# Taking Your Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is the force of blood as it moves from the heart through the blood vessels. You can take your own blood pressure reading using a digital monitor. Take readings as often as your doctor instructs. Take each reading at the same time of day.


1. Relax

- Wait at least a half-hour after smoking, eating, or exercising.

- Sit comfortably at a table. Place the monitor near you.

- Rest for a few minutes before you begin.
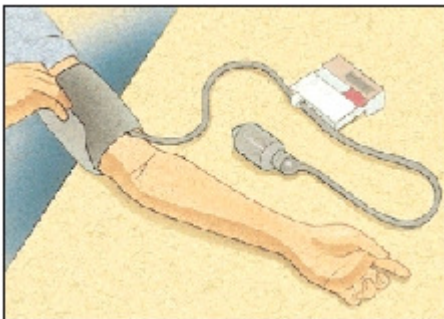
2. Wrap the Cuff

- Place your arm on the table, palm up. Your arm should be at the level of your heart. Wrap the cuff around your upper arm, just above your elbow. It's best done on bare skin, not over clothing.

- Make sure your cuff fits. If it doesn't wrap around your upper arm, order a larger cuff.
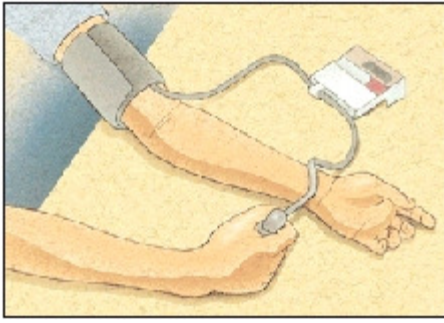
3. Inflate the Cuff

- Pump the cuff until the scale reads 160. If you have a self-inflating cuff, push the button that starts the pump.

- The cuff will tighten, then loosen.

- The numbers will change. When they stop changing, your blood pressure reading will appear.

- If you get a reading that is too high or too low for you, relax for a few minutes. Then do the test again.

4. Write Down the Results

- Write down your blood pressure numbers. Note the date and time. Keep your results in one place, such as a notebook.

- Remove the cuff from your arm. Turn off the machine.