

BLOOD PRESSURE IS TOP PRIORITY

A guide to blood pressure that
includes home monitoring
instructions and a monitoring chart

Protect your brain, know your blood pressure

Our brain cells regenerate throughout our lives. The brain's ability to adapt and recover from various forms of damage has proved to be greater than once believed. There is one thing, however, that the brain cannot withstand, and that is high blood pressure.

High blood pressure does not cause detectable symptoms, but it relentlessly stresses the brain, 24 hours a day, and in the worst-case scenario, for years. The pressure causes brittleness and a build-up of fatty matter in the blood vessels of the brain. If there is no relief, somewhere in the brain a blood vessel will reach its limit and rupture. Or, the pressure will cause fatty deposits to collect on the walls of the blood vessel, eventually blocking it entirely. This is how cerebral infarctions and strokes, the greatest risk factor for which is elevated blood pressure, occur. Seven out of ten people who have suffered a cerebral infarction have had a blood pressure reading higher than the recommended level.

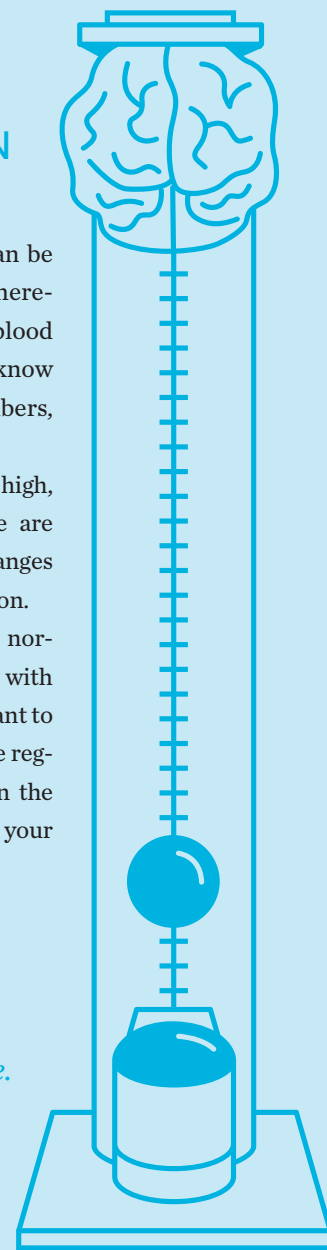
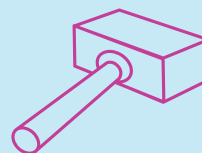
MEASURE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE AND TAKE ACTION ACCORDINGLY

Elevated blood pressure can be treated. It is important, therefore, to know where your blood pressure stands. If you know your blood pressure numbers, you can act accordingly.

If your blood pressure is high, it must come down. There are ways to do so: lifestyle changes and, in some cases, medication.

If your blood pressure is normal or can be controlled with medication, it is still important to monitor your blood pressure regularly. This will keep you in the know as you get older and your life situation changes.

If you do not measure your blood pressure yourself, have it done at a health-care centre.



At-home monitoring

Avoid intense physical activity and cigarette smoking, and do not drink coffee, tea, cola or energy drinks 30 minutes before taking your blood pressure.

Do not take your blood pressure right after a meal; wait 30 minutes after eating.



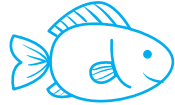
1. Sit at a table.
2. Rest your arm on the table at a 90 degree angle.
3. Slide the cuff onto your bare arm, just above the elbow. The cuff is sufficiently tight if you can fit a finger in between the cuff and your upper arm.
4. Relax for 5 minutes and press the start button to begin the reading.
5. Do not talk or move during the reading.
6. Repeat the measurement 1–2 minutes after the first reading. Write down the numbers.
7. Calculate the average of the two measurements if you wish.
8. Measure day and night! Initially, measure every day for a full week; thereafter, four days at a time is enough.

If your blood pressure is often higher than 135/85 mmHg when you measure it at home, be sure to tell your health nurse, occupational health nurse or doctor about it.

You can lower your blood pressure yourself



Reduce your sodium intake.



Opt for unsaturated fats.



Be active every day.



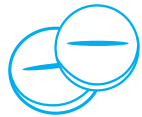
Quit smoking.



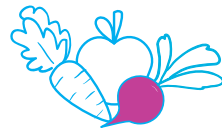
Drink alcohol in moderation.



Lose weight if you are overweight.



Take blood pressure medication if you need it.



Eat at least half a kilo of vegetables, fruit and berries a day.

Recognise the symptoms of cerebral infarction and stroke:

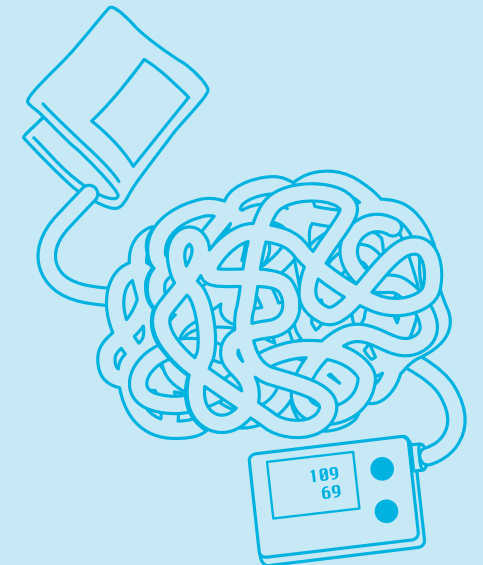
- Slurred speech or difficulty finding the right words.
- Drooping on one side of the mouth.
- Impaired movement or sensation in the limbs on one side of the body.
- Impaired vision.
- Sudden and severe headache.



If you or someone close to you displays one or more symptoms, call 112 immediately.

Important in home monitoring:

- Don't do hard work or eat just before measuring.
- Rest your arm at a 90 degree angle.
- Set the cuff around your upper arm, with a finger's width of space in between the cuff and your skin.
- Do not talk or move during the reading.
- Measure a second time after 1–2 minutes.



Blood pressure monitoring chart

DATE	1st reading	pulse	2nd reading	pulse

If your blood pressure is often higher than 135/85 mmHg when you measure it at home, be sure to tell your health nurse, occupational health nurse or doctor about it.



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One life
Enjoy every day.

