



Patient & Family Guide  
2022

# High Blood Pressure in Pregnancy

South Shore Regional  
Hospital



[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

# High Blood Pressure in Pregnancy

- High blood pressure in pregnancy (also called gestational hypertension) is a blood pressure (BP) that stays higher than 140/90 (140 over 90). For most people, a normal blood pressure is 140/90 or less.
- After week 20 of your pregnancy, high blood pressure can be linked to pre-eclampsia. This is a more serious condition that includes high blood pressure and protein in the urine (pee).
- Pre-eclampsia puts you at a higher risk for seizures, strokes, and long-term health issues. It also puts your baby at higher risk of stillbirth, low birth weight, and preterm birth.
- Because pre-eclampsia can be dangerous to you and your baby, we ask you to monitor your blood pressure and symptoms. Your primary health care provider may recommend other tests (like blood work or ultrasounds).

**What are your questions?  
Please ask. We are here to help you.**

- If you have high blood pressure, watch for **ONE** of these symptoms:
  - › Headache
  - › Vision problems (like spots, blurring, or shaky vision)
  - › Pain in the upper stomach area
  - › Swelling of the hands and face
  - › Nausea (upset stomach) and/or vomiting (throwing up)
  - › Chest pain
  - › Shortness of breath
- If you have one or more of the above symptoms, check your blood pressure.

## **Checking your BP at home**

### **For 30 minutes before taking your BP:**

- Do not have caffeine (coffee, tea) or nicotine (smoking, vaping).
- Do not exercise.

### **To check your BP:**

- Rest for 15 minutes before taking your BP.
- Sit with your feet resting on the floor. Do not cross your legs.
- Support your arm at the level of your heart.

**Call the OBS clinic, OBS unit, or your primary midwife right away if:**

- › You have 2 BP readings 15 minutes apart with either the top number above 140 or the bottom number above 90.

**OR**

- › You are experiencing any of the symptoms on page 2.

**You can call the OBS clinic, OBS unit, or your primary midwife any time if you have questions or concerns about your pregnancy.**

**OBS Clinic**

- › Phone: 902-527-1180
- › Hours: Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**OBS Unit**

- › Phone: 902-527-5214
- › Hours: The OBS Unit is **always** open.

**My primary midwife**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Use this sheet to keep track of your BP.

<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Blood pressure</b>

Date and Time	Blood pressure

# Notes:

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Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.  
For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>  
Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>  
Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.

