



# How to Take Blood Pressure Measurements at Home

## To purchase an accurate blood pressure monitor online:

- Measure your upper arm above your elbow to choose the correct cuff size. Upper arm cuffs come in different sizes or are adjustable to fit arm sizes from 9 to 17 inches. One option our Kaiser Permanente pharmacies stock is the Omron 3 Upper Arm monitor, which can be ordered from online retailers.
- Don't buy a monitor that uses your wrist or fingertip to measure. Those are not accurate and shouldn't be used.

## Follow these instructions to take an accurate reading:

### DO

1. Use the bathroom before you measure your blood pressure so that you're comfortable.
2. Sit in a quiet room.
3. Sit in a chair with your back supported with BOTH feet resting on the ground.
4. Flex your arm at the elbow and rest it on a flat tabletop or other surface for support.
5. Put the cuff in **direct contact** with the skin of your arm.

### DON'T

1. DO NOT cross your legs.
2. DO NOT **position cuff over clothing.**
3. DO NOT talk when you take your reading.
4. DO NOT **smoke, drink caffeinated beverages, or exercise within 30 minutes BEFORE taking your blood pressure.**

## What are the BEST times to measure blood pressure?

1. **Early morning.** Measure blood pressure **within 1 hour of waking BEFORE** taking any morning medicines.
2. **Evening.** Measure your blood pressure **1 hour or more after eating dinner** but **BEFORE** taking any evening medicines.

**NOTE:** Morning readings are HIGHER than evening readings for many people. Because of this, **it's important that at least half of your readings are morning readings.**

## How many readings should you take?

1. Take "sets" of morning AND "sets" of evening readings for best results. Each set should include either 2 or 3 readings.
2. Measure blood pressure at least **3 days** over the course of one week.
3. Make sure not to skip days between readings, when possible.

Use the **Blood Pressure Results Log on the back of this page** to record blood pressure readings.

# Home Blood Pressure Results Log

- Check your blood pressure **3 mornings** during the week between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m. AND **3 evenings** during the week between 6 p.m. and 10 p.m.
- Your morning and evening blood pressures can both be done on the same day or on separate days.
- Take 2 to 3 blood pressure readings each time you take your blood pressure. Each should be at least 1 minute apart.
  1. REST for 5 minutes BEFORE taking the FIRST reading.
  2. Wait 1 minute AFTER the FIRST reading, THEN take the SECOND reading.
  3. Wait 1 minute AGAIN, and THEN take the THIRD reading.
  4. Write all 3 readings down on a piece of paper. Be sure to note the date and times.

Sunday/Date:		Monday/Date:		Tuesday/Date:		Wednesday/Date:	
Time	Systolic / Diastolic	Time	Systolic / Diastolic	Time	Systolic / Diastolic	Time	Systolic / Diastolic
a.m.	/	a.m.	/	a.m.	/	a.m.	/
a.m.	/	a.m.	/	a.m.	/	a.m.	/
a.m.	/	a.m.	/	a.m.	/	a.m.	/
p.m.	/	p.m.	/	p.m.	/	p.m.	/
p.m.	/	p.m.	/	p.m.	/	p.m.	/
p.m.	/	p.m.	/	p.m.	/	p.m.	/

Thursday/Date:		Friday/Date:		Saturday/Date:	
Time	Systolic / Diastolic	Time	Systolic / Diastolic	Time	Systolic / Diastolic
a.m.	/	a.m.	/	a.m.	/
a.m.	/	a.m.	/	a.m.	/
a.m.	/	a.m.	/	a.m.	/
p.m.	/	p.m.	/	p.m.	/
p.m.	/	p.m.	/	p.m.	/
p.m.	/	p.m.	/	p.m.	/

Source: Handler, J., M.D., Managing White Coat Effect, Journal of Clinical Hypertension, Vol. 10 No. 8 August 2008.

This information is not intended to diagnose or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor. Some photos may include models and not actual patients.