

Pump it up!



Best **Blood Pressure Monitor** *Guide*

The American Heart Association (AHA) and other organizations recommend that anyone who has high blood pressure (BP) monitor his/her BP at home. Because BP monitors are widely available, home monitoring is an easy step you can take to track your BP between visits to the doctor. It's also a great way to know whether your lifestyle changes and/or your medications are working!

The AHA recommend an automatic, cuff-style, bicep monitor. Wrist and finger monitors are not recommended because they provide less reliable readings.

All monitors have the same basic parts: an inflatable cuff or strap, a gauge for readouts and sometimes a stethoscope depending on the type of monitor you buy. Without proper training on the use of a stethoscope, it may be difficult to interpret the sounds needed to determine your BP numbers. Digital BP cuffs usually have a built in sensor that record the information for you!

Here are some tips when shopping for a BP monitor:

1. Choose a validated monitor. Make sure the monitor has been tested, validated and approved by the Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation. A list of validated monitors is available at www.dableducational.org
2. Make sure the cuff fits right. Using a BP cuff that is too large or too small can give you inaccurate readings. The inflatable part of the BP cuff should cover about 80% of the circumference of your upper arm. The cuff should cover 2/3rds of the distance from your elbow to your shoulder. Children and adults with smaller or larger average-sized arms may need special sized cuffs.



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