24-Hour Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitoring
A Reference Guide

What is 24-hour Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitoring?
Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitoring (ABPM) measures your blood pressure over the course of a full day (24 hours). You will wear a blood pressure cuff on your upper arm that is connected to a monitor. The monitor records your blood pressure readings 3 times per hour while awake and 1 time per hour while sleeping.

Why Monitor Blood Pressure for 24 hours?
Measuring your blood pressure in your normal environment and during your usual daily routines gives your doctor a better idea of how your blood pressure changes throughout the day. Some reasons for having ABPM:

- White coat hypertension: high blood pressure in clinic settings (around medical staff or doctors) with lower blood pressure outside of clinic.
- High blood pressure without a diagnosis of hypertension: blood pressure may be high sometimes and more blood pressure measurements are needed.
- Hypertension medicine assessment: to make sure your blood pressure medicines are working as they should all day.
- Assess symptoms - such as lightheadedness, dizziness, or headaches, to check if these are due to blood pressure.

The Blood Pressure Monitor
The monitor is a small box that connects to the cuff on your arm. The monitor remains in a black pouch throughout the day. You may wear it with a belt to keep it up on your side and out of the way. During the measurement, the monitor screen will be black and will not display any blood pressure readings.

Important Reminders and Tips
- When the cuff inflates and you feel the cuff tightening, stop what you are doing and remain as still as possible (without putting yourself at risk). This allows the cuff to sense your blood pressure accurately. Extend your arm, and relax. If you are walking or standing, remain standing and drop the arm with the cuff to your side.
- Avoid vigorous physical activity, such as jogging/running, biking outdoors, lawn mowing, etc, while wearing the blood pressure monitor.
- If the monitor misses a reading, you will feel the cuff inflate again in 1-2 minutes to try another reading.
- When you are ready for bed, remove the cord from around your neck and place the monitor by your side. It should be placed far enough away so you do not roll on it.
- Showers: do not wear the monitor into the shower/bath. Remove the cuff from your upper arm and set aside. Do not disconnect anything or push any buttons on the monitor. After your shower, place the cuff back on your upper arm as described below.
Putting the Cuff Back On

- Make sure the cuff is in the correct position when on your arm. The rubber tube should point upward and in the center of your upper arm. Check the cuff and place it above the crease of your arm. Make sure the rubber tubing is not pinched or kinked to allow proper air flow.
- You may take the cuff off if it causes pain or discomfort. Remove the cuff to rest the arm for 5-10 minutes in between readings. Place the cuff back on your arm as directed above.
- If the cuff is causing pain and you want to stop the test you may turn the monitor off. Hold the circle button on the lower right of the monitor as it beeps. A message will appear “Do you want to switch the unit off?” Use the arrow buttons to highlight “yes” and press the circle button to select. The monitor will turn off. It cannot be turned back on to start the test. Once you turn the monitor off, the test is over.

Recording Activities
The activity log is an important part of the ABPM procedure and should be completed as instructed by the clinician. List changes in activity/symptoms throughout your day. If you are doing the same activity for an extended time you do not need to write this over and over, instead write ranges of time. Record your bedtime and wake time. Also record if you get up during the night to use the restroom or for any other reason.

Returning the Monitor
The cuff, monitor, activity log, and belt (if you were given one) must be returned to the Preventive Cardiology Clinic. Follow the instructions given to you by the clinician. All ABPM equipment must be returned the next business day. Due to the expense of this equipment, it must be hand-delivered back to the Clinic: there is not a mail-back option.

Results
Upon your return the next day to the Preventive Cardiology Clinic, a clinician will remove the monitor, review the activity log, and discuss any concerns or questions with you. The clinician will then download the results from the monitor and prepare a report for a UW Health Cardiologist to read. A final report will be sent to your provider who ordered the test. Your provider will give you the results. If you have not received a call within 5-7 business days, place a call to your provider who ordered the test to ask about the results.

If you have any questions or concerns while wearing the ABPM monitor, please call the Preventive Cardiology Clinic Monday through Friday between 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM at 608-263-7420.