

Appendix 3: Measurement of Blood Pressure

- Use a properly maintained and calibrated mercury sphygmomanometer.
- If an alternative device is used, ensure that it meets standards recommended by the British Hypertension Society.
- Sitting BP in left arm is recommended.
- Measure standing BP, especially in elderly and those who are pregnant, to exclude postural hypotension (a fall in SBP > 20mmHg on standing).
- Seat the patient for a minimum of 3 minutes before recording BP.
- Patient should avoid tea and coffee for 30 minutes before measurement.
- Remove tight clothing above the cuff, support arm at heart level and ensure hand is relaxed.
- Use cuff of appropriate size. Bladder should engage at least two thirds of the arm circumference.
- Lower mercury slowly by 2 mmHg per second.
- Read BP to the nearest 2 mmHg.
- In the elderly and pregnant measure DBP at Phase 4 and note in records.
- Take two measurements at each visit.