



Patient information 24 hour Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitor

24 hour Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitor (ABPM) is the technique of measuring the blood pressure repeatedly throughout one whole day and night, outside the setting of the doctor's surgery.

Why does my doctor want me to have this test?

The procedure is used to assess blood pressure in a more accurate way than a "one-off" reading in a doctor's surgery. This is able to predict the risk of cardiovascular disease (heart attack and stroke) related to elevated levels of blood pressure more accurately. It may be ordered to help confirm or exclude the diagnosis of hypertension (high blood pressure). The test may also be used to assess the effectiveness of treatments for high blood pressure, especially if there are also symptoms of low blood pressure.

How do I prepare for the test?

No specific preparation is required. Please allow 30 minutes for assessment and fitting of the blood pressure cuff to your upper arm and recorder to your waist. Wearing a loose-fitting top will assist in this process. Please bring an up to date medication list to the appointment (or a bag with all of your medications in it). You will be instructed on keeping a diary to record the timing and nature of any important symptoms during the recording period. It will only take a few minutes to return the device and provide any feedback the following day.

Is it dangerous?

There is no danger associated with the test. The cuff on your arm will automatically inflate tightly, several times each hour (not as frequently overnight). Whilst this can be uncomfortable there is usually no risk associated with the test. The procedure does not impair your ability to drive. Please remember to keep your arm relaxed during inflations, to allow accurate recording. In patients with lymphoedema of the arm or patients at risk of lymphoedema (eg prior breast cancer) your other arm is generally used. Please mention this to the practice nurse at the time of fitting if this applies to you.

What happens after the test?

The blood pressure readings obtained are downloaded and analysed. The results are usually available to your doctor within 24 hours. Urgent problems will be communicated directly by telephone.