

## Correct Way to Measure Blood Pressure

- Best time to check: late AM or early afternoon
- Best not to check in early AM because levels are higher due to high cortisol levels in blood stream.
- Do not test during time of increased pain or stress
- Measure at least 30 minutes since last meal, caffeine or nicotine.
- Bladder should be empty
- Should rest at least 5 minutes (sitting) prior to test
- Should be sitting in a chair with a back rest while testing
- Cuff should be at level of heart, so place arm on a table. Do not hold arm out mid-air for test or rest in lap.
- Relax arm and shoulder muscle while testing
- Use instrument that is routinely calibrated for accuracy.
- Finger measurements have been found to be inaccurate.
- Use correct cuff size:
  - Must encircle at least 80% of the arm
  - Must be 2/3 width of upper arm
  - If upper arm circumference measures < 13 inches use **Regular** size cuff
  - If upper arm circumference measures between 13 inches to 16 inches use **Large** size cuff
  - If upper arm circumference measures >16 inches use a cuff specific for **Thigh** measurements
- Take your personal cuff in to physician's office so comparison testing can be done.
- Always record your measurements with date and time. Take with you to physician's office so trends can be seen from readings.

