Home blood pressure monitoring in pregnancy

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NHS
West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospitals
NHS Trust

Patient information

Home blood pressure monitoring in pregnancy

Excellent patient care, together

You have been given this leaflet because you have been asked to monitor your blood pressure at home. The leaflet will explain how to measure blood pressure, what targets to aim for, and what to do if your blood pressure is outside of this target range.

How should I measure my blood pressure at home?

Please follow these steps:

1. Ensure your clothing is loose or not too tight when rolled up.
2. Sit on a chair with both feet flat on the floor.
3. Rest for 5 minutes before measuring your blood pressure.
4. Slip the cuff onto your arm following the instructions of the device you are using.
5. Make sure the bottom part of the cuff is about 2cm above the inside of your elbow joint.
6. Rest your arm on a table or across your lap with the palm facing upward.
7. Once you have the cuff in the correct position, measure your blood pressure following the instructions of the device you are using.
8. Do not talk until the measurement is completed.

How often should I measure my blood pressure at home?

This will depend on how well your blood pressure is controlled and how many weeks pregnant you are.

You and your doctor can decide on a plan of home blood pressure monitoring that works for you depending on the above factors.

What target ranges should I be aiming for?

Your reading will give two numbers: systolic pressure / diastolic pressure
An example reading is 120 (systolic)/70(diastolic)
We aim to keep your blood pressure below 140/90

If either of these numbers are equal or above 140 / 90mmHg, your next steps are shown in the table below. The Systolic reading is the top number, and the diastolic reading is the bottom number.

Level	Blood pressure reading	Action
Low	Systolic 109 or less AND Diastolic 69 or less	**If you are not taking blood pressure medication:** Your blood pressure is normal. If you are feeling well this blood pressure does not need any further action. **If you are taking blood pressure medication:** Your blood pressure is low. Repeat once more in 5 minutes. If you repeat reading is still low, contact the Maternity Day Assessment Unit during opening hours or Maternity Triage at other times if you feel unwell (dizzy or faint).
Normal	Systolic 110-134 AND Diastolic 70-84	Your blood pressure is normal. Continue blood pressure monitoring and your current care.
High Normal	Systolic 135-139 OR Diastolic 85-89	Your blood pressure is normal but moving towards the raised threshold. Sit quietly for 5 minutes then measure it again and note the reading. If your repeat reading is still high end of normal, please continue to monitor your blood pressure daily until your next appointment. Contact Maternity Triage if you have any symptoms.
Raised	Systolic 140-149 OR Diastolic 90-99	Your blood pressure is raised. Sit quietly for 5 minutes then measure it again and note the reading. If your repeated reading is raised, you should contact Maternity Triage
High	Systolic 150 or more OR Diastolic 100 or more	Your blood pressure is high. Sit quietly for 5 minutes then measure it again and note the reading. If your repeated reading is raised, please attend Maternity Triage for immediate review.

It you have any of the following symptoms, then you should attend the hospital for a review:

- Headache
- Visual disturbances
- Pain in your tummy or just below your ribs
- Your baby is not moving or moving less
- Vomiting

How to contact us

Maternity Day Assessment Unit
Tel: 01923 217851
Open 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday

Maternity Triage
Tel: 01923 217343
Open every day 24 hours

Returning the blood pressure monitor.

You will need to return the Blood Pressure cuff after the birth of your baby. You can return it in the following ways:

1. At your midwife appointment 10 days after the birth of your baby.
2. Drop it off to the Maternity Day Assessment Unit at Watford General Hospital.

PALS

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For more information, please scan the QR code or visit our website.

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