



American
Heart
Association.

BLOOD PRESSURE MEASUREMENT INSTRUCTIONS

IN THE 30 MINUTES
BEFORE YOUR BLOOD
PRESSURE IS TAKEN:

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

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.

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.

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

BLOOD
PRESSURE
HIGHER THAN
180/120 mm Hg
IS A CRISIS.*

* 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/HBP](https://heart.org/HBP)