

CARDIOMETABOLIC · FREE POCKET CARD

The 7 Golden Rules of Home Blood Pressure

Home readings are only as good as the technique behind them. This card encodes the AHA/ACC measurement protocol as seven testable rules, the 2017 category thresholds, a cuff-size check, and a three-reading worksheet that produces an average a clinician will actually use.

- 7 measurement rules
- 2017 category thresholds
- Cuff-size check
- 3-reading averaging worksheet
- 3-page A4 printable PDF

CLINICAL RATIONALE — WHY THIS SPECIFIC TOOL

A single clinic reading misclassifies roughly one person in five, because blood pressure rises with a full bladder, crossed legs, an unsupported arm, and the anxiety of the room itself. Home measurement with correct technique removes those errors.

Most "high" readings are technique errors. A full bladder adds around 10–15 mmHg; crossed legs and an unsupported back add several more; an arm held below heart level or a cuff over clothing adds still more. Fix the technique and a large share of alarming readings disappear.

Cuff size is the silent error. The cuff bladder should cover about 80% of the arm circumference. A cuff that is too small over-reads; one that is too large under-reads. If the cuff you were given wraps with lots of strap to spare, it is probably too big; if it barely closes, too small.

AUTHORITY / EVIDENCE BASE	WHAT IT ESTABLISHES FOR THIS TOOL
AHA/ACC 2017 guideline	Defines the standardised home-measurement protocol and the 120/130/140 category thresholds.
Measurement-error studies	Quantify the mmHg added by a full bladder, crossed legs, unsupported arm and talking during measurement.
Cuff-size research	Undersized cuffs over-read and oversized cuffs under-read; bladder should cover ~80% of arm circumference.

QUICK START — THE NEXT TEN MINUTES

- 1

Check the cuff against your arm
Measure your mid-upper-arm circumference and match it to the cuff-size table on page 2 before you trust a single number.
- 2

Run the seven rules before every session
Empty bladder, no caffeine or exercise for 30 minutes, sit 5 minutes, back and feet supported, arm at heart level, no talking.
- 3

Repeat morning and evening for 7 days
Same times each day, before medication and caffeine. Average the week and bring that number, not a single reading, to your clinician.

ESCALATION THRESHOLDS — ACT NOW, DO NOT AVERAGE

A reading above 180/120 mmHg that repeats after five minutes of rest is a hypertensive crisis: call emergency services if there is chest pain, shortness of breath, weakness, vision change or confusion; otherwise contact your clinician the same day. Sustained readings at or above 130/80 warrant a scheduled review; do not wait for the week to finish.

THE SEVEN RULES, IN THE ORDER YOU PERFORM THEM

- 1

Empty bladder; 30 minutes clear
No caffeine, exercise or smoking for 30 minutes. A full bladder adds about 10–15 mmHg.
- 2

Sit quietly for five minutes
In a quiet room, before the first reading. Rushing in and cuffing up reads high.
- 3

Back supported, feet flat, legs uncrossed
A dangling back or crossed legs each add several mmHg to the number.
- 4

Arm supported at heart level, cuff on bare skin
Rest the arm on a table. A hanging arm or a cuff over a sleeve over-reads.
- 5

Correct cuff size
The bladder should cover about 80% of your arm circumference — check the table on page 2.
- 6

No talking, no texting
Talking or listening during a reading adds several mmHg. Sit still and breathe normally.
- 7

Two readings, one minute apart, twice daily for 7 days
Average the week. That average — not any single reading — is what your clinician acts on.

Medical disclaimer. This pocket card is published by Health Secrets for educational, informational and personal habit-tracking purposes only. It is not medical advice, is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease, and does not replace care from your own clinician. In an emergency call 911. **FTC disclosure.** Health Secrets may earn a commission from qualifying purchases made through links on our website, at no extra cost to you; recommendations are editorial and evidence-led. Board-certified clinical review · edition 1.0 · healthsecrets.com/lead-magnets/lm-04-blood-pressure-7-rules-card

Thresholds, cuff sizes and the 7-day worksheet

CUFF SIZE BY ARM CIRCUMFERENCE

CUFF	ARM	IF IT IS WRONG
Small adult	22–26 cm	Slim upper arms; a standard cuff over-reads here.
Adult	27–34 cm	The default cuff on most home monitors.
Large adult	35–44 cm	A standard cuff over-reads; use the large bladder.
Adult thigh / extra-large	45–52 cm	Ask the pharmacist for the correct bladder size.

DAY	AM READ 1	AM READ 2	AM AVG	PM READ 1	PM READ 2	PM AVG	NOTES — MEDS, CAFFEINE, STRESS, SLEEP
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							

7-day AM average 7-day PM average Overall weekly average Category (from table)

Within a session, average the two readings if they are within 5 mmHg; if they differ by more, take a third and average the two closest. Then average the sessions across the week. Do not average in a reading taken during pain, an argument or right after the stairs — note it and exclude it. Bring the weekly average and the raw log; the pattern matters as much as the number.

Ready for the Complete Step-by-Step Blueprint?

This pocket card gives you the immediate tools to take action today. But long-term health requires a complete, structured daily system — one that tells you **what to do on the days this sheet does not cover**, in what order, and how to adjust when your body does not respond the way the chart says it should.

HEALTH SECRETS

Home Blood Pressure Tracking Kit

Standardized home readings using the AHA / ACC protocol, a 30-day log, and a rolling-average sheet clinicians actually use.

Clinical Practice Series · 22 pages · A4 print + fillable

Home Blood Pressure Tracking Kit

Standardize home readings using validated AHA/ACC protocols and produce clean logs clinicians respect.

22 pages

Protocol + 30-Day Log

Clinical Practice Series

\$15 one-time

WHAT IS INSIDE THE FULL EDITION

- 1 The 7 golden rules as a laminated routine** — the full AHA/ACC protocol in the order you actually perform it, with the mmHg each error adds.
- 1 The rolling-average calculator** — the weekly average clinicians use, with the day-one discard rule built in.
- 1 A 30-day morning and evening log** — twice-daily paired readings with space for medication timing and notes.
- 1 The urgency vs emergency escalation card** — exactly which number with which symptom is a same-day call versus a 911 call.

THIS FREE TOOL VERSUS THE COMPLETE SYSTEM

What this free pocket card already gives you

- ☐ The seven measurement rules and category thresholds
- ☐ A cuff-size check that removes the biggest hardware error
- ☐ A 7-day paired-reading worksheet with averaging

What only the 22-page edition has

- ☐ A 30-day log long enough to see treatment changes land
- ☐ The rolling-average math that turns readings into a clinical number
- ☐ A worked escalation card for urgency versus emergency
- ☐ How to hand your clinician a log they will actually read

Get the Complete Guide

AT [HEALTHSECRETS.COM/PRODUCTS/HOME-BLOOD-PRESSURE-TRACKING-KIT](https://healthsecrets.com/products/home-blood-pressure-tracking-kit)

<https://healthsecrets.com/products/home-blood-pressure-tracking-kit>

READER-ONLY COUPON

READER20

Use code **READER20** for 20% off your full guide at checkout.

A4 print + fillable

Keep the card beside the monitor; complete the worksheet on paper or screen.

AHA/ACC-aligned

Written to the 2017 measurement and category guidance. No miracle claims.

One-time payment

\$15 once, no subscription, instant download after checkout.

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