

How to check blood pressure properly

Before checking your blood pressure, sit quietly and calmly for 5 minutes taking several slow deep breaths, while smiling and thinking wonderful thoughts
“I can make progress and improve my blood pressure!”❤️

To check blood pressure, sit upright with back supported. Do not cross legs. Have both feet planted on the floor or on a footstool.

Refrain from drinking caffeine or exercising 30 minutes before checking your blood pressure.

Always try to use the bathroom before getting a reading. **Poor support for your feet or back while seated can raise your blood pressure reading by 6 to 10 points.** Crossing your legs can add 2 to 8 points to your reading.¹

Support the arm with the blood pressure cuff, resting on an arm rest, at heart level. It should not be held in the air or dangling at your side. No speaking or moving while checking blood pressure.

Place proper blood pressure cuff size on a bare upper arm preferably, rather than on a wrist, so it wraps around fully with about one third of the extra cuff remaining, so it's not too tight it separates, or too loose, when it inflates. It should be snug.

The device should measure blood pressure on the **upper arm**, which produce a more reliable result than those that measure from the wrist.²

¹ <https://www.webmd.com/hypertension-high-blood-pressure/news/20180511/7-mistakes-that-boost-your-blood-pressure-reading>

² <https://www.heart.org> › 2020/05/22

If you have a large arm, use a large or extra-large cuff size.

If you had breast surgery or lymph nodes removed on one side, do not put the blood pressure cuff on that side.

Use a good brand for your blood pressure monitor i.e., Omron, Relion.

Check blood pressure in each arm with a break in between of 2-3 minutes. Take slow deep belly breaths and smile, while at rest and checking blood pressure.

According to one leading cardiology expert Dr. Mark Houston you can check blood pressure 3 times in each arm and then in the upper thighs with an extra-large cuff or use the calf if it doesn't fit.³

With respect to the systolic blood pressure values, for an individual, the calf measurement is on an average 15.25 mmHg higher than the arm measurement.⁴

Non-invasive measurement of blood pressure (NIBP) is widely used in the critically ill, the cuff being often placed on the calf or the thigh in case of contraindication for placing it on the arm (wounds, fracture, vascular access, and so forth).⁵

If using the leg: Position the leg so that it is at an equal level to the heart, then wrap the cuff around the thigh with the bottom of the cuff slightly above the knee. The popliteal artery will be used for BP measurement. This is easier if the patient is in a prone position.⁶

[How to accurately measure blood pressure at home](#)

³ [How to accurately measure blood pressure at home](#)

⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov> › pmc
[Comparison of arm and calf blood pressure - PMC - NCBI - NIH](#)

⁵ <https://ccforum.biomedcentral.com> › ...
[Are the calf and the thigh reliable alternatives to the arm for cuff non](#)

⁶ <https://www.ausmed.com> › explainers
[How to Take Someone's Blood Pressure \(Manually\) - Ausmed](#)