

Using the Screen and Confirm technique to measure blood pressure

What is the *screen and confirm* blood pressure measurement technique?

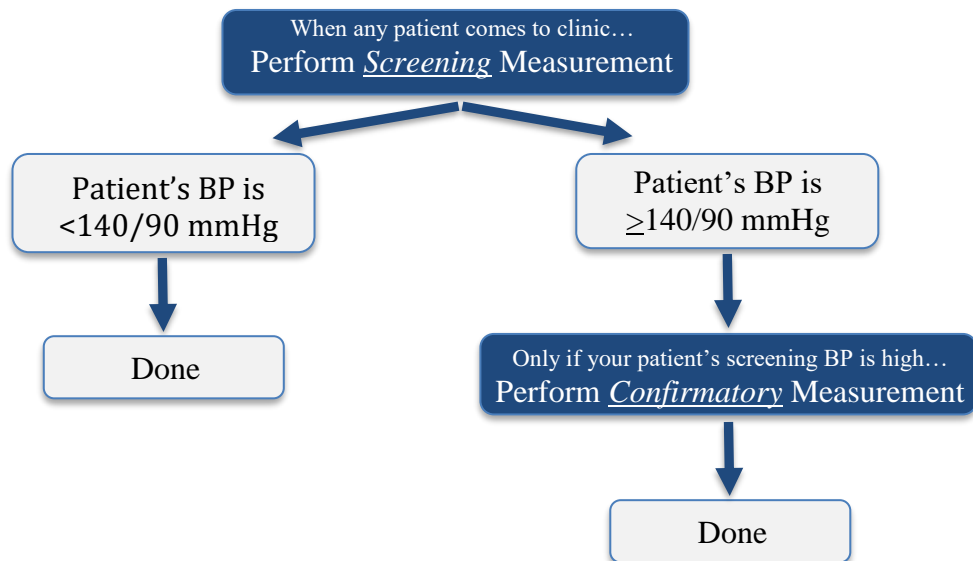
It's a method that helps healthcare workers measure blood pressure accurately, so that patients receive the right care. For every patient, you take a *screening* reading to efficiently check your patient's blood pressure. If their screening blood pressure is 140/90 mmHg or higher, you then take a *confirmatory* measurement to determine if their blood pressure really is high.

Why is the *screen and confirm* technique important?

Guidelines recommend healthcare workers measure blood pressure multiple times during a primary care visit to get the most accurate readings. However, measuring blood pressure multiple times can slow down the clinic workflow. Since studies also show that only patients whose first blood pressure reading is 140/90 mmHg or higher are likely to have high blood pressure, the screen and confirm technique lets healthcare workers focus on getting the most accurate readings only from patients at-risk for uncontrolled hypertension.

How should we perform the *screen and confirm* technique?

You perform a *screening* measurement anytime you check a patient's blood pressure. You only need to obtain a *confirmatory* BP measurement if the first blood pressure reading is 140/90 mmHg or higher:



The specific techniques used to measure BP are covered in more detail in other Fast Fact sheets:

- For both screening and confirmatory BP measurements, you should prepare you patient to ensure you get accurate blood pressure measurements (see Fast Facts #2)
- For most patients, you should use an automated device to obtain both *screening* and *confirmatory* BP measurements (see Fast Facts #3)
- Occasionally, when an automated device won't work, you should obtain *screening* and *confirmatory* BP measurements using a manual device (see Fast Facts #4)

For more information

- Ogedegbe, G. and T. Pickering (2010). "Principles and techniques of blood pressure measurement." *Cardiol Clin* 28(4): 571-586.
- Handler, J., et al. (2012). "Impact of the number of blood pressure measurements on blood pressure classification in US adults: NHANES 1999-2008." *J Clin Hypertens (Greenwich)* 14(11): 751-759.

And check out the training modules and other materials at [<http://www.richlifeprogram.org/>]