

# START HERE: KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

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## A Calm, Practical Guide to Understanding and Tracking Your Blood Pressure

Lifestyle-based education for blood pressure support

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## INTRODUCTION

High blood pressure can feel confusing, overwhelming, or even scary, especially when you're not sure whether your numbers are accurate to begin with.

This guide was created to help you slow things down and get clarity.

Before changing your food, supplements, or routines, it's important to understand **how** your blood pressure is being measured and **what your numbers are actually telling you**. Small differences in timing, posture, cuff placement, recent activity, caffeine, or talking during measurement can affect a blood pressure reading.

Inside this guide, you'll learn how to:

- Measure your blood pressure correctly
- Track your numbers with confidence
- Understand what your readings mean
- Begin building awareness without panic or pressure

This is not about perfection.

It is about measuring consistently, recording what you observe, and discussing important patterns with your healthcare professional.

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# CHAPTER 1

## Understanding Your Blood Pressure & Why It Matters

Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the walls of your arteries as your heart pumps. When this pressure stays elevated over time, it places strain on your heart, blood vessels, kidneys, and brain.

Blood pressure is recorded as **two numbers**:

- **Systolic (top number):** Pressure when your heart beats
- **Diastolic (bottom number):** Pressure when your heart rests between beats

### Why Blood Pressure Matters

High blood pressure often has no obvious symptoms. Regular monitoring can help you record your readings, notice repeated patterns, and share useful information with your healthcare professional. Home readings alone do not diagnose high blood pressure, and treatment decisions should be made with a qualified healthcare professional.

### Factors That May Influence Blood Pressure

- High sodium intake
- Limited physical activity
- Tobacco or nicotine use
- Drinking too much alcohol
- Ongoing stress or insufficient sleep
- Certain prescription or over-the-counter medications, or health conditions

### Mindset Shift

**“Knowing my numbers gives me clarity, not fear.”**

You don’t need to panic about your blood pressure. You need to understand it.

This is where real change begins.

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# CHAPTER 2

## How to Monitor Your Blood Pressure Accurately

Monitoring your blood pressure correctly is one of the most powerful tools you have for protecting your health.

Because high blood pressure often has no symptoms, the only way to truly know what's happening inside your body is through consistent and accurate measurement.

### 1. Choose the Right Blood Pressure Monitor

For home monitoring, the most reliable option is:

- An **automatic upper-arm blood pressure monitor**
- Proper cuff size for your arm
- A validated device recommended by reputable health organizations

Wrist and finger monitors are less reliable and may produce inconsistent results.

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### 2. Prepare for an Accurate Reading

Before measuring your blood pressure:

1. Avoid smoking, caffeine, and exercise for at least 30 minutes.
2. Empty your bladder.
3. Sit quietly for at least five minutes without talking or using your phone.
4. Sit with your back supported, both feet flat on the floor, and your legs uncrossed.
5. Place the cuff on your bare upper arm. Do not place it over clothing.
6. Support your arm on a flat surface with the middle of the cuff at heart level.
7. Remain still and do not talk while the monitor is taking the reading.

Following the same preparation and positioning each time makes it easier to compare your readings accurately.

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### 3. How Often Should You Check Your Blood Pressure?

Follow the monitoring schedule recommended by your healthcare professional.

When you are asked to track your blood pressure at home, you may be instructed to:

- Take two readings in the morning, one minute apart
- Take two readings in the evening, one minute apart
- Measure at approximately the same times each day
- Record every result and share the record with your healthcare professional

Morning readings are often taken before eating and before blood pressure medication, unless your healthcare professional gives you different instructions.

Blood pressure naturally changes throughout the day. Consistent measurements can help you and your healthcare professional identify patterns. Home monitoring does not replace regular medical care, and you should not stop or change medication based on home readings without speaking with your healthcare professional.

#### 4. Know Your Numbers

| Category             | Blood Pressure Range                          |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Normal               | Less than 120 <b>and</b> less than 80         |
| Elevated             | 120–129 <b>and</b> less than 80               |
| Stage 1 hypertension | 130–139 <b>or</b> 80–89                       |
| Stage 2 hypertension | 140 or higher <b>or</b> 90 or higher          |
| Severe hypertension  | Higher than 180 <b>and/or</b> higher than 120 |

If your blood pressure is higher than 180 and/or 120, wait at least one minute and measure it again.

If the second reading remains that high and you have symptoms such as chest pain, shortness of breath, back pain, numbness, weakness, changes in vision, or difficulty speaking, call 911. Do not wait to see whether your blood pressure comes down on its own.

If the second reading remains that high but you do not have these symptoms, contact your healthcare professional promptly for guidance.

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## **5. Set Simple Tracking Goals**

Examples:

- “I will follow the monitoring schedule recommended by my healthcare professional.”
  - “I will take two readings, one minute apart, and record both results.”
  - “I will share my blood pressure record with my healthcare professional.”
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## **Mindset Shift: Track With Purpose**

**“I am no longer guessing. I am observing.”**

Your blood pressure readings are not a judgment. They are information.

Information helps you make calm, supportive decisions for your health.

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# YOUR NEXT STEP

Understanding your blood pressure is an important foundation for making informed decisions about your health.

If you are ready to go beyond tracking, Vivahealthy™ offers personalized blood pressure and lifestyle coaching to help you explore sustainable daily habits that may support your efforts to lower and stabilize your blood pressure.

Together, we look at patterns involving nutrition, meal timing, hydration, movement, sleep, and stress while supporting consistent blood pressure monitoring and communication with your healthcare professional.

## **Book Your Complimentary Strategy Call**

<https://vivahealthytoday.com/strategy-call>

No obligation. No pressure.

Vivahealthy™ provides educational blood pressure and lifestyle coaching. It does not diagnose, prescribe, or replace medical care. Always follow your healthcare professional's guidance regarding medications and your care plan.