



24-hour blood pressure (BP) monitoring

Your clinician has recommended that you undergo 24-hour ambulatory blood pressure monitoring. This leaflet explains what to expect during the test and why it is being carried out.

What is a 24-hour ambulatory blood pressure monitor?

An ambulatory blood pressure monitor records your blood pressure over a 24-hour period, while you go about your normal daily activities. It provides an understanding of how your blood pressure changes during the day and overnight.

You will be asked to wear a blood pressure cuff on your upper arm, which is connected to a small monitor worn on a belt around your waist.

You will go home wearing the monitor and return it the following day. There is no need to stay in hospital for this test.

Why do I need a 24-hour ambulatory blood pressure monitor?

Your doctor has requested this non-invasive test to monitor your blood pressure.

The results can help to:

- Diagnose high blood pressure (hypertension)
- Assess how well your blood pressure is being controlled if you are already on treatment
- Support decisions about the most appropriate care or medication for you

Preparing for your 24-hour ambulatory BP test

- You can eat and drink as normal.
- Take a shower or bath before attending your appointment.
- Wear a loose-fitting top that has fairly wide or flexible sleeves so that the cuff worn underneath has room to inflate.
- Please contact us before your appointment if you require a male or female cardiac physiologist, and we will do our best to meet your request.
- Please continue to take all medications as normal unless told otherwise by your doctor

Getting to us

Please refer to your appointment letter for the location of your appointment. It is essential you **check the location of your appointment before attending**.

We provide blood pressure monitoring at the following sites:

Royal Berkshire Hospital: Cardiology Department, Battle Block, Level 1, Craven Road, Reading RG1 5AN

West Berkshire Community Hospital: Main Outpatients Department, London Road, Benham Hill, Thatcham, RG18 3AS

When should I arrive?

Arrive at the department about 10 minutes before your appointment. **Allow extra time for parking**, as late arrival may require your appointment to be rescheduled.

Upon arrival, please check in at reception or inform the cardiac practitioner

On the day of your appointment

In a private consultation room, a cardiac practitioner will review the purpose of the blood pressure monitor, confirm your symptoms, check for any allergies, ensure the correct device has been selected, and confirm that you are happy to proceed before the fitting begins.

We'll ask you what time you get up and go to bed each day. We'll then set-up the monitor to automatically record your blood pressure.

Once you have confirmed you are happy to proceed, we will fit the monitor, which takes about 20 minutes. The BP cuff will usually be put on your left arm if you are right-handed or your right arm if you are left-handed. The cuff connects via a small tube to the monitoring device, which is a small box worn on a belt around your waist or over your shoulder on a strap.

Wearing the monitor

During a recording, the blood pressure cuff around your arm will inflate and deflate automatically every 30 minutes during the day, and every 60 minutes throughout the night. You will hear the monitor working and feel the pressure of the cuff inflating on your arm.

When the cuff begins to inflate, please try to sit down and rest your arm comfortably in a straight position. It is important to keep your arm still and remain quiet while the measurement is being taken. Do not drop your arm while driving; continue driving as normal.

Occasionally, the monitor may not be able to record your blood pressure. If this happens, it will automatically repeat the measurement after approximately 5 minutes. You do not need to take any action, as the device is fully automated.

It is important to continue with your normal daily activities while wearing the monitor, including any usual exercise, as advised by your doctor. However, you should not bathe, shower, or swim while wearing the equipment.

You may feel a tightening or mild tingling sensation in your arm when the cuff inflates. This is normal and will settle once the cuff deflates.

Important information

- The monitor must be worn day and night for the entire recording period.
- You may use your mobile phone and other electrical devices as normal.
- You should continue with your normal daily activities.
- You must not swim during the 24-hour period that you are wearing the device.**
- Do not bathe or shower** while the blood pressure monitor is in place.

Returning the monitor

Once the monitoring period has ended, remove the device, and place the monitor in the red bag provided. **Monitors should be returned to the same site where the fitting was carried out.**

Return the monitor as soon as possible after your test. Delayed returns will delay your results and may prevent other patients from being seen.

Please return the monitor on the agreed-upon date and time determined by the cardiac practitioner and you during your appointment.

Where to drop your monitor off:

Royal Berkshire Hospital

Please place the monitor, in the red bag provided, into the black drop box located either outside the Cardiology Department or within the Cardiology Concourse. Alternatively, you may return it in person to the Cardiology Reception during opening hours, Monday to Friday 8am–5pm

West Berkshire Community Hospital

Please return the monitor to the Main Outpatient Reception, Monday to Friday 8am-5pm

Results

Once the monitor has been returned, the recording will be downloaded in chronological order. The results will be sent to your referring clinician, who will contact you if any further action is required.

For any queries regarding your results, please contact your referring clinician directly.

Additional requirements

For patients with additional requirements, please contact the department in advance so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Hospital transport — If you are using hospital transport, please ensure that transport is arranged for both your monitor-fitting appointment and your return visit.

Patients arriving on a stretcher — If you will be arriving on a stretcher, please contact the department in advance on 0118 322 6676 so that suitable arrangements can be made for both fitting and returning the Blood Pressure monitor.

Children and supervision — Children must not be left unattended in the waiting area. Staff are unable to supervise children, so please ensure appropriate childcare arrangements are in place. Failure to do so may result in your appointment being rescheduled.

Useful contacts

Clinical Admin Team (CAT 11)	0118 322 6676 or email or email rbb-tr.cat11@nhs.net
Monitor fitting queries	0118 322 5489
Cardiology Reception Enquiries	0118 322 6515
British Heart Foundation:	www.bhf.org.uk

This leaflet is printed privately for the Cardiac Fund. It was set up in 1976 for the purpose of providing cardiac services that would otherwise not be available through National Health resources. Our Cardiac Laboratory was largely equipped through the fund and many other areas in the Department have also benefited from equipment and staff training.



If you would like to contribute please scan the QR code below to donate direct to the fund online, alternatively, cheques should be made payable to:



The Royal Berks Charity Cardiac Fund U226

Royal Berks Charity

Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust London Road

Reading RG1 5AN Telephone 0118 322 8860 www.royalberkscharity.co.uk

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

RBFT Cardiology Department, May 2026

Next review due: May 2028