Patient Guide to Self-Monitoring of Blood Pressure

Before using the Blood Pressure Monitor

• **Avoid things that can raise your blood pressure in the short term.** Don't measure your blood pressure within half an hour of eating, smoking, drinking caffeinated drinks such as coffee, or exercising. You should also avoid measuring your blood pressure when you need to use the toilet.

• **Always measure your blood pressure in the same arm.**

• **Use the right size cuff.** The arrow on the cuff should line up with your inner elbow. If you need a smaller or larger cuff please speak to reception.

• **Wear loose-fitting clothes.** Avoid wearing tight or thick clothing, as this could affect the fit of the cuff around your arm and the reading.

• **Rest for five minutes before you take your reading.** Sit down somewhere quiet, ideally at a desk or table.

• Make sure your arm is supported and at the same level as your heart. Position yourself so that your arm is resting on a surface and is at the same height as your heart. Keep your arm and hand relaxed, not tensed and feet flat on the floor.

• **Make sure you are relaxed and comfortable.**

Using the Blood Pressure Monitor and Monitoring

You can access this YouTube video which shows how to use a blood pressure monitor: https://youtu.be/AXCFcftkric

1. The cuff should be placed about 2cm above your elbow to make sure it can detect the artery in your arm.
2. Keep still and quiet while you take your reading. Make sure you don't cross your legs, as this will raise your reading.
3. Take at least 2 blood pressure readings, 1-2 minutes apart, each morning & evening, ideally for 7 consecutive days.
4. If the first two readings you take are very different, take 2 or 3 further readings.
5. Write your readings in your blood pressure diary below exactly as they appear on screen. Do not round the numbers up or down.
6. Return the Blood Pressure Diary (& BP monitor if borrowed) to your GP practice.

Recording your blood pressure

Please ensure you provide us with readings either by responding to twice daily text messages or using the template provided by the practice. **We will not accept readings not provided in these formats.**