

Blood Pressure Case Finding

NICE NG136 (updated 2023) | NHS Advanced Service Spec v2.2

■ EMERGENCY: Call 999 Now

- BP 180/120+ WITH: severe headache, confusion, chest pain, palpitations, or signs of heart failure
- Give written record. Relay results to GP immediately via approved secure channel.

■ URGENT: Same-Day Action

- BP 180/120+, no acute symptoms: refer to GP or urgent care same day
- ABPM average 170/115+: same-day GP (999 if acute symptoms develop)
- Irregular pulse persists on second reading: same-day GP
- BP below 90/60 with regular fainting or falls: same-day GP
- Call the practice while patient is still present. Send results immediately.

Clinic reading	Action	GP timeframe
Below 90/60, no symptoms	Lifestyle advice; recheck in 1 year	Weekly summary
Below 90/60 + dizziness, nausea or fatigue	Lifestyle advice + refer	Within 3 weeks
90/60 to 139/89 (normal)	Lifestyle advice	Weekly summary
140/90 to 179/119 (high)	Offer ABPM + lifestyle advice	After ABPM result
180/120+, no symptoms	Same-day GP referral	Same day
180/120+ with symptoms	Call 999	Immediate

ABPM average	Diagnosis	GP timeframe
Below 135/85	Normal: recheck in 5 years	Weekly summary
135/85 to 149/94	Stage 1 hypertension	Within 3 weeks
150/95 to 169/114	Stage 2 hypertension	Within 7 days
170/115 or above	Severe hypertension	Same-day GP (999 if acute symptoms)
Patient declines ABPM	Refer on clinic reading	Within 3 weeks
Fails to attend	2 contact attempts; notify GP if unsuccessful	Promptly

✓ ADVISE: Lifestyle (Every Patient)

- Salt below 6 g/day; balanced diet, more fruit and vegetables
- 150+ mins moderate exercise/week; healthy weight
- Alcohol within limits; stop smoking; moderate caffeine

Key pitfalls:

First visit: measure both arms; use the higher-reading arm for all future measurements and ABPM. Use the lower of the two readings for clinical decision-making. Always offer ABPM when clinic BP is 140/90 mmHg or above and below 180/120 mmHg. Record consent before measuring. Send same-day results immediately. Complete clinical record before submitting MYS claim.