

## Monitoring Your Blood Pressure at Home

If you are concerned about your blood pressure you should consider monitoring it from home. You still want to keep your regular doctor visits but this will help ensure you are making the right lifestyle choices. There is nothing more frustrating than changing your entire lifestyle for your blood pressure only for it to show no change. While this can sometimes happen, you might just need to add medication.

If you decide to monitor your blood pressure at home you want to keep a record. By doing this you can see what is working and what isn't in lowering or maintaining your blood pressure.

When monitoring your blood pressure you have choices of the equipment to use. You can use an aneroid monitor that has a dial gauge and uses a pointer to read. You can also use a digital monitor with the option of a manual or automatic cuff. With a digital monitor your reading will flash on the screen.

Some people might suggest using a finger or wrist monitor but these have been proven less effective. They are not as accurate, more movement sensitive and more costly as well.

When choosing your monitor you want to choose one that has the right cuff size for you. If you are unsure of what size to get, ask your doctor. If the cuff size is wrong your reading will be wrong, therefore you receive no benefit in the end.

If you want to be sure you are operating the blood pressure monitor right take it to your doctor. They can show you how to use it correctly. Using it the right way will ensure you get the right readings.

There are certain things you should do before checking your blood pressure. You do not want to drink or use any caffeine, alcohol or any tobacco products thirty minutes prior to checking. You want to be sure you use the restroom first as well. Relax and don't talk for at least three to five minutes prior to taking a reading.

Make sure you are completely comfortable. Do not cross your legs or arms and keep your back straight. When you strap the cuff on, you want to be sure your arm is at the same level of your heart. Rest it on a table or solid surface. Be sure the cuff is snugly fit around your arm but still has room for a finger. The bottom of the cuff should be an inch from the crease of your elbow.

Understand what your numbers mean before monitoring your blood pressure from

home. Normal blood pressure would be a reading of 120/80 or less. High blood pressure would be 160/100 or higher. Anything in between these readings would mean prehypertension and this means you are on the way to developing high blood pressure.

You want to avoid this at all costs if possible and if you find your numbers increasing consult your doctor. Together you can find an effective way of helping you decrease your blood pressure. You might even have to consider blood pressure medication.