

Your Blood Pressure Reading

When it is higher than normal

Why am I getting this handout?

We are giving you this handout because your blood pressure was higher than normal at your visit today.

Your blood pressure reading was: _____

What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the walls of the blood vessels as the heart pumps. About 1 in 3 adults in the United States has high blood pressure.

High blood pressure usually does not cause symptoms. You can have it for years without knowing. But, if your blood pressure stays high, over time it can cause damage to your heart, blood vessels, kidneys, and other organs.

Does this mean I have hypertension?

This one reading does not mean that you have *hypertension* (high blood pressure). It does mean that you should get your blood pressure checked again soon.

Blood pressure changes from minute to minute. Your activities, emotions, diet, medicines, and other things can all affect a blood pressure reading.

Some people have higher blood pressure when they visit the doctor. This is called "white coat hypertension." Their blood pressure goes up when they are anxious. It usually goes down when they feel more relaxed.



Get your blood pressure assessed as soon as you can.

What should I do next?

Meet with your primary care provider (PCP) as soon as you can, at least within the next 4 weeks. Tell your PCP that we took your blood pressure and it was high, and that we advised you follow up with your own provider.

If you do not have a PCP, we can help you find one. Call the UW Medicine Contact Center at 206.520.5000, or visit www.uwmedicine.org and click on "Make an appointment."

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.
