What is self-measured blood pressure?

Self-measured blood pressure (SMBP) is when you measure your blood pressure outside of the doctor's office or other health care setting.

Why do I need to measure my blood pressure at home?

SMBP allows you to measure at different times throughout the day and over a longer period of time, helping your doctor get a more complete picture of your blood pressure. Your doctor may ask you to take measurements before, after, or between visits.

How does SMBP help improve my health?

SMBP can help your doctor and care team partner with you on a treatment plan for your blood pressure. Using SMBP can also help you better understand your blood pressure numbers and talk with your doctors about your blood pressure.

1. Muntner P, Hardy ST, Fine LJ, et al. Trends in Blood Pressure Control Among US Adults With Hypertension, 1999-2000 to 2017-2018. JAMA. 2020;324(12):1190–1200. doi:10.1001/jama.2020.14545

What do the numbers mean when I take a blood pressure measurement?

Systolic blood pressure (SBP or SYS): Top number of your blood pressure measurement which tells you how much pressure your blood is applying against your artery walls when the heart beats

Diastolic blood pressure (DBP or DIA): Bottom number of your blood pressure measurement which indicates how much pressure your blood is exerting against your artery walls while the heart is resting between beats

Pulse: Number of times your heart beats per minute

What are some important things to know before I start measuring my own blood pressure?

○ Use a blood pressure measurement device with an upper arm cuff. Ask your doctor or care team for a list of clinically accurate (validated) devices.

○ If you purchase your own device, ask your care team to check that the device will work and that the cuff will fit your arm.

○ Understand how to accurately measure your BP, including how to prepare and position yourself.

○ Know when and how you will share your blood pressure measurements with your doctor and care team.

○ Make sure you have instructions from your doctor or care team on what to do if your blood pressure is too high, too low or if you have symptoms like chest pain, dizziness or shortness of breath.