

Wearing a 24-hour Blood Pressure Monitor

Your doctor has asked you to monitor your blood pressure for 24 hours. This handout gives instructions for you to follow during this time.

About the Monitor

The blood pressure monitor has:

- A **cuff** that you will wear on your upper arm.
- A **small battery-powered unit**. Depending on the kind of unit you are using, you will either carry it in a pocket or wear it on your belt.
- A **tube** that goes from the cuff to the unit.



The battery unit of a blood pressure monitor.

How It Works

- The monitor will take your blood pressure every 20 minutes during the day (from 6 or 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.), and once an hour during the night. You will feel the cuff fill with air at these times. Try to hold your arm still while the cuff is filling.
- If the monitor cannot take a reading for some reason, it will try again in 3 minutes. If it still cannot take a reading, it will wait and try again at the next scheduled time.
- For best results, wear the monitor for a full 24 hours. It is important that the monitor takes your blood pressure when you are active, at rest, and asleep.
- Depending on the kind of unit you are using, the display will show only your first 1 to 5 blood pressure readings. After that, it will just show the current time. All other readings are recorded and stored in the unit.
- If you feel dizzy or have a headache, push the “Start” button. The monitor will take your blood pressure reading right away.

Care Instructions and Tips

Showering

- When you shower, take off your cuff and battery unit. Try to put them back on before the next reading time.
- Shower in between reading times. If you cannot do this:
 - Take off the cuff and the battery unit.
 - Disconnect the tube from the battery unit.
 - Squeeze the air out of the cuff.
 - Reattach the tube to the battery unit when you are ready to wear the monitor again.

Sleeping

If you are having trouble sleeping because of the monitor noise, try:

- Wearing earplugs
- Placing the monitor as far away from you as it will go
- Putting the monitor under a pillow

Activities

Try to do as many of your normal activities as you can while you are wearing the monitor. Your doctor wants to know what your blood pressure is during a normal day for you.

Problems

If you cannot keep wearing the cuff for any reason:

- Take off the cuff and the battery unit.
- Take the unit out of its pouch and switch the button to “off.”

Specific Instructions

For University of Washington Medical Center Patients

- On the day of your appointment, come to the Kidney Care Center on the 3rd floor (main level) of the hospital at 10 a.m. Wear a loose-fitting shirt and pants with roomy pockets.
- If you have problems with the monitor during the day when the center is open (weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.), please call 206.598.4615.
- Bring the monitor and cuff to the Kidney Care Center at the agreed-upon time the next day.

For Harborview Medical Center Patients

- To pick up your monitor, come to the front desk at the 7 Maleng Building Specialties Clinic.
- You must give us a reliable phone number where we can reach you.
- The monitor works best if you are wearing a loose-fitting shirt and pants with roomy pockets.
- If you have problems with the monitor during the day when the clinic is open (weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), please call 206.744.8998 and push option 8 to speak to a nurse.
- After you have finished the 24-hour period, return the monitor and cuff to the front desk at the 7 Maleng Building Specialties Clinic.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

University of Washington Medical Center patients:

Call the Kidney Care Center at 206.598.4615

Harborview Medical Center patients: Call the Kidney Clinic at 206.744.8998