

— SCREENING FOR —
HYPERTENSION
IN THE ADULT POPULATION
— 2012 —

For all adults 18 years of age and older, we suggest screening at all appropriate primary care visits, which include: new patient visits, periodic health exams, urgent office visits for neurological or cardiovascular related issues, medication renewal visits, and other visits where the primary care practitioner deems it an appropriate opportunity to monitor blood pressure. It is not necessary to measure blood pressure on every patient at every office visit if not clinically indicated.

CANADIAN TASK FORCE ON PREVENTIVE HEALTH CARE (CTFPHC) RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We recommend blood pressure measurement at all appropriate primary care visits.
2. We recommend that blood pressure be measured according to the current techniques described in the Canadian Hypertension Education Program (CHEP) recommendations for office and out-of-office blood pressure measurements*.
3. For people who are found to have an elevated blood pressure during screening, the CHEP criteria for assessment and diagnosis of hypertension should be applied to determine whether the patient meets diagnostic criteria for hypertension**.

Please note: These recommendations do not apply to those who have already received a confirmed diagnosis of hypertension.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

For primary care practitioners using electronic health records, flag a screening reminder for adults aged 18 years and older, especially for those who have not had their blood pressure measured.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The frequency and timing of blood pressure screening may vary between patients. The risks of high blood pressure, stroke, or heart disease changes over a person's natural lifespan, increasing with age, comorbidities, and the presence of other risk factors. Therefore, screening frequency may increase accordingly, especially in patients with more than one vascular risk factor.

Having recent consistent normal blood pressure results may decrease the need for more frequent monitoring, while a tendency toward "high normal" blood pressure could indicate that more frequent monitoring is needed.

Adults identified as belonging to a high-risk ethnic group (e.g. South Asian, Aboriginal, African ancestry) may benefit from more frequent monitoring. Practitioners should remain alert for opportunities to screen infrequent visitors and others who have not been screened recently.

*See <http://www.hypertension.ca/accurate-measurement-of-blood-pressure>

**See <http://www.hypertension.ca/diagnosis>

**THE CANADIAN TASK FORCE ON PREVENTIVE HEALTH CARE (CTFPHC):
PUTTING PREVENTION INTO PRACTICE**

The CTFPHC is an independent body of fourteen primary care and prevention experts who recognise and support the need for evidence informed preventive activities in primary care in Canada. We develop and disseminate clinical practice guidelines for primary and preventive care, based on the systematic analysis of scientific evidence. To learn more about the CTFPHC, visit our website at www.canadiantaskforce.ca.

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ADAPTED FROM THE CANADIAN HYPERTENSION EDUCATION PROGRAM (CHEP)

