



# A Brief Review of *Blood Pressure Basics*

Blood Pressure is the measurement of the circulating blood against the walls of the blood vessels. This is a measurement of the amount of force the body is using to get blood through the arteries.

## What do the kidneys have to do with blood pressure?

The kidneys filter blood to remove toxins, keep in good nutrients, and balance fluids.

When the blood vessels that supply the kidneys with blood are compromised, the kidneys cannot function properly and become damaged. This damage further hinders the kidney's ability to filter and function properly, which leads to a vicious cycle of high blood pressure and kidney damage. High blood pressure causes kidney damage and kidney damage causes high blood pressure.

## Why are home readings so important?

Your blood pressure readings at home show us what your blood pressure is like in your every day life. Your readings at doctor appointments can have other influences affecting them like White Coat Syndrome, stress, anxiety, traffic, and more. If decisions were only made on your in office readings, we may end up over- or under-prescribing medication and treatment plans, leading to more problems than we solve.

“ It's like the chicken and egg analogy. What came first: hypertension or kidney damage? ”

# BLOOD PRESSURE BEST PRACTICES

1. Remove clothing and jewelry from the arm you will be using for a reading. These may interfere with the reading's accuracy.
  - a. Make sure any rolled or adjusted sleeves are not constricting blood flow.
2. Sit down at a table or desk.
3. With your arm facing upwards, slide the cuff up to the upper arm and secure
4. Depending on your machine, press start or go, based on the instructions.
  - a. Don't talk or move during the reading!
5. Record your reading

## TIPS FOR TAKING ACCURATE READINGS

- Consistency is key! Take readings on the same arm and in the same conditions or circumstances each time.
- Take your blood pressure 1-2 hours after taking your medications and when you are most relaxed.
- Uncross legs and ankles, sitting with good posture and feet flat on the ground
- Do not slide your cuff off as this can damage the cuff and its ability to inflate properly. Always fully remove the velcro when you are finished taking your readings.
- Take a second reading if you are unsure if your first is accurate following the above steps.
  - Wait 5-10 minutes before taking a second reading. Take deep breaths and find a "happy place" in your mind to work on relaxing.
- Avoid eating, caffeine, and smoking before taking a reading.

Blood Pressure  
Video

<https://bit.ly/3GZNIrN>



### Additional Resources



Hypertension  
Page

<https://bit.ly/4bw89nt>