

Further Information

For local services/ information about improving your health please use this link:

<http://www.firstcontactplus.org.uk/our-services/improving-your-health/>

Waist measurement

Measuring your waist is a good way to check you're not carrying too much fat around your stomach, which can raise your risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, cancer and stroke. You can have a healthy BMI and still have too much tummy fat. To measure your waist:

- find the bottom of your ribs and the top of your hips
- wrap a tape measure around your waist, midway between these points
- breathe out naturally before taking the measurement

Regardless of your height or body mass index (BMI), you should try to lose weight if your waist is 94cm (37in) or more for men, 80cm (31.5in) or more for women

You're at very high risk of some serious health conditions and should see a GP if your waist is 102cm (40in) or more for men, 88cm (34.5in) or more for women

Alcohol Units

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/alcohol-support/calculating-alcohol-units/>

The number of units in a drink is based on the size of the drink, as well as its alcohol strength. To keep health risks from alcohol to a low level. If you drink most weeks **men and women are advised not to drink more than 14 units a week on a regular basis**. Spread your drinking over 3 or more days if you regularly drink as much as 14 units a week, and if you want to cut down, try to have several drink-free days each week. **Fourteen units is equivalent to 6 pints of average-strength beer or 10 small glasses of low-strength wine.**

Activity

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/>

Adults aged 19 to 64 (including disabled adults, pregnant women and new mothers) should do some type of physical activity every day. Any type of activity is good for you; aim to be physically active every day. The more you do the better. Make sure the type and intensity of your activity is appropriate for your level of fitness. For example:

- do strengthening activities that work all the major muscles (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms) on at least 2 days a week
- do at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity a week for example brisk walking, water aerobics, riding a bike, dancing, doubles tennis, pushing a lawn mower, hiking, rollerblading
- or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity a week jogging or running, swimming fast, riding a bike fast or on hills, walking up the stairs, sports, like football, rugby, netball and hockey, skipping rope, aerobics, gymnastics, martial arts
- reduce time spent sitting or lying down and break up long periods of not moving with some activity.
- You can also achieve your weekly activity target with several short sessions of very vigorous intensity activity, a mix of moderate, vigorous and very vigorous intensity activity or over a single day or over 2 or more days.

Adults aged 65 and over should aim to be physically active every day. Any activity is better than none. The more you do the better, even if it's just light activity. Do activities that improve strength, balance and flexibility on at least 2 days a week, do at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity a week or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity if you are already active, or a combination of both, and reduce time spent sitting or lying down and break up long periods of not moving with some activity

Home Blood Pressure Monitoring

Choosing the best home blood pressure monitor for you

If you are asked to measure your blood pressure at home, you will be asked to get a home blood pressure monitor. There is a wide range of home blood pressure monitors available, but it is important that the blood pressure monitor you choose is accurate.

The easiest to use is a monitor that is fully automatic (digital), this should measure your blood pressure at your upper arm, NOT your wrist or finger. Upper-arm blood pressure monitors give the most accurate and consistent results.

Make sure that the home blood pressure monitor you choose has been listed as 'clinically validated' for accuracy by the British Hypertension Society. This means that the digital monitor has gone through a series of tests to make sure it gives results that you and your doctor can trust. Blood pressure monitors can vary in price. This usually depends on the number of extra features that the digital monitor has, like a built-in memory for example. All you need to measure your blood pressure correctly is a clinically validated monitor, and a pen and paper to record your readings (or form from the surgery). Choose a home blood pressure monitor that you can afford.

Here are links to clinically validated blood pressure monitors for home use (prices correct according to websites 31/3/2020):

<https://bihsoc.org/bp-monitors/for-home-use/>

<http://www.bloodpressureuk.org/BloodPressureandyou/Homemonitoring/Choosingyourmonitor>

Examples we suggest you look at buying are:

- Lloyds Pharmacy BP monitor
- Boots Upper Arm BPM 56-90-447 (HEM-7101)
- Boots Upper Arm BPM 56-90-420 (HEM-7115-BS)
- Omron M2 Compact (HEM-7102-E)
- Omron M2 Basic (HEM-7116-E)

An upper-arm blood pressure monitor will come with a cuff that you need to wrap around your arm. If you use a cuff that is the wrong size for you, your blood pressure reading will not be correct. Measure around your upper arm at the midpoint between your shoulder and elbow, and choose your cuff size from the chart below.

Upper Arm Blood Pressure Monitor cuff sizes

| Measurement (cm) | Measurement (inches) | Cuff size |
|------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| 18-22 cm | 7.1-8.7" | Small |
| 22-32 cm | 8.8-12.8" | Medium |
| 32-45 cm | 12.8-18" | Large |

Most home blood pressure monitors will come with a medium-sized cuff. You may have to order a different-sized cuff separately.

Ensure your home blood pressure monitor is calibrated at least once every two years to be sure it is giving you accurate results. To have your automatic home monitor re-calibrated, you will need to send it back to the manufacturer. There may be a fee for this service.

How to check your blood pressure using a blood pressure machine

For a 'how to' video please use this link:

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/heart-matters-magazine/medical/tests/blood-pressure-measuring-at-home> (correct 21/5/2021)

- In order for it to be an accurate reading it's important that you're resting and that you're not feeling anxious or stressed.
- Sit upright in a chair, your back against the back of the chair, and place your feet flat on the floor.
- Rest your arm on a table if you have one and make sure your hand and arm are relaxed on the table or armrest. It's important that you don't clench your fist when you're taking your blood pressure.
- Place the cuff over your upper arm and tighten the cuff over your arm, making sure you can fit two fingers underneath the cuff. You want the cuff to be over the upper part of your arm with the tubing leading down the centre or slightly to the right of your arm.
- When you check your blood pressure, don't talk and just relax. Press the on button, and then press the start button.
- You'll feel the cuff inflate quite rapidly. It may temporarily be a bit tender or uncomfortable as the cuff inflates and deflates automatically, but this will only be for a short period of time. If it is too tender or uncomfortable you can just press the 'Stop' button and the cuff will instantly deflate.
- Once you get your reading, make a note of the reading. A few minutes after you've taken your blood pressure, please take a second reading and record it.
- How often you need to do this will depend on the Doctor or nurse.