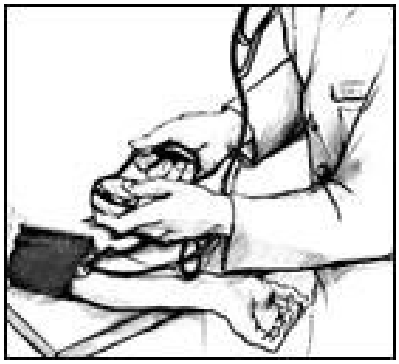
How To Take Your Blood Pressure At Home

These instructions are only for electronic home blood pressure machines. You will need:

- An automatic or semi-automatic blood pressure machine.
- Fresh batteries for the blood pressure machine.



HOW DO I USE THESE TOOLS TO CHECK MY BLOOD PRESSURE?

- There are 2 numbers that make up your blood pressure. For example: 120/80, which is said as "one twenty over eighty."
- The first number (120 in our example) is called the "systolic pressure." It is a measure of the pressure in your blood vessels when your heart is pumping blood.
- The second number (80 in our example) is called the "diastolic pressure." It is a measure of the pressure in your blood vessels when your heart is resting between beats.
- Before you buy a home blood pressure machine, check the size of your arm so you can buy the right size cuff. Here is how to check the size of your arm:
  - Use a tape measure which shows both inches and centimeter markings.
  - Wrap the tape measure around the middle upper part of your arm. You may need someone to help you measure right.
  - Write down your arm measurement in both inches and centimeters.
  - Use the chart below to be sure and get the right size cuff for your arm. To measure your blood pressure right, it is important to have the right size cuff.

If your arm is: Inches		**Centimeters**		**Get this cuff size**
up to 13	which is	27 - 34	→	Adult
13 - 17	which is	35 - 44	→	Large Adult
17 -20	which is	45 - 52	→	Adult thigh cuff

- Try to rest or relax for at least 30 minutes before you check your blood pressure. Do not smoke or have any drinks with caffeine, these include:
  - Pop.
  - Coffee.
  - Tea.
- Check your blood pressure in a quiet room so you or your helper can hear well.
- Sit down and stretch out your arm on a table. Keep your arm at about the level of your heart. Let your arm relax.

GETTING BLOOD PRESSURE READINGS:

- Make sure you remove any tight-fighting clothing from your arm. Wrap the cuff around your upper arm. Wrap it just above the bend, and above where you felt the pulse. You should be able to slip a finger between the cuff and your arm. If you cannot the cuff is too tight and should be removed and rewrapped.
- The semiautomatic unit requires you to manually pump up the arm cuff.
- Automatic units inflate the cuff when you press a button.
- Cuff deflation is automatic in both models.
- After the cuff is inflated, the unit measures your blood pressure and pulse. The readings are displayed on a monitor. Hold still and breathe normally while the cuff is inflated.
- Obtaining a reading takes less than a minute.

- Some models store readings in a memory. Some provide a printout of readings.
- Get readings at different times of the day. You should wait at least 5 minutes between readings. Take readings with you to your next doctor's appointment.

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