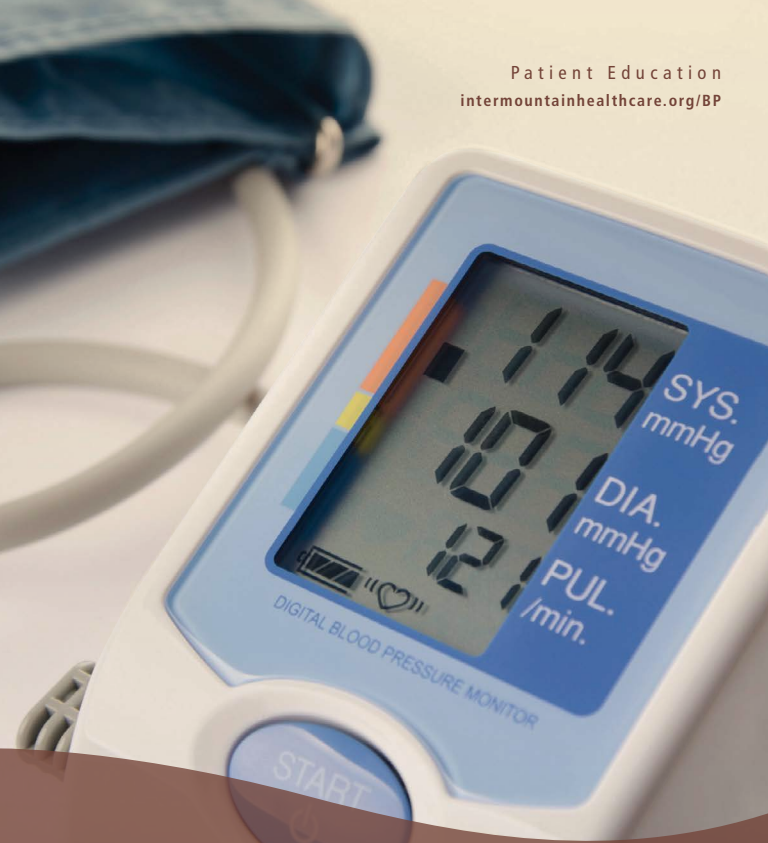
Patient Education

intermountainhealthcare.org/BP




# BP Tracker

A TOOL FOR KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

Intermountain® Healthcare

My name/phone: _____

## Contact numbers:

Healthcare provider: _____

After hours clinic: _____

Pharmacy: _____

Other contacts: _____

## Appointments:

| Date | Time | With |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

**In case of EMERGENCY call 911**

*Bring this booklet to all of your healthcare visits.*

# Current BP medications

While you're bringing your BP into control, you may need to change your medications or doses several times. Update this list when you have a change.

| Medication | Dose | When to take |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
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BP medications tried in the past (no longer taking):

# Other medications you take

Having a list of all your medications will help any healthcare provider caring for you. Include prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, and herbal supplements.

| Medication and what it's for | Dose | When to take |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Allergies or problems with any medications:

_____

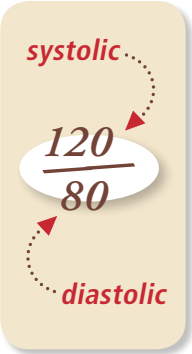
_____

# Are you taking your medications as directed?

Your doctor and pharmacist need to know if you're taking your medications as directed. This is the only way they can know if the medications are working — and what to do next.

- If you **are not** taking your medications as directed for any reason, they'll try to understand why. Are you concerned about cost? Having side effects? Having trouble remembering? If they know these things, they can help you make a plan to address the problem.
- If you **are** taking your medications, but they're not helping enough, you may need a change to your prescription.

# What is high blood pressure?




**Blood pressure** (BP) is the force of blood pressing on your artery walls. A BP measurement consists of 2 numbers: **systolic BP** "over" **diastolic BP** (for example, 120/80).

- Your **systolic BP** (the top number) is the highest pressure in your arteries when your heart beats.
- The **diastolic BP** (the bottom number) is the pressure that remains in your arteries when your heart relaxes between beats.

If EITHER your systolic or diastolic BP is too high, you have **high blood pressure**.

High blood pressure raises your risk of serious health problems like heart attack, heart failure, stroke, and kidney disease. Follow your healthcare provider's advice to lower your BP and reduce your risk.

# What your BP numbers mean

| Category | Systolic | | Diastolic | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Normal blood pressure** | less than **120** | **and** | less than **80** | ***Good news!*** Maintain a healthy lifestyle to keep your blood pressure within normal limits. Have it rechecked at least every 2 years. |
| **Borderline high blood pressure** | **120-139** | **or** | **80-89** | Your blood pressure could be a problem. Take steps now to be active, control your weight, eat healthy, quit smoking, and manage stress. Have your BP rechecked at least once a year. |
| **High blood pressure** | **140** or higher | **or** | **90** or higher | You have **high blood pressure.** In addition to making healthy lifestyle changes, you'll probably need to take one or more medications to help keep your BP below 140/90. Be sure to take your medication as prescribed. |

# Managing your blood pressure with BP-MAWDS

Use **BP-MAWDS** to help you remember and follow the basics for maintaining a healthy BP.

**M**
Take your **MEDICATIONS**

**A**
Get enough **ACTIVITY** each day

**W**
Maintain a healthy **WEIGHT**

**D**
Follow a healthy **DIET**

**S**
Stop **SMOKING** and manage **STRESS**

Take **MEDICATIONS** as prescribed.

Get at least 150 minutes per week of physical **ACTIVITY** — or about 30 minutes most days.

Maintain a healthy body **WEIGHT.** Your healthcare provider can help you set a good target weight for you.

Follow a healthy **DIET**. Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products. Limit salt (sodium), saturated and total fat, and alcohol.

Stop **SMOKING** and manage your **STRESS**.

For more information on following **BP-MAWDS** to manage your blood pressure, ask for a copy of Intermountain's *BP Basics*. You can also visit intermountainhealthcare.org/BP.

# Choosing a blood pressure monitor

There are many types of blood pressure monitors on the market. You can buy them in drugstores, supermarket pharmacies, and other large stores. Here are some tips for choosing a monitor:

- **If possible, choose a monitor that inflates automatically.** It's a little more expensive than a monitor with a squeeze ball, but it's easier to use. If you have a monitor that inflates with a squeeze ball, have someone else squeeze the ball to inflate the cuff. Squeezing the ball can temporarily increase your BP.
- **Choose a monitor that also shows your heart rate.** Some BP medications affect your heart rate, so your doctor may ask you to keep track of it. A normal heart rate is 60 to 100 beats per minute.
- **Choose a monitor with a cuff that wraps around the upper arm.** Avoid wrist cuffs. Arm monitors are more accurate and consistent.
- **Be sure the arm cuff is the right size for your arm.** Most cuffs fit upper arms that are 9 to 13 inches around. If your upper arm is more than 13 inches around, buy a monitor with a large cuff. You may have to pay extra, but it's worth it. To get a correct measurement, the cuff needs to be the right size.

# Monitoring your blood pressure

**Accurate, regular blood pressure measurement is vital to your treatment plan.** You don't want your treatment to be based on incorrect measurements.

**How often you measure and record your BP is up to you and your healthcare provider.** At first, or after medication changes, you may be asked to take your BP every day — maybe even twice a day. Once your BP is more stable, you can monitor less often.

**Record your measurements in this Tracker,** and be sure to have it at each appointment. You'll need to share your measurements with your healthcare provider as often as every 2 weeks until your BP goal is reached. After that, check in at least every 6 months to be sure you're still on track.

## Follow these tips to get the most accurate readings:

- **Compare your monitor to the one used in your healthcare provider's office.** Have your healthcare provider check your monitor about every 6 months. If you drop the monitor or readings change dramatically, have it checked right away.
- **Before checking your blood pressure, wait for a half hour** after eating a heavy meal, drinking caffeine or alcohol, exercising, or using tobacco products. These activities can temporarily raise your BP. Also, use the restroom first — a full bladder can temporarily raise your BP, too.

- **Make sure the blood pressure cuff is positioned correctly, with no wrinkles.** Remove clothing that gets in the way. Avoid tight or restrictive clothing (like rolling up a sleeve to expose your upper arm).
- **Rest both feet flat on the floor with your back supported.** Rest your arm at heart level on a table or the arm of a chair, using a small pillow if needed.
- **Sit quietly for at least 5 minutes before taking your BP.** Avoid talking or other distractions. Take 2 or 3 readings at least 2 minutes apart, and record all results.
- **Record the time you take your blood pressure.** Your BP can go up or down based on the time of day or what you're doing. Recording the time you take your BP will help you and your healthcare providers see a pattern.
- **Record which arm the reading is from.** Most patients should measure their BP in the non-dominant arm. (That is, if you're right-handed, measure on your left arm.) However, because BP in one arm can be different from the other arm, your doctor may recommend you check both arms at first.

  If there's always a difference, tell your doctor and then regularly measure in the arm with the higher reading. If you have a fistula in your arm (for dialysis), or if you've had a stroke or a radical mastectomy on one side, measure your BP in the other arm — unless your doctor says otherwise.

# How to use this tracker

1. Fill in your **Target BP** and **Target weight**. For most people, target BP is **less than 140/90**. Depending on your age or other health conditions, your target may be different. Ask your healthcare provider.
2. Enter the date and time each time you take your BP.
3. Record your blood pressure as "systolic BP/diastolic BP." See the example below. (You can also use this space to record the arm you used.)
4. Check one of the boxes to show where your BP was measured: at your doctor's office, at home, or other (such as a pharmacy or grocery store).
5. Record your pulse (heart rate) if your healthcare provider asked you to. Most automated BP machines will also display your pulse.
6. Keep track of your weight, especially if you're trying to lose weight. Your weight may go up or down a little every day. Look at your overall pattern of weight change unless instructed otherwise.

| 2 Date/Time | 3 Systolic BP/Diastolic BP | 4 Measured at: doctor's office | home* | other | 5 Pulse | 6 Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1/5/14 10:00 am | 126/82 (right arm) | ❑ | ☑ | ❑ | 73 | 176 |

## BP TRACKER

| Date/Time | Systolic BP/Diastolic BP | Measured at: doctor's office | home* | other | Pulse | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |

**Notes** (side effects, questions, missed medications, etc.):

_____

_____

# BP TRACKER

*Target BP* _____ /_____

*Target weight* _____

| Date/Time | Systolic BP/Diastolic BP | Measured at: doctor's office | home* | other | Pulse | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |

**Refer to page 8 for tips for taking an accurate BP at home.*

| Date/Time | Systolic BP/Diastolic BP | Measured at: doctor's office | home* | other | Pulse | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |

**Notes** (side effects, questions, missed medications, etc.):

# BP TRACKER

*Target BP* _____ /_____

*Target weight* _____

| Date/Time | Systolic BP/Diastolic BP | Measured at: doctor's office | home* | other | Pulse | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |

**Refer to page 8 for tips for taking an accurate BP at home.*

| Date/Time | Systolic BP/Diastolic BP | Measured at: doctor's office | home* | other | Pulse | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |

**Notes** (side effects, questions, missed medications, etc.):

# BP TRACKER

*Target BP* _____ /_____

*Target weight* _____

| Date/Time | Systolic BP/Diastolic BP | Measured at: doctor's office | home* | other | Pulse | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |

**Refer to page 8 for tips for taking an accurate BP at home.*

## BP TRACKER

| Date/Time | Systolic BP/Diastolic BP | Measured at: doctor's office | home* | other | Pulse | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |

**Notes** (side effects, questions, missed medications, etc.):

# BP TRACKER

*Target BP* _____ /_____

*Target weight* _____

| Date/Time | Systolic BP/Diastolic BP | Measured at: doctor's office | home* | other | Pulse | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
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| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |

**Refer to page 8 for tips for taking an accurate BP at home.*

| Date/Time | Systolic BP/Diastolic BP | Measured at: doctor's office | home* | other | Pulse | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |

**Notes** (side effects, questions, missed medications, etc.):

# BP TRACKER

*Target BP* _____ /_____

*Target weight* _____

| Date/Time | Systolic BP/Diastolic BP | Measured at: doctor's office | home* | other | Pulse | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |

**Refer to page 8 for tips for taking an accurate BP at home.*

## BP TRACKER

| Date/Time | Systolic BP/Diastolic BP | Measured at: doctor's office | home* | other | Pulse | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |

**Notes** (side effects, questions, missed medications, etc.):

# BP TRACKER

*Target BP* _____ /_____

*Target weight* _____

| Date/Time | Systolic BP/Diastolic BP | Measured at: doctor's office | home* | other | Pulse | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |

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## BP TRACKER

| Date/Time | Systolic BP/Diastolic BP | Measured at: doctor's office | home* | other | Pulse | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |

**Notes** (side effects, questions, missed medications, etc.):

# BP TRACKER

*Target BP* _____ /_____

*Target weight* _____

| Date/Time | Systolic BP/Diastolic BP | Measured at: doctor's office | home* | other | Pulse | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
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| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |
| | | ❑ | ❑ | ❑ | | |

**Refer to page 8 for tips for taking an accurate BP at home.*

*Remember. . .*

## FOLLOW UP WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER.

Remember to follow up regularly with your healthcare provider. This may be as often as every 2 weeks until your blood pressure goal is reached — then every 6 months to make sure you're still on track.

To find these and other resources, go to:

**intermountainhealthcare.org/BP**

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The content presented here is for your information only. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, and it should not be used to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease. Please consult your healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns. More health information is available at **intermountainhealthcare.org/BP.**

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