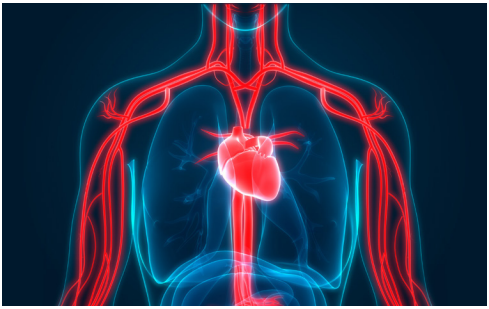
Keep an eye on your blood pressure

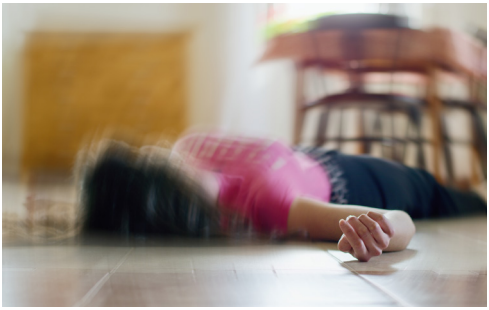
An easy read guide

Your heart pumps blood around your body. The force at which it pumps is called blood pressure.

Having high blood pressure can put a strain on your arteries and organs.
This means you could be at high risk of getting serious problems like a heart attack or stroke.



Your arteries are the tubes that take blood from your heart to other parts of your body.



Having low blood pressure isn’t as dangerous but it can make you feel dizzy or faint.

A blood pressure test is the only way to find out what your blood pressure is.

Most people don’t have any obvious symptoms so it is important to get it checked.

Having a test is easy and could save your life.

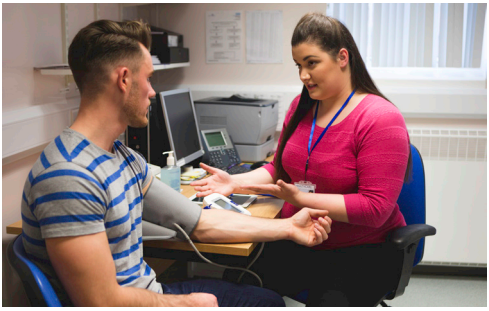
You can get it checked at your doctors, some pharmacies and other places too.

It should always be checked when you have your annual health check.

A special device is used to take your blood pressure.

It is usually electronic but sometimes it might be taken with a stethoscope, arm cuff, pump and dial.

It is best to sit down with your back supported and your legs uncrossed for the test.



You will need to roll up your sleeves or if you have a thick jumper or coat on you will have to take it off.

You should try to relax while the test is being taken.

The cuff will be put around the top of your arm.

It doesn't matter which one.

The cuff is then pumped up to slow down the flow of blood in your arm.

The squeezing might feel a bit uncomfortable but it only lasts a few seconds.

The pressure in the cuff is then slowly let out and your blood pressure will be recorded.

If the doctor is using a stethoscope they will listen to your pulse.

The test is then over and you will usually be told your result straightaway.

Your blood pressure is made up of two numbers.

For example you might be told that it is 140 over 80.

The numbers might change every time you have your blood pressure taken.

When you are relaxed they might be lower and if you are stressed or nervous they might be higher.

If your first number is more than 140 and the second number is more than 90 you might have high blood pressure.

Your doctor or person taking the test will then tell you what to do.

Some things can help to lower your blood pressure. These include:

- Eating a healthy diet with less salt
- Getting regular exercise

- Cutting down on the amount of alcohol you drink

- Losing weight

- Stopping smoking

For more accessible information on a broad range of subjects please contact

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