

A guide to taking your blood pressure (BP)

Blood pressure (BP) is an important measure of your heart and overall health. Some medicines, including those used to treat ADHD, can affect BP, so it's important to monitor this carefully while your dose is being adjusted.

During your treatment, we will contact you at regular intervals to ask you to take and upload your latest BP readings. This helps your prescriber to make safe and informed decisions about your medication.

Having a reliable BP monitor at home helps provide accurate readings and will ensure that there are no delays to your treatment.

Choosing a BP monitor

- **Get a monitor with an upper cuff:** Ideally, choose a monitor that measures your blood pressure at your upper arm.
- **Check that it is UK approved:** Choose a monitor that has been validated by the [British and Irish Hypertension Society \(BIHS\)](#). This means that it has been through a series of tests to check that it gives results you can trust.
- **Make sure the cuff is the right size:** The cuff should wrap snugly around your upper arm, with just enough space to slide 2 fingers underneath. Most home BP monitors will come with a medium-sized cuff. If your upper arm is much larger or smaller than average, you may need to buy a different-sized cuff separately.
- **Get it serviced every 2 years:** Your BP monitor needs to be serviced and calibrated at least once every 2 years to make sure it's accurate. This involves sending it back to the company that made it, usually for a fee. If this option is too complicated or expensive, it may be easier and cheaper to buy a new monitor.

Where to buy a BP monitor

Purchase from pharmacies, supermarkets or online. They typically cost around £20+, but prices will vary, so it's worth shopping around.

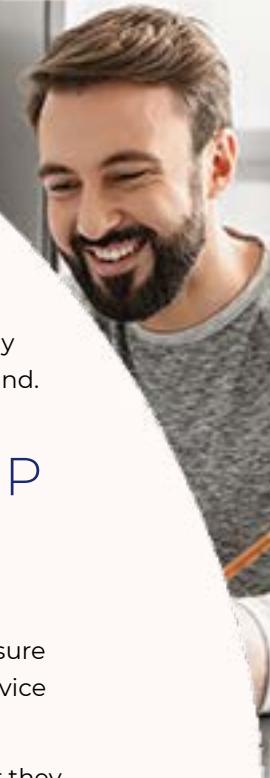
Visit your local pharmacy or GP surgery

Check with your local pharmacies whether they offer blood pressure checks. These may be free for people over 40. Otherwise, this service usually costs around £10.

It may also be helpful to contact your GP Practice to ask whether they have a self-service 'Surgery Pod'. Some larger GP Practices offer these to allow you to check your BP without needing an appointment.

How to take accurate blood pressure readings

Please scroll to the next page to continue reading.



How to take your blood pressure (BP) reading

Taking your blood pressure correctly helps give the most accurate reading. These steps will guide you through the process.



Please also see our accompanying resources:

[Simple tips for accurate blood pressure readings](#)

[Watch our video](#)

Before you take your reading

Medication



If you take stimulant medication, **please wait 60-90 minutes** after taking it before checking your blood pressure, as it can temporarily raise your reading.

Avoid for 30 mins beforehand

For at least **30 minutes before your reading**.

Try not to:

- drink caffeine (e.g. coffee, tea, energy drinks)
- smoke
- eat a large meal
- exercise

These can all affect your result. If you have done any of these, sit quietly for a few minutes before measuring.

Get comfortable

- Sit in a chair with your **back supported**.
- Keep **both feet flat on the floor**.
- **Do not cross your legs**.
- Rest your arm on a table or cushion so it is **supported at the same level as your heart**.
- Sit quietly and relax for **5 minutes** before taking the reading.

Applying the cuff

- Use the **correct size cuff** for your arm – not too tight or too loose.
- Place the cuff on your **left upper arm**, on bare skin.
- The bottom of the cuff should be **2-3cm above the crease of your elbow**.
- Line up the artery marker with the inside of your arm.

Taking the reading

- Do not talk while the machine is working.
- Keep your arm relaxed and supported.
- Sit still and breathe normally.
- Try to stay calm – it's normal to feel a little nervous at first.

Understanding your reading

Check your results using the [NHS blood pressure reading tool](#) to see your reading on a chart and understand what it means.

If your reading is higher than expected, try not to worry. Many things can affect your blood pressure.

Try taking a second reading. If it's still high, please seek the advice of your GP.