

My blood pressure monitor check

Questions about your own monitor, cuff, batteries and accuracy checks, answered from its manual. Keep your monitor's manual beside you, write the answers on the lines, and take this sheet to your next appointment.

Make and model: _____

Safety first. Call 911 for severe chest pain or pressure, severe shortness of breath, or suddenly not being able to speak, see, walk or move. Do not wait to recheck a reading or test your monitor first. Do not stop or change a medicine because of home readings without checking with your healthcare professional. This sheet is general education about the device, not medical advice. It has no blood pressure numbers and is not a way to judge your readings. Your monitor's manual and your healthcare professional decide when to check or replace it.

The monitor and its manual

1. What is the make and model number, and where is the manual (paper copy or the manufacturer's website)?

2. When did I buy it, and what does the warranty cover for the monitor and for the cuff?

3. What does the specifications table list as the monitor's service life, durable period or expected life?

4. Does the manual say not to use the monitor after that period ends?

5. What does the manual say to do if the monitor is dropped, damaged or acting unusually?

6. Is this model on the validated device listing at validatebp.org, and is it validated for the person who uses it?

The cuff and air tube

7. What arm size range is printed on the cuff, and does it fit the arm of the person who uses it?

8. Does the manual give the cuff its own service life, separate from the monitor's?

9. Which replacement cuff does the manual approve for this model?

10. Which error message or sign does the manual link to air leaking from the cuff?

11. How does the manual say to clean and store the cuff and air tube?

Batteries and power

12. Which battery type does the manual call for, and does it advise against any type?

13. What does the low-battery symbol look like on this model?

14. Does the manual say to replace all the batteries at the same time?

15. Does the manual say to remove the batteries if the monitor will not be used for a long time?

16. If the model can use an AC adapter, which one does the manual allow?

Accuracy checks

17. Does the manual recommend an accuracy check or inspection, how often, and who does it?

18. When will I next bring the monitor and cuff to an appointment so my healthcare professional can check how I use it and compare it with office equipment?

19. Which conditions does the manual say can make a reading less accurate?

20. What is the manufacturer's customer service number in the manual?

Bring to your next appointment

- The monitor and its cuff
- The manual, or the make and model number
- This checklist with your answers
- The monitor's memory or your written log, if your healthcare professional asked you to keep readings

My notes

Sources

American Heart Association: Monitoring your blood pressure at home (heart.org). NHLBI: High blood pressure diagnosis; Self-measured blood pressure fact sheet (nhlbi.nih.gov). American Medical Association: Validate BP device listing (validatebp.org). MedlinePlus: Blood pressure monitors for home; When to use the emergency room (medlineplus.gov). CDC: Measuring your blood pressure (cdc.gov). Questions are based on what three manufacturer instruction manuals for upper-arm monitors cover; your own manual is the authority for your model.

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