

Patient information leaflet

What is ambulatory blood pressure monitoring?

Ambulatory blood pressure monitoring (ABPM) monitors your blood pressure over a period of time -usually throughout the day or for a full 24 hours, rather than the old “one-off” measurement in the clinic.

Why measure BP for so long?

Your blood pressure naturally rises and falls during the day. Also BP may go up when you visit the doctor’s surgery or hospital, so one-off readings don’t accurately reflect your blood pressure throughout the day. Ambulatory monitoring helps assess your blood pressure more accurately as you go about your routine day, so we can be really sure whether you have high blood pressure or not.

How is ambulatory blood pressure measured?

You will be fitted with a cuff that sits around your upper arm. This cuff will automatically inflate at regular intervals during the day to measure your BP. The cuff is attached to a monitor (a box worn on a belt around your waist) which collects the readings of your blood pressure at each measurement. The cuff and monitor will be fitted by one of our nurses at the surgery. Wear a loose fitting or short sleeved top that will allow access to your upper arm. You will not be able to have a bath or shower while you are wearing the monitor.

How often will my BP be taken?

We usually set the monitors to take your BP every half hour from early morning to late at night. You will be asked to remove the monitor and cuff and return it to the surgery the next working day.

Will it hurt?

Wearing an ABPM is only as uncomfortable as having your BP checked at the surgery. The cuff will tighten on your arm for a short while before deflating. When it is tight try and keep your arm still and relaxed. The monitor may take your BP again a minute later if it was not able to get a reading the first time.

Can I carry on as normal?

It is important to live your normal day. Take your usual medicines and do whatever you would normally do, so we can get an accurate measure of your BP on a typical day. You can drive if you wish to, but don't panic if the cuff inflates and you can't relax your arm or keep it still; there will be enough other readings to get an average blood pressure reading.

Can I remove the monitor?

Leave the cuff and monitor on all day. If you are not keeping it on overnight, you will be shown how to remove it at bedtime, you then return it to the surgery where the stored blood pressure readings will be analysed and we will let you know the outcome. If the average day time BP is over 135/85 you will be asked to make another appointment with the nurse for more tests (blood, urine and a heart tracing) before seeing the doctor again for a decision about whether medication is needed.

Name

Systemone number.....

You have chosen home blood pressure monitoring to assess your blood pressure, which has been slightly raised on a surgery reading.

The blood pressure monitor _____ has been loaned to you.

This monitor is on loan from the practice for 1 week only, and must be returned promptly, so it can be loaned to other patients.

Please measure your blood pressure twice a day, morning and evening for 5 days.

Each time take 2 readings at least 1 minute apart and record results on the table over the page.

If your monitor is an OMRON M6 comfort, the readings will be stored in the memory, with times and dates, but you can write them down as well.

Please be sitting when you take your blood pressure and use your non-dominant arm, i.e. left if you are right handed, but this is not essential.

Apply cuff to upper arm with blue line in the middle of your inner elbow crease.

When you have completed your readings after 5 days, please return monitor to reception at the surgery on the next working day, along with this piece of paper.

We will call you to inform you if you need further tests/ appointments, once we have analysed the data. If the average reading is over 135/85 you will need blood and urine tests and an ECG, followed by an appointment with the doctor, who will then decide if treatment is necessary.

	Morning	Evening
Day 1	1. 2.	1. 2.
Day 2	1. 2.	1. 2.
Day 3	1. 2.	1. 2.
Day 4	1. 2.	1. 2.
Day 5	1. 2.	1. 2.

Name.....

D.O.B.....