



MAYFIELD MEDICAL GROUP

Family Centred Care

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Dictated:
Date:
Ref:

Dear Patient,

Despite the restrictions of the coronavirus pandemic, your practice continues to review our patients with long-term medical conditions. This is vitally important in order to optimise your health, and to prevent the risk of complications of these diseases.

With that in mind, we have had to adapt our approach to our patients by utilising telephone or video consultations throughout the pandemic.

Unfortunately, there are certain things that we simply cannot do down the phone: for example checking your weight or your blood pressure. It is with regards to this that I write to you today.

Most of our patients have the ability to check their weight at home using domestic weighing scales. I would encourage you to check your weight and feedback to the practice so that your medical records can be kept up to date for your chronic disease management appointments. Ideally we would want the weight without any footwear on, and without any heavy clothing such as dressing gowns, outdoor jackets or coats. We would prefer a weight in kilograms, but we are happy to accept imperial measurement which we will convert when placed in your notes.

Getting a blood pressure is slightly trickier. The national guidance has been to recommend that patients obtain their own blood pressure machines. As a practice we would also strongly advocate this. There are many benefits to having your own blood pressure machine, not least of all the fact that it allows a much more accurate and representative blood pressure when done in the comfort of your own home over multiple readings compared to the sometimes stressful environment of rushing to a nurse's appointment.

Blood pressure machines are readily available through large pharmacies, department stores, bigger supermarkets, and also online through retailers such as Amazon and Argos.

At the practice we commonly use the Omron brand, and the uncomplicated machines such as the Omron M2 can be bought from retailers for £20 to £25. This machine will give you an easy to understand blood pressure reading, along with your pulse rate.

To obtain your blood pressure there will be instructions with your machine, but in summary, you would want to be sitting in a neutral position with your arm relaxed and rested on the arm of the chair or table. The cuff on the blood pressure machine will go on in a specific way, often with a diagram on the cuff to show you how to orientate it. There is often only one or two buttons on the machine: one to turn it on and one to start the blood pressure reading process. When you press

the button to start the process the cuff will initially inflate around your arm giving a tight sensation and then it will gradually reduce as the machine starts to find your pulse. When the machine is finished running this cycle and the cuff is fully deflated it will give you a blood pressure reading. You should aim to stay relaxed, without flexing any of the muscles in your hand or your arm during the process, and avoid interacting with anything or anyone else.

An isolated blood pressure reading is seldom helpful. I encourage that you do two to three readings per a day over a three to five day period and **take an average**. Your target blood pressure is usually 135/85, although this can be altered in individual cases. Please note that one-off readings higher than this are not alarming.

You should seek immediate and urgent medical attention if you are persistently obtaining readings of 200/110 and higher. Please note that either reading elevated persistently is grounds to seek urgent attention.

We would encourage you to communicate your blood pressure readings to our staff during your chronic disease management appointments. We will then be able to advise you on what action to take, if any.

I hope you have found this letter helpful. Please note that this is not designed to replace your chronic disease management letter, rather it is a means to ensure your safety by not exposing you to the risks of a public area such as a General Practitioner's building during the active period of this coronavirus crisis.

If you have queries, please direct them to our Reception staff or to your Nurse during your appointment.

With best wishes and stay safe,

Yours sincerely

Dr Shaun Aval MBChB MRCP MRCS(Ed) DOHNS
General Practitioner
Partner

On behalf of Mayfield Medical Group