

Blood Pressure Measurement Tips and Tricks



Proper Patient Positioning for Blood Pressure Accuracy

- Have the **patient sit quietly for 5 minutes** before taking blood pressure.
- Place the cuff on a **bare arm**.
- Use the **proper size cuff**. If two cuff sizes fit, **use the larger one**.
- Place the artery marker over the **brachial artery**.
- Apply the cuff carefully, allowing room for no more and no fewer than **two fingers underneath**.
- Make sure the patient's **back is supported and relaxed**.
- Make sure the patient's **feet are supported and legs are uncrossed**.
- Ask the patient to **keep the arm still and not talk during the measurement**.
- Keep the **upper arm supported, relaxed and at heart level**.

Questions You Can Ask

Asking patients about their blood pressure is a good way to open the lines of communication. Here are a few ideas:

- What have you been doing since our last visit to control your blood pressure?
- What concerns you the most about your high blood pressure?
- What specifically would you like to work on to manage your high blood pressure?

Resources for You and Your Patients



High Blood Pressure Basics -

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=a3aC9BDpdA0

Vital Signs: Getting Blood Pressure Under Control -

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=XOxQyO-Sw-g

Test Your Blood Pressure IQ -

http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/HighBloodPressure/AboutHighBloodPressure/Test-Your-Blood-Pressure-IQ_UCM_303313_Article.jsp

Million Hearts Health Care Provider Tip Sheet -

http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/files/TipSheet_HCP_Checklist.pdf