

Patient information

Managing high blood pressure before your local anaesthetic operation

Why is high blood pressure important?

Having high blood pressure over a long period of time can increase your risk of a stroke or heart attack, particularly if you have other problems such as kidney disease or diabetes.

Your consultant has probably mentioned to you that having an operation carries some risk. The risk of having a heart attack and stroke during or shortly after the operation can be reduced by making sure your blood pressure is as good as it can be before surgery.

Sometimes being anxious or rushing to an appointment can make your blood pressure go up. We have therefore asked you to have your blood pressure checked 2 or 3 times by your doctor's surgery.

Please use this leaflet to record your blood pressure readings and bring them with you on the day you are admitted for surgery.

Below are some changes you could make to your lifestyle to help reduce your blood pressure:

- Cut salt intake to less than 6g a day
- Eat a healthy, low fat, balanced diet
- Be active
- Cut down alcohol
- Stop smoking
- Lose weight
- Drink less coffee, tea or other caffeine rich drinks

- Try relaxation therapies, such as meditation and stress management

What is hypertension?

Hypertension is the medical term for high blood pressure. Blood pressure is the measure of the pressure of the blood as it flows through the arteries. When it is measured, two numbers are recorded: the higher number (known as systolic pressure) is the pressure produced when the heart is contracting; the lower number (known as diastolic pressure) is the pressure it falls back to when the heart is relaxed.

Blood pressure varies between individuals and usually rises with age. Occasionally it may be caused by an underlying problem but usually there is no underlying cause.

High blood pressure affects 10 million people in the UK and even 1 in 600 children. It does not usually cause problems in everyday life and rarely causes symptoms unless very high. However, over a long period of time, if left untreated, hypertension increases the risk of having a stroke or a heart attack.

Current recommendations suggest that blood pressure taken on separate occasions, which is consistently shown to be 160/100 or higher needs to be treated. A blood pressure below 138/80 is considered normal.

Your GP may feel that a different target blood pressure is right for you; they will be happy to discuss this with you.

Blood pressure readings

Readings at pre-operative clinic

1 /

2 /

3 /

Readings in doctor's surgery / home

4 /

5 /

6 /

Current medication:

Medication started or changed:

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Please bring this leaflet with you on admission to hospital.