



Healthy Her

How Can I Get My Most Accurate Blood Pressure Reading?

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Many don't realize that there is a lot we can do to ensure that we are taking accurate and reliable blood pressure readings. With the increasing understanding that maintaining a normal blood pressure is paramount to good health, many are taking advantage of home blood pressure monitors to stay on top of any changes.

Why is this important?

Great question. Blood pressure is directly related to your heart health and high blood pressure (known as hypertension) is a significant risk factor for heart disease, heart attack, and stroke.

What's more, half of Americans don't even know that they have high blood pressure. It often is without symptoms, so you can feel just fine, but still have hypertension putting you at risk of heart disease and kidney disease. This is why it is known as the silent killer.

But we are fighting back now with home blood pressure monitors. And since more and more of us are taking our blood pressures at home, we should review some good housekeeping for getting your most reliable and accurate measurement.

Don'ts

- Don't check your blood pressure right after exercise.
- Don't check your blood pressure within 30 minutes of waking up, or drinking coffee or tea.
- Don't sit with your legs crossed.
- Don't take your blood pressure with a full bladder. Be sure to empty your bladder as this can increase your blood pressure.

Do's

- Do take your blood pressure around the same time every day, as your blood pressure can fluctuate throughout the day.
- Do ensure that you are well hydrated.
- Do sit with both feet flat on the floor.
- Do sit up straight and tall with your back well supported.
- Do take several deep breaths in and out before taking your blood pressure to settle down.
- Do be certain to be in a quiet and calm environment.

If your blood pressure reading is high (greater than 120/80) re-check the do's and don't lists above and make sure that you are doing everything correctly. Wait 5 minutes, and re-check.

Remember: Always take your medications as prescribed, and don't skip. If your blood pressure is elevated, please check in with your physician as elevated blood pressures are serious. Even mild elevations can put you at a heart health risk.

For more and as a reminder, here is a 60 second Stairwell Chronicle to review:

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DHqKraJAFzF/?igsh=a291bzNpbmpIMmJy>

Best,

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You can follow me for more medical information at @drjaynemorgan on IG, YouTube, Threads, TikTok and Jayne Morgan, M.D. on LinkedIn