Blood Pressure Action Pack · Large print

Red-Flag and Pregnancy Blood Pressure Card

EMERGENCY, WHATEVER THE READING

Call 999 for:

- sudden chest pain or tightness that doesn't go away
- severe difficulty breathing
- stroke signs: face drooping, arm weakness, slurred speech
- sudden blurred vision or loss of sight
- sudden severe headache or new confusion

VERY HIGH READING, FEELING WELL

Top number 180 or more, OR bottom number 120 or more:

- rest a few minutes, then check again
- still that high: contact your GP surgery as soon as possible
- worried, or can't reach your surgery: NHS 111

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UK health education only. Not personal medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. In a life-threatening emergency call 999 or go to A&E. If you need medical help urgently, or are not sure where to go, use NHS 111 online or call 111. For other concerns contact your GP.
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⚠ PREGNANT OR GAVE BIRTH IN THE LAST FEW WEEKS

- top number 160 or more, OR bottom number 110 or more: urgent help the same day, even if you feel well
- severe headache, blurred vision or flashing lights, pain below the ribs, or sudden swelling: urgent help
- pregnant: call your maternity unit straight away
- gave birth, or can't reach your maternity unit: call 111

⚠ ALSO IN PREGNANCY, AND MEDICINES

- over 20 weeks, and top number 140 or more, OR bottom number 90 or more, for the first time: maternity unit within 24 hours
- don't start, stop or change blood pressure medicine unless a doctor tells you to
- on blood pressure medicine and pregnant? Tell your doctor straight away

Full details in the description.

Full safety advice: immediately below.

The full safety advice

Call 999 straight away if you or someone else has sudden chest pain or tightness that does not go away, severe difficulty breathing, signs of a stroke such as face drooping, arm weakness or slurred speech, sudden blurred vision or loss of sight, a sudden severe headache, or new confusion. This applies whatever the blood pressure reading.

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⚠ NICE counts blood pressure as severe when, measured in clinic, the top number is 180 or higher or the bottom number is 120 or higher. Either number on its own is enough. If either number in a home reading is at that level or higher and you feel well, rest for a few minutes and check it again. If either number is still that high, contact your GP surgery as soon as possible so it can be checked. If you're worried, or can't reach your surgery, get help from NHS 111.

⚠ If you often get headaches or blurred vision, or chest pain that comes and goes, get help from NHS 111.

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⚠ If you're pregnant or have given birth in the last few weeks, different numbers apply. During pregnancy and in the weeks after birth, a top number of 140 or higher, or a bottom number of 90 or higher, is high. A top number of 160 or higher, or a bottom number of 110 or higher, is severe. If you're more than 20 weeks pregnant and either number reaches the high level for the first time in this pregnancy, contact your maternity unit so you can be checked within 24 hours, even if you feel well. If you're less than 20 weeks pregnant, or you had high blood pressure before this pregnancy, tell your midwife about a high reading, because you may need to see a specialist. If you've given birth in the last few weeks and either number reaches the high level, tell your midwife, health visitor or GP so it can be checked. If either number reaches the severe level, get urgent medical help the same day, even if you feel well. Also get urgent medical help if you have symptoms such as a severe headache that does not go away with painkillers, blurred vision or flashing lights, pain below the ribs, sudden swelling of the face, hands or feet, or feeling very unwell. If you're pregnant, call your maternity unit straight away. If you've recently given birth or can't reach your maternity unit, call 111.

Do not start, stop or change blood pressure medicine unless a doctor tells you to. If you take blood pressure medicine and find out you're pregnant, tell your doctor straight away.

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