

# White Coat Hypertension

**W**hite coat hypertension is a condition in which your blood pressure is high only when measured in a healthcare setting. These blood pressure spikes are presumed to be related to anxiety and stress. A 2024 review suggested a small but definite increase in the heart related risks in people with white coat hypertension.

People with white coat hypertension are also prone to develop full-time high blood pressure which is defined as reading of 130/80 mmHg or higher. Diagnosis of white coat hypertension requires people to check their blood pressure outside of the doctors' office, either with Home blood pressure monitor or more accurately by an ambulatory blood pressure monitoring.

The latter uses a device that automatically measures and records blood pressure every 15 to 30 minutes over a 24 hour period.

**DANGERS OF WHITE COAT HYPERTENSION:** White coat hypertension is defined as a blood pressure reading in the doctors office of greater than 130/80 but less than 160/100 and an average daytime blood pressure reading of less than 130/80. If your home blood pressure readings are truly normal, no need for treatment.

However, if you have some strikingly high readings, this intermittent spikes might still be damaging your cardiovascular system.

People with untreated white coat hypertension has a greater risk of heart disease than people whose blood pressure readings are always normal.

**FEW POINTERS ABOUT HYPERTENSION AND BLOOD PRESSURE MONITORING:** High blood pressure is a silent killer because most of the patients with this condition have no symptoms, yet it silently causes damage. However, blood pressure which is 130/80 mmHg or higher.-the official definition of high blood pressure-injures blood vessels, causing them to thicken and stiffen.

Left untreated, high blood pressure eventually damage the heart, brain and kidneys. That's the reason every adult should have his or her blood pressure checked and kept under control. If your blood pressure starts trending higher or you have already been diagnosed with high blood pressure, it is a good idea to buy a home blood pressure monitor and check your home blood pressure.

Heart attacks ,stroke and other serious health problems correlate more closely with home blood pressure than with office blood pressure.

It is always a good practice to have your blood pressure checked in both arms sequentially, at least once. If this has not been done, please have this done either at home or during next visit with your doctor. If the reading from one arm is higher than the other arm, it is the arm with higher blood pressure should be the one to follow.

Women who have mastectomy should generally have their blood pressure checked in the arm on the side, opposite to the breast that was removed. It is also a good practice to take your home blood pressure monitor to your doctors office periodically to compare the readings with the measurements taken in the doctors office.

If the readings vary by less than 10%, you can take it for granted that your home monitor is well validated.

**TIPS FOR MEASURING BLOOD PRESSURE:** The following tips can help you to get the most accurate blood pressure readings -Avoid caffeine, tobacco and exercise for at least 30 minutes before hand -Empty your bladder and don't cross your legs during blood pressure measurement.

A full bladder and crossed legs can reduce blood flow return to your heart and your body's natural response to this is to raise your blood pressure. -Sit with your feet flat on the floor -Place cuff on your bare arm (not over the clothing) with the bottom edge about a finger's breadth above your elbow. -Support your forearm by resting it on it table, with your elbow positioned roughly at heart height. -Sit quietly without talking or doing anything else such as reading, watching TV , argue with your spouse, etc., during the measurement

Current guidelines suggest that you should wait one minute and retake the reading and then average the two numbers.

If you're planning to buy a blood pressure monitor, do not buy a wrist cuff or a fingertip sensor, as they are not accurate and always buy one with upper arm cuff

I hope I have given you enough homework for the weekend for those who reads this. For those who don't read, you're on your own. 😊 😂 🤣 🤣

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