

What is hypertension?

Hypertension (or high blood pressure) is a global epidemic. An estimated five million Canadians over the age of 18 have high Blood Pressure. Over 1.5 billion people worldwide suffer from high blood pressure. Hypertension is the most important risk factor for heart disease, stroke and kidney disease.

For more information

www.worldhypertensionleague.org www.hypertension.ca
www.hypertension.qc.ca www.heartandstroke.ca/bp
www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ccdpc-cpcmc/cvd-mcv/index_e.html

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Measure Your Blood Pressure ...at Home!

WHY HYPERTENSION DAY?

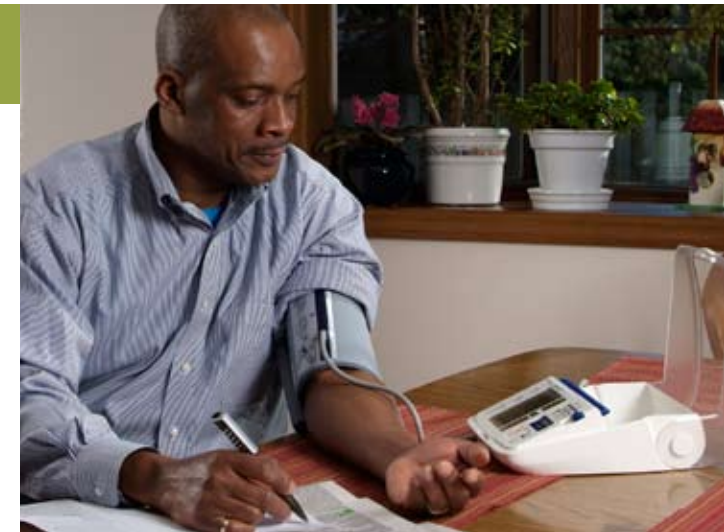
World Hypertension Day has been established to highlight the serious medical complications of this condition and to communicate to the public information on prevention, detection and treatment. Each year, May 17th is designated World Hypertension Day.

Why measure your blood pressure ...at home?

When you measure your blood pressure at home it helps you and your health care provider understand how to control your blood pressure on a day-to-day basis. It also shows how lifestyle changes and medications help control your blood pressure. Your health care provider may ask you to measure and record your blood pressure twice a day for at least one week before each appointment. This record shows how well-controlled your blood pressure is during your daily routine.

KEEP YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE UNDER CONTROL

- Whenever your blood pressure is high (equal to or more than 135/85 mmHg at home, check with your health care provider.
- Make healthy food choices.
- Eat less salt.
- Get physically active.
- Medications can help.
- Remember to take your medications.
- Monitor your blood pressure while on medications.
- Report any side effects to your health care provider.



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WORLD HYPERTENSION DAY

Initiated by the World Hypertension League

In partnership with:



MAY 17, 2008

The only way to know if your blood pressure is high is to measure...so measure at home.

Most modern machines are either fully or semi-automatic. Self-measurement of blood pressure is easy and safe. Some very anxious individuals or those with disabilities may have problems measuring their blood pressure. If this is the case, ask your health care provider to measure your blood pressure.



What is a normal BP reading?

- Daytime average blood pressure must be below 135/85 mmHg.
- Treatment may be considered if the reading is consistently more than 135/85 mmHg at home.
- Treatment for those with diabetes or kidney disease may be warranted when the reading is less than 135/85 mmHg.


What if the blood pressure readings are abnormal?

- Do not panic.
- Consult and follow the advice of your health care provider.
- Do not adjust your medications yourself.

PREVENT HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

What type of blood pressure monitor should you buy?

There are many blood pressure monitors for sale in the market. Speak with your health care provider about which blood pressure monitor and cuff size are right for you.

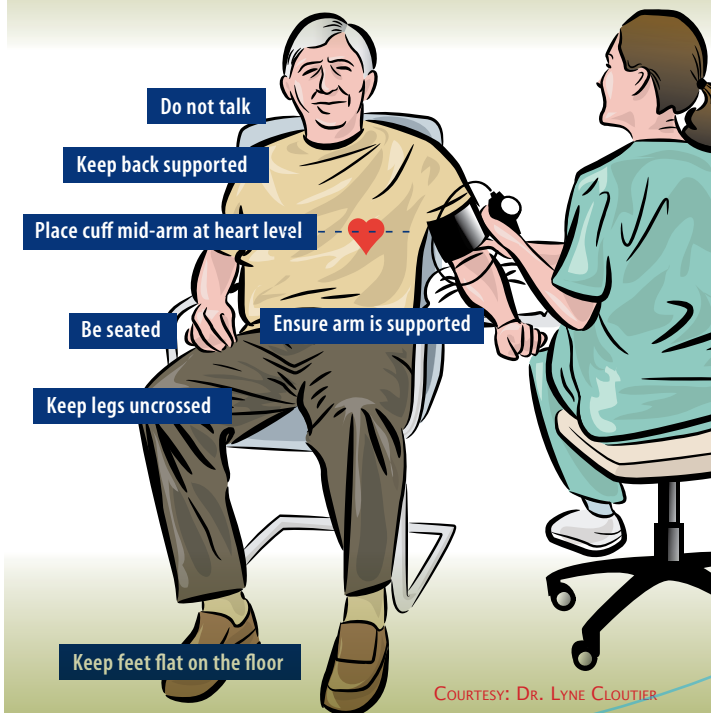
- To ensure you buy an accurate machine, look for one of these logos. 
- A basic model costs approximately \$100.
- A device with more features may suit you best, but may be more expensive.
- Automatic monitors are easier to use, but tend to be more expensive than semi-automatic monitors.
- Blood pressure cuffs come in different sizes. It is very important that the cuff fits your arm properly. The wrong cuff size will give you incorrect readings. Ask your pharmacist to help you choose the right cuff size.



HOW TO MEASURE BLOOD PRESSURE

- Rest and relax for 5 minutes without distractions (e.g. TV) before measuring.
- Do NOT measure when you are uncomfortable, cold, anxious, stressed or in pain.
- Wait at least two hours after a big meal and at least half an hour after drinking coffee or smoking.
- Empty your bladder and bowel if uncomfortable before taking a reading.
- Place the cuff on your bare arm.
- Sit in a chair that supports your back and beside a table that can support your arm. (See diagram.)
- Put a pillow or towel under your arm so that it rests at heart level.
- Keep your feet on the floor and do NOT cross your legs.
- Home blood pressure values should be based on two measures—morning and evening for 7 days.
- Record your blood pressure measurement right away.
 - Single or first day home blood pressure values should not be considered.

HOW TO USE A HOME MONITOR



COURTESY: DR. LYNE CLOUTIER