

BP measurement skills assessment

Excellent blood pressure (BP) measurement technique requires training and skills, but a few common problems related to patient preparation and positioning often account for unreliable readings.^{1,2} Use this tool to verify everyone in your practice or health center obtains BP readings the right way every time. This tool is not designed to assess individual competence. Instead, it will help detect systemic issues that may be resulting in the routine use of improper technique.

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete four observations for each team member (e.g., medical assistant, nursing staff and physicians) who regularly takes BP measurements. Repeat quarterly, monthly or as needed.

Site name:				Date:											
Observer name(s):				Observation location (clinic, unit, etc.):											
	Patient No. 1			Patient No. 2			Patient No. 3			Patient No. 4					
Device used	Yes	No	Comments	Yes	No	Comments	Yes	No	Comments	Yes	No	Comments			
Manual device	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Automated device	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Patient preparation and positioning	Yes	No	If no, why not?	Yes	No	If no, why not?	Yes	No	If no, why not?	Yes	No	If no, why not?			
Asked patient if bladder is full, and if yes, instructed to use the bathroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Assessed for recent exercise, tobacco, caffeine or stimulant use and document in EHR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Seated with back supported	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Feet flat on floor or footstool	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Legs uncrossed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Correct cuff size used	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Cuff placed over bare upper arm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Arm supported with cuff at heart level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
No one talked or used phone or other personal device during measurement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Confirmatory BP: If the initial BP was high, confirmatory BP (at least one and up to three measurements) should be performed after one minute's rest and documented in the patient's medical record	Yes	No	If no, why not?	Yes	No	If no, why not?	Yes	No	If no, why not?	Yes	No	If no, why not?			
Patient rested quietly for at least one minute before repeat measurement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
At least one repeat BP measurement was performed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
All BP measurements were averaged (one average systolic and one average diastolic)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Average systolic and diastolic BP measurements documented in the EHR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

This skills assessment was adapted with permission of the American Medical Association and The Johns Hopkins University. The original copyrighted content can be found at <https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/hypertension/ama-johns-hopkins-blood-pressure-control-resources>.

1. Pickering, et al. Recommendations for Blood Pressure Measurement in Humans and Experimental Animals Part 1: Blood Pressure Measurement in Humans. *Circulation*. 2005;111: 697-716.
 2. Handler J. The importance of accurate blood pressure measurement. *The Permanente Journal* / Summer 2009/ Volume 13 No. 3 51