

Does My Blood Pressure Cuff Fit My Arm?

Did you know that a blood pressure cuff that is too big or too small can cause inaccurate blood pressure readings? See the star below to make sure you have the correct blood pressure cuff size; Use a soft measuring tape around the bicep or halfway between the shoulder and elbow which is also pictured below.

Recommended blood pressure cuffs

The American Heart Association advises against using a wrist blood pressure cuff.

Arm blood pressure cuffs are more accurate.

Recommend to patients bringing in their home cuff to the office to calibrate.



Arm circumference (in)	Cuff size
8.7 - 10.2	Small adult
10.6 - 13.4	Adult
13.8 - 17.3	Large adult
17.7 - 20.5	Extra large adult



Other Tips: Bring your cuff to one of your doctor visits to check if the blood pressure cuff is still reading correctly. Your doctor’s office can compare your home blood pressure cuff to the blood pressure reading at with one of the doctor office’s blood pressure cuffs.

Taking My Blood Pressure

Step 1: Preparation

- 1.) Relax while sitting in a chair for >5 minutes.
- 2.) The patient should avoid **caffeine, exercise, and smoking** for at least 30 minutes before measurement.
- 3.) Ensure patient has emptied their bladder.
- 4.) Remove clothing covering the location to cuff placement.

Step 2: Proper Technique

- 1.) Use a Blood Pressure measurement device that has been validated and ensure that the device is calibrated periodically.
- 2.) Position the middle of the cuff on the patient's upper arm.
- 3.) Use the correct cuff size.
- 4.) Use proper technique: Support the patient's arm (resting on a table), feet on floor, back supported, no talking during the reading.

Step 3: Recording Measurements

- 1.) Take at least 2 readings 1 minute apart each morning before medication and each evening before supper.
- 2.) Obtain weekly readings 2 weeks after a treatment change and the week before a clinic visit.
- 3.) Record date, time, Systolic Blood Pressure, Diastolic Blood Pressure, and other notes on your Blood pressure record chart.

Blood Pressue Record Chart

Name: _____

Date & Time	Systolic Blood Pressure	Diastolic Blood Pressure	Comments

Other Interventions to Help My Blood Pressure

TABLE 15 Best Proven Nonpharmacological Interventions for Prevention and Treatment of Hypertension*

	Nonpharmacological Intervention	Dose	Approximate Impact on SBP		
			Hypertension	Normotension	Reference
Weight loss	Weight/body fat	Best goal is ideal body weight, but aim for at least a 1-kg reduction in body weight for most adults who are overweight. Expect about 1 mm Hg for every 1-kg reduction in body weight.	-5 mm Hg	-2/3 mm Hg	(S6.2-1)
Healthy diet	DASH dietary pattern	Consume a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products, with reduced content of saturated and total fat.	-11 mm Hg	-3 mm Hg	(S6.2-6,S6.2-7)
Reduced intake of dietary sodium	Dietary sodium	Optimal goal is <1500 mg/d, but aim for at least a 1000-mg/d reduction in most adults.	-5/6 mm Hg	-2/3 mm Hg	(S6.2-9,S6.2-10)
Enhanced intake of dietary potassium	Dietary potassium	Aim for 3500-5000 mg/d, preferably by consumption of a diet rich in potassium.	-4/5 mm Hg	-2 mm Hg	(S6.2-13)
Physical activity	Aerobic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 90-150 min/wk ■ 65%-75% heart rate reserve 	-5/8 mm Hg	-2/4 mm Hg	(S6.2-18,S6.2-22)
	Dynamic resistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 90-150 min/wk ■ 50%-80% 1 rep maximum ■ 6 exercises, 3 sets/exercise, 10 repetitions/set 	-4 mm Hg	-2 mm Hg	(S6.2-18)
	Isometric resistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 4 × 2 min (hand grip), 1 min rest between exercises, 30%-40% maximum voluntary contraction, 3 sessions/wk ■ 8-10 wk 	-5 mm Hg	-4 mm Hg	(S6.2-19,S6.2-31)
Moderation in alcohol intake	Alcohol consumption	In individuals who drink alcohol, reduce alcohol† to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Men: ≤2 drinks daily ■ Women: ≤1 drink daily 	-4 mm Hg	-3 mm Hg	(S6.2-22-S6.2-24)

Other Interventions to Help My Blood Pressure

Medication class	Examples	Common side effects	Counseling points
Diuretics “water pill”	Hydrochlorothiazide, Triamterene, Spironolactone, Furosemide, Bumetanide	Increased urination, Dehydration, hypotension, dizziness, electrolyte abnormalities	Stay hydrated! Get labs done to check kidneys and electrolytes
ACE-Inhibitors	Lisinopril, Ramipril, benazepril, enalapril	Dry cough, increased potassium, hypotension, dizziness	Don’t use in pregnancy, get labs done
ARBs	Losartan, candesartan, Olmesartan, valsartan	Increased potassium, hypotension, dizziness	Don’t use in pregnancy, get labs done
Calcium Channel blockers	Dihydropyridine: Amlodipine, nifedipine Non-dihydropyridine: diltiazem, verapamil	Ankle swelling, headache, constipation, hypotension, dizziness	Watch for ankle swelling
Beta blockers	Propranolol, metoprolol, atenolol, carvedilol	Slows the heart rate, masking of hypoglycemia, hypotension, dizziness, fatigue	Don’t abruptly stop taking!