

# How to measure lying and standing blood pressure (BP) as part of an assessment to optimise safe activity



- 1 Identify if you are going to need assistance to stand the patient and simultaneously record their blood pressure.
- 2 Use a manual sphygmomanometer if possible and definitely if the automatic machine fails to record.
- 3 Explain the procedure to the patient.



minutes

Lying down

0

Ask the patient to lie down for at least **5 minutes**.



5

Measure the BP and pulse.



Standing

1

Ask the patient to stand up (assist if needed).  
Measure BP and pulse after standing in the **first minute**.



3

Measure BP and pulse again after patient has been standing for **3 minutes**.



**Repeat recording** if BP is still dropping.

In the instance of positive results, **repeat regularly** until resolved.

If symptoms change, **repeat the test**.



Notice and document symptoms of dizziness, light-headedness, vagueness, pallor, visual disturbance, feelings of weakness and palpitations.

Advise patient of results, and if the result is positive:

- a inform the medical and nursing team.
- b take immediate actions to prevent falls and/or unsteadiness.

A **positive result** is:

- a A drop in systolic BP of 20 mmHg or more (with or without symptoms).
- b A drop to below 90 mmHg on standing even if the drop is less than 20 mmHg (with or without symptoms).
- c A drop in diastolic BP of 10 mmHg with symptoms (although clinically less significant than a drop in systolic BP).