



Mid and South Essex
Integrated Care
System



Mid and South Essex

BP@Home

Blood pressure

A run-down of how to measure your blood pressure at home and the benefits of knowing your numbers.



Why monitoring your blood pressure is important

BP@Home is a scheme where you use a blood pressure monitor in the comfort of your own home to monitor your blood pressure and feedback the results to your GP surgery.

A blood pressure test checks if your blood pressure is healthy, or if it's high or low. Blood pressure is the term used to describe the strength with which your blood pushes on the sides of your arteries as it's pumped around your body. The medical term for high blood pressure is 'hypertension', which means your blood pressure is too high and your heart is working harder when pumping blood around your body.

Checking your blood pressure regularly and sharing the results with your GP surgery can help your GP to understand your blood pressure. Your GP can then offer you advice and support to avoid serious problems, such as heart attacks, strokes and other health conditions.

Why you have been chosen to check your blood pressure

Your GP surgery or a clinical staff member has identified you as someone they would like to monitor their blood pressure at home. This may be because you:

- previously had a high blood pressure reading
- may have a health condition that puts you at risk of high blood pressure
- may have already been diagnosed with hypertension.



Healthy blood pressure range for under 80s:

90/60 mmHg and 120/80 mmHg

For over 80s, the ideal blood pressure is below **150/90 mmHg**

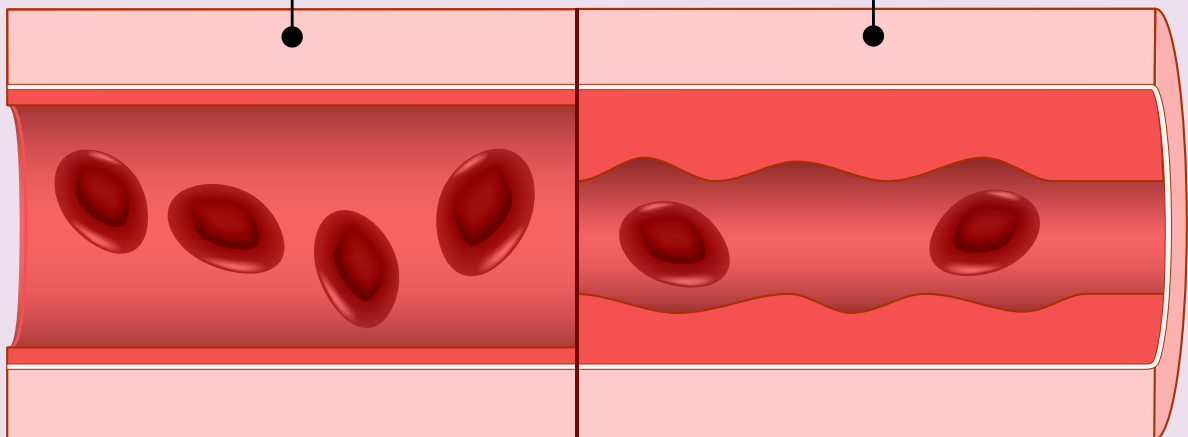
What is normal blood pressure?

Normal blood pressure is usually considered to be between 90/60 mmHg and 120/80 mmHg. For the over 80s, because it's normal for arteries to get stiffer as we get older, the ideal blood pressure is under 150/90 mmHg (or 145/85 mmHg at home).

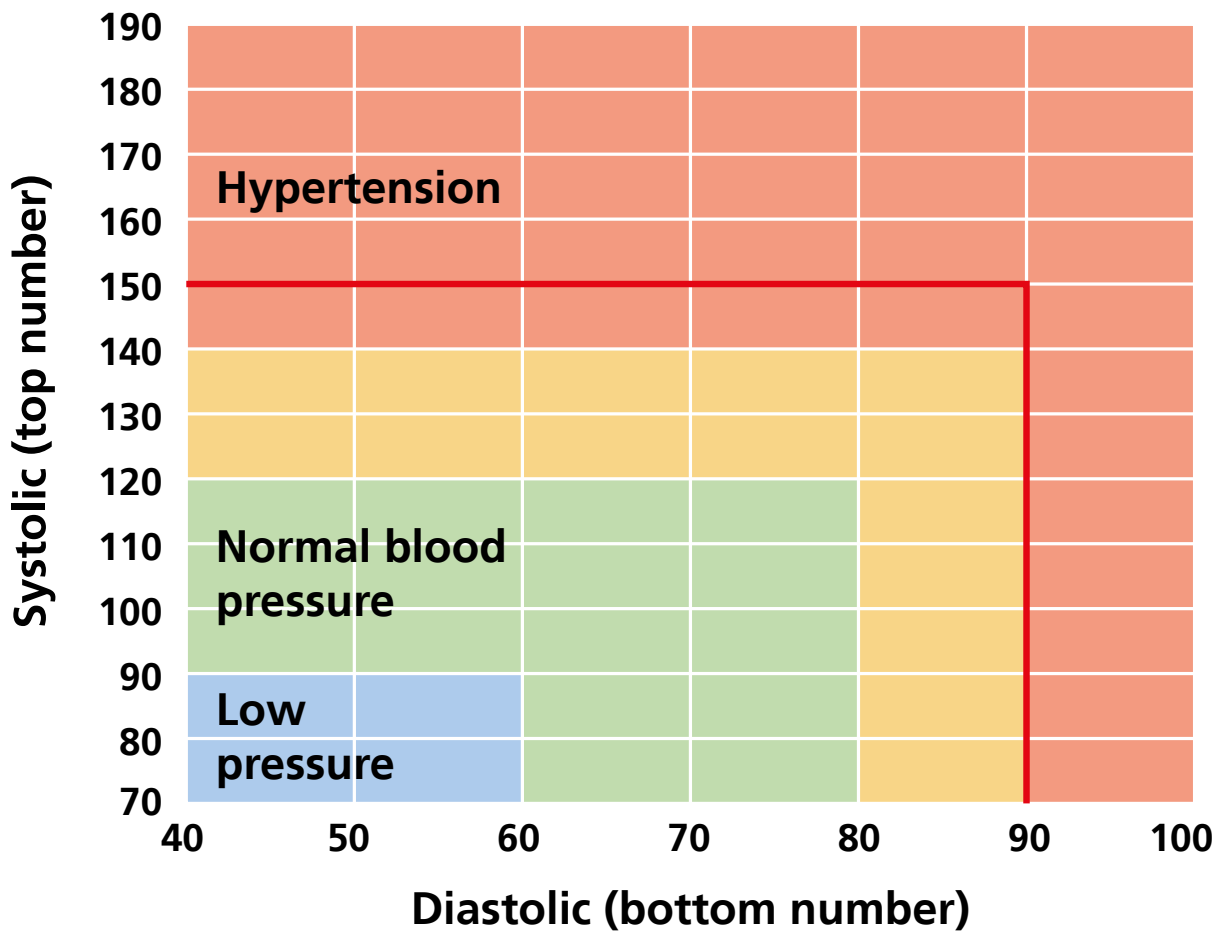
High-normal blood pressure is when you don't have an ideal blood pressure, but you also don't have hypertension. Being at this level might prompt you to explore ways to reduce your blood pressure to avoid developing high blood pressure in the future.

Normal - this is where blood pressure falls within a range that is considered healthy.

Hypertension - when the pressure in your blood vessels is high. It can lead to serious and life-threatening conditions.



Blood pressure ranges



— The boundary for normal blood pressure in the over 80s

When is it best to monitor your blood pressure?

It's best to take your blood pressure readings with your monitor over four days, checking twice in the morning and twice at night. You can agree with your GP how and when you'll give the readings to the GP surgery.



Over four days



Twice in the morning and twice at night



Avoid a meal or exercise before

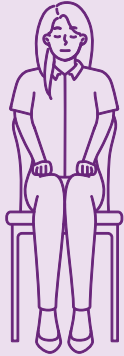


Avoid caffeine and nicotine before

How to monitor your blood pressure

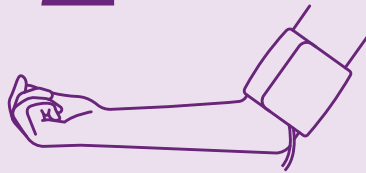
It's really important to monitor your blood pressure correctly, as this could impact your readings.

1



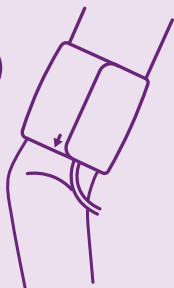
Sit in a comfortable position with your legs uncrossed and your back supported.

2



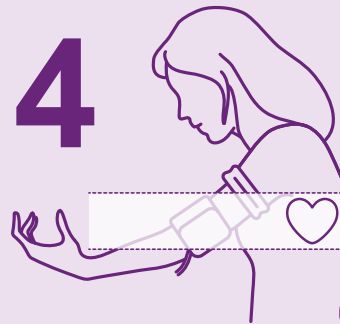
Place the cuff 2-3cm above the elbow. Place it directly on the skin if possible.

3



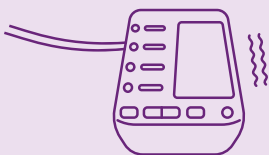
The cuff's tubing should be at the centre of your arm on the front side.

4



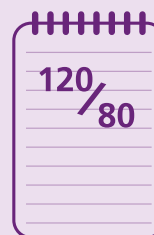
Your forearm should be supported at heart level.

5



Take a reading. Take a second reading after a few minutes as the first is often higher.

6



Note and send your readings to your GP surgery at the end of the four days.

Scan the following QR code to watch our instructive video and find other helpful resources to manage your blood pressure.

Alternatively you can ask your GP for more information.



Ways to reduce high blood pressure

Below are some of the ways you can reduce your blood pressure and stay healthy. You can find more information on reducing risks of high blood pressure by scanning the QR code on the previous page.



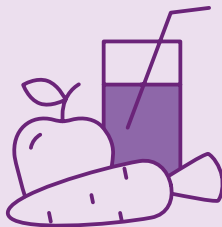
Get active



Stop smoking



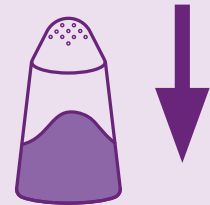
Reduce alcohol



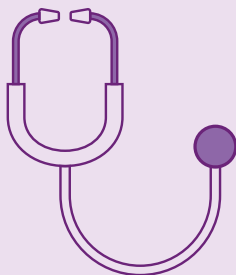
Eat a balanced diet



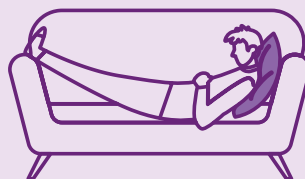
Maintain a healthy weight



Reduce salt intake



Attend NHS 40+ Health Checks



Take time to relax and de-stress



Take medication

What happens next?

After you submit your blood pressure readings to your GP, the clinical staff will enter these onto your medical records to help them keep track of your health. If no further monitoring or testing is needed you may not hear from your GP, however if they would like to follow up with you, they will contact you to make an appointment.

In this appointment, you may discuss your next steps to improving your blood pressure. This could include a referral for support, such as weight management services, stop smoking support and other relevant lifestyle programmes. Your clinical team may recommend that medication is needed to support your blood pressure.

Remember, everyone is different and what works well for another person may not work well for you. Use the questions to the right as a guide to explore treatment options.



What are my choices?

What are the advantages and disadvantages?

What if I do nothing?

Where can I find more information and support?

Any questions?

If you have any further questions about the BP@Home scheme or have concerns about your blood pressure, please contact your GP surgery for more support.



This guide was produced by NHS Mid and South Essex. For more information on our work, please visit www.midandsouthessex.ics.nhs.uk



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