIGHER READING.)

## American Heart Association recommended blood pressure levels

| Blood Pressure Category                               | Systolic mm Hg (upper number) |        | Diastolic mm Hg (lower number) |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|
| Normal                                                | Less than 120                 | and    | Less than 80                   |
| Elevated                                              | 120-129                       | and    | Less than 80                   |
| High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 1            | 130-139                       | or     | 80-89                          |
| High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 2            | 140 or higher                 | or     | 90 or higher                   |
| Hypertensive Crisis (Consult your doctor immediately) | Higher than 180               | and/or | Higher than 120                |



\* WAIT A FEW MINUTES AND TAKE BLOOD PRESSURE AGAIN.

\* IF YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE IS STILL HIGH AND THERE ARE NO OTHER SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS, CONTACT YOUR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL IMMEDIATELY.

\* IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING SIGNS OF POSSIBLE ORGAN DAMAGE, SUCH AS CHEST PAIN, SHORTNESS OF BREATH, BACK PAIN, NUMBNESS/WEAKNESS, CHANGE IN VISION OR DIFFICULTY SPEAKING, CALL 911.

LEARN MORE AT [HEART.ORG/BP](https://heart.org/bp)

