

Blood Pressure Monitors

A number of self monitoring blood pressure devices that are easy to use and provide accurate readings are available at drug stores, pharmacies and medical supply outlets. These monitors feature a soft arm cuff that's wrapped around the upper arm, above the elbow. A hand bulb is used to pump air into the cuff in the case of manual monitors. Battery operated models pulse air automatically with the push of a button. This gently squeezes the arm and temporarily interrupts the flow of blood. The pressure gauge then reaches a peak. The cuff is then slowly deflated, letting blood flow again. As the cuff deflates and the pressure gauge gradually decreases, the return of the blood flow through the main artery in the arm can be heard using a stethoscope. The reading on the pressure gauge when the pulse is first heard is the systolic pressure and the reading when the pulse can no longer be heard for the first time is the diastolic pressure. Electronic or battery operated monitors provide the pulse rate along with the systolic and diastolic readings in a matter of seconds. This eliminates the use of a stethoscope to get the pulse reading. Most of these are now digital monitors and are very easy to use. A small monitor can be bought in any pharmacy and can be used at home for a regular blood pressure check. These monitors are particularly useful when an individual has high blood pressure and needs to regularly monitor blood pressure readings to keep an eye out for complications or extreme variations in readings. It's a good idea to ask your physician for help the first few uses to ensure accurate readings.

About the Author

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