



How to measure Blood Pressure using an automated cuff

Instructions for taking blood pressure- either for yourself or for someone else- generally start with '*sit quietly for 5 minutes*'-

However, that is often where the challenge starts. How do you sit quietly for 5 minutes when anxious thoughts or plans for later today keep popping into your mind?

Why not try some 3-4-5 breathing?

Focussing on regulating your breathing is a way to calm the mind.

It goes like this:

Breathe in through your nose for a count of 3

Hold your breath for a count of 4

Breathe out through your mouth for a count of 5.

Repeat

So the next time you take your blood pressure:

Make sure you're sitting comfortably

Apply the cuff to your upper arm

Do 5 cycles of 3-4-5 breathing (5 breaths), then take your blood pressure while continuing to focus on your breathing.

If the reading is 135/80 or higher, repeat the reading after a couple of minutes quiet breathing.

3-4-5 breathing can be used at other times in the day too. It's been shown to be a great way to reduce stress, calm the mind, and is better at helping you fall asleep than counting sheep!

And as you practice and get better at 3-4-5 breathing, you can change it up- try 4-7-8 breathing instead.