

Hypertension

Adult Hypertension: Diagnosis and Management

Measuring Blood Pressure

- When measuring with an automated BP machine, measurements may be inaccurate if there is a pulse irregularity. If this is the case, then BP should be measured manually.
- BP should be taken in a relaxed environment with the person sitting quietly with their arm straight and supported. The cuff used should be sized to the person's arm.
- To diagnose postural hypotension, measure BP sitting and standing. Ensure the individual is standing for at least a minute before standing measurement.
- If the systolic pressure drops by 20mmHg when standing, a review of medication should be made if BP remains to have this pattern. If this is the case, then a referral should be made to a specialist.

Diagnosing Hypertension

- Ensure BP is checked in both arms before diagnosing hypertension.
- If BP is 140/90 mmHg or higher measure again and if measurement is different, take another measurement and record the lower two measurements.
- If BP is between 140/90mmHg and 180/120mmHg, complete ambulatory blood pressure monitoring (ABPM) or home blood pressure monitoring (HBPM) to confirm hypertension diagnosis.