

- Tobacco use in any form (smoking and chewing tobacco).
- Excessive alcohol consumption.
- Chronic conditions such as kidney and hormone problems, diabetes, and high levels of harmful blood fats.
- Stress.

In your community, the ANM, with your help will undertake screening of all adults 30 years and above, for hypertension. This will take place on a fixed day. Individuals who have normal blood pressure should be screened once in a year. Any individual diagnosed with high BP should be referred to a higher level for further diagnosis and management.

It is the medical officer's responsibility to develop a treatment plan for the patient, based on the level of blood pressure and the presence of other conditions such as high levels of blood glucose and fat. The treatment plan includes not just anti-hypertensive medication but also a plan for addressing any modifiable risk factors. It is part of your role to ensure that the patient adheres to the treatment and makes changes in her/his lifestyle to reduce modifiable risk factors.

## Diagnosis of High Blood Pressure

The only way to detect high blood pressure is to measure it using a BP apparatus. There are many kinds of BP apparatus. In this section, we will discuss the use of a Digital blood pressure machine.

A blood pressure measurement gives you two readings (numbers). The upper one, which is higher of the two numbers, is called the *systolic blood pressure*. The lower number, which is also the smaller of the two numbers, is the *diastolic blood pressure*.

In a screening programme, an individual with a systolic pressure (upper reading) of 140 mm Hg or more and a diastolic pressure (lower reading) of 90 mm Hg requires referral.



## Recording Blood Pressure

### Tools

- Digital blood pressure instrument.

A digital blood pressure instrument measures blood pressure. It shows the readings on a small screen. It can be used by anyone with a little training. However confirmation of high blood pressure can only be made by a medical doctor.

### Important points to keep in mind

- Ensure the patient is sitting comfortably with back supported, with their feet flat on the floor. The legs should not be crossed.
- Ensure the measurement is taken in a quiet room with comfortable temperature.