

# Measuring your blood pressure at home

Keeping track of your blood pressure at home helps you and your doctor get a clearer idea of what your blood pressure is during a usual day. This information lets you and your doctor see how well your blood pressure medicine is working. It also shows you how the lifestyle changes you're making, such as healthier eating and being more active, are affecting your blood pressure.

## When to check

- Take your blood pressure readings at least 3 days in a row every week. Plan to check your blood pressure on those same days every week.
- Check your blood pressure in the morning or in the evening (preferably both) at the same time(s) each day that you measure your blood pressure. For both times, check your blood pressure before you take your medicines.

## Prepare for your check

- ✓ Don't exercise, have any caffeine, or use tobacco for at least 30 minutes before checking your blood pressure.
- ✓ Empty your bladder before you take your blood pressure reading. A full bladder can make your blood pressure reading higher.

## How to check

- Sit in a comfortable position with your back resting against the back of a chair. Keep your feet flat on the floor. Don't cross your legs or ankles.
- Put your arm on a table so that it's at the same level as your heart. Use the same arm for every blood pressure check.
- Sit quietly for 5 minutes before checking your blood pressure.
- Keep your arm relaxed while you're checking your blood pressure.
- You may take 1 to 2 readings each time you check your blood pressure. Wait at least 2 minutes between checks.
- If your machine doesn't automatically record the blood pressure, write down each reading and the date and time you took it in a log book.

## How to use an electronic blood pressure monitor

1. Sit with your arm slightly bent and resting on a table so that your upper arm is at the same level as your heart.
2. Roll up your sleeve or take off your shirt to expose your upper arm.
3. Wrap the blood pressure cuff around your upper arm so that the lower edge of the cuff is about 1 inch above the bend of your elbow.
4. Press the start button. The cuff will inflate and deflate by itself.
5. Your blood pressure numbers will appear on the screen.
6. Write your numbers in your log book or record card along with the time and date.

## Doing your part

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment. Be sure to make appointments with your care team as needed and go to all scheduled visits.

If you have questions or concerns, contact any member of your health care team by calling or sending a secure message through your online account on our secure member site at [kp.org/wa](https://kp.org/wa).

If you have medical concerns or symptoms that need immediate attention:

- During clinic hours, call your doctor's office.
- After clinic hours, call the Consulting Nurse Service at 1-800-297-6877.