Monitor Your Pressure, Know Your Risk

Blood pressure (BP) shows how hard your heart works to push blood through your body. When it stays high, your risk of heart attack, stroke, kidney damage, and vision loss increases—even if you feel fine.

Checking your BP at home is a simple but powerful way to protect your health. But for results to be useful, you need to measure correctly and consistently.

**How to Check BP the Right Way**

* Sit quietly for 5 minutes before testing.
* Rest your arm on a table at heart level.
* Place the cuff on bare skin, not over clothing.
* Stay silent during the reading.
* Avoid caffeine, smoking, or exercise for 30 minutes beforehand.
* Take two readings, one minute apart, and record both.

**What Do the Numbers Mean?**

* **Normal:** Below 120/80 mmHg
* **Elevated:** 120–129 systolic and <80 diastolic
* **Stage 1 Hypertension:** 130–139 systolic or 80–89 diastolic
* **Stage 2 Hypertension:** 140/90 mmHg or higher
* **Hypertensive Crisis:** Above 180/120 mmHg → seek immediate care

**Why It Matters**  
One reading alone doesn’t tell the whole story. Tracking your numbers over time shows patterns and risks. If your BP is often high, consult your doctor. Small lifestyle changes—and sometimes medication—can prevent long-term damage.

Don’t wait for symptoms. Make BP checks part of your routine and stay ahead of risk.