

Self-measured blood pressure

Patient training checklist

Instructions: To ensure all necessary steps and components are covered, use this checklist when training your patients on how to perform self-measured blood pressure (SMBP).

Gather supplies

- Tape measure
- What is SMBP? (PDF)
- SMBP infographic (PDF in English or Spanish)
- SMBP recording log (PDF)
- SMBP device accuracy test (PDF)

Provide background information on SMBP to patient (if not explained by provider)

- Explain how SMBP allows the provider to get a more accurate and complete picture of the patient's blood pressure outside of the office (more readings, over a longer period of time, in the patient's normal environment)

Tip: Hand out the "What is SMBP?" document.

Determine SMBP cuff size

- Use tape measure to measure the circumference of patient's mid-upper arm in centimeters (see adjacent image)

Tip: Ideally, this is done before the patient purchases a device so you can ensure the device and cuff purchased are appropriate for the patient.



Locate mid-upper arm

Using a measuring tape, place one end on bony prominence at the shoulder (acromion process) and measure length of arm to bony protuberance at the elbow (olecranon process). Divide this distance in half and that is the mid-upper arm where you should measure arm circumference for determining cuff size.

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhanes/2017-2018/manuals/2017_Anthropometry_Procedures_Manual.pdf

Check patient's SMBP device for accuracy

Tip: Use the SMBP device accuracy test.

Determine patient's blood pressure arm (if not currently identified)

- Measure patient's blood pressure in each arm and use arm with higher reading for all future readings

Teach patient how to properly prepare for self-measurement

- Avoid caffeine, tobacco and exercise for at least 30 minutes before measurement
- Empty bladder if full
- Take BP measurements before blood pressure medications

Tip: Show [SMBP training video](#) and hand out the SMBP infographic.

Teach patient the proper positioning for self-measurement

- Back supported
- Feet flat on floor or firm surface
- Legs uncrossed
- Cuff placed on bare upper arm
- Arm supported with middle of cuff at heart level

Tip: Refer to the SMBP video and/or infographic.

Teach patient how to use device* (if applicable)

- How to turn on device
- How to start measurement
- How to troubleshoot

** Refer to device manual as needed.*

Teach patient how to properly self-measure

- Rest quietly for five minutes
- Take two measurements, one minute apart
- Avoid conversations and electronic devices during measurement
- Perform this process once in the a.m. and once in the p.m. for seven consecutive days

Tip: Provide patient with [link to SMBP training video](#) to reference later (also available in [Spanish](#)).

Teach patient how to use SMBP recording log

- Reminder: Staff to complete “For Office Use” section
- How to document systolic and diastolic blood pressure
- What to do if blood pressure is too high or too low
- What to do with log when week of measurements is complete

Use teach back or return demonstration methods to ensure patient understands how to properly self-measure