

## Our Guide to Blood Pressure

Blood pressure, is a measure in millimetres of mercury (mmHg) of the force/pressure that your heart uses to pump blood around your body.

When we measure blood pressure, we are looking at two figures:

- Systolic pressure – the pressure when your heart pushes blood out.
- Diastolic pressure – the pressure when your heart rests between beats

### What is classed as normal blood pressure?

- Ideal blood pressure is considered to be between 90/60mmHg and 120/80mmHg
- High blood pressure is considered to be 140/90mmHg or higher
- Low blood pressure is considered to be below 90/60mmHg



## High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure, medically known as *hypertension*, is often related to unhealthy lifestyle habits, such as smoking, drinking too much alcohol, being overweight and not exercising enough. However, it can run in families. Sometimes there's no obvious cause.

High blood pressure is serious. If you ignore it, it can lead to heart and circulatory diseases like heart attack or stroke. It can also cause kidney failure, heart failure, problems with your sight and vascular dementia.

As many as 5 million adults in the UK have undiagnosed high blood pressure, so will not know that they are at risk.

High blood pressure rarely has noticeable symptoms. The only way to know whether you have high blood pressure is to have it measured.

## Low Blood Pressure

Low blood pressure, medically known as *hypotension*, is less common. Some medicines can cause low blood pressure as a side effect. It can also be caused by a number of underlying conditions, including heart failure and dehydration.

## 24 hour Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitor (ABPM)

Ambulatory blood pressure monitoring measures blood pressure at regular intervals throughout the day and night. This gives a more accurate assessment. It can help differentiate between true hypertension and white coat syndrome/hypertension. With recordings taken throughout your normal day it can also help your doctor see how high your blood pressure goes. It is also good for seeing whether your hypertensive medications are working.

### What to do before fitting

You wear the blood pressure device in daily life, so there's little preparation. You will not be able to shower, bathe, or immerse the device in water, while wearing it, so consider doing so ahead of time or scheduling activities after it.

### Do I have to take my own readings?

No, the device takes the readings for you over a period of 24 hours. The device should not hurt, but when the cuff inflates you will feel it tighten, its only for a few seconds. It may wake you during the night.

### Fitting your ambulatory blood pressure monitoring device

Our devices are very easy to fit yourself, with easy-to-use instructions. The device will be sent to your home address via our courier service, we will pre-arrange a date that suits you. Once you have worn the device it will then be collected by the courier and returned for analysis.

If you are unsure about fitting the device and would prefer our Physiologists to do it, please tell us when you book your appointment, and we will organise an appointment for you to attend one of our clinics. We will give you instructions on how to remove it, you would then need to return the device to one of our clinics for analysis.

For any questions or advice please see our FAQ page or email us via our contact us form or call us on 01332 315778

### How and when will I get my results

Once your device has been returned the data will be analysed. It can take up to 24 hours to review and report. The results will be emailed to your referring clinician. If you have self-referred for this test, both yourself and GP will receive a copy. We aim to have your results to you within 3 working days.

We hope this information helps you make an informed decision on booking a monitor. Please contact us to ask any questions you may have.

**ABPM costs £100**

Book online or by telephone



**Available in Large Print,  
and other languages**