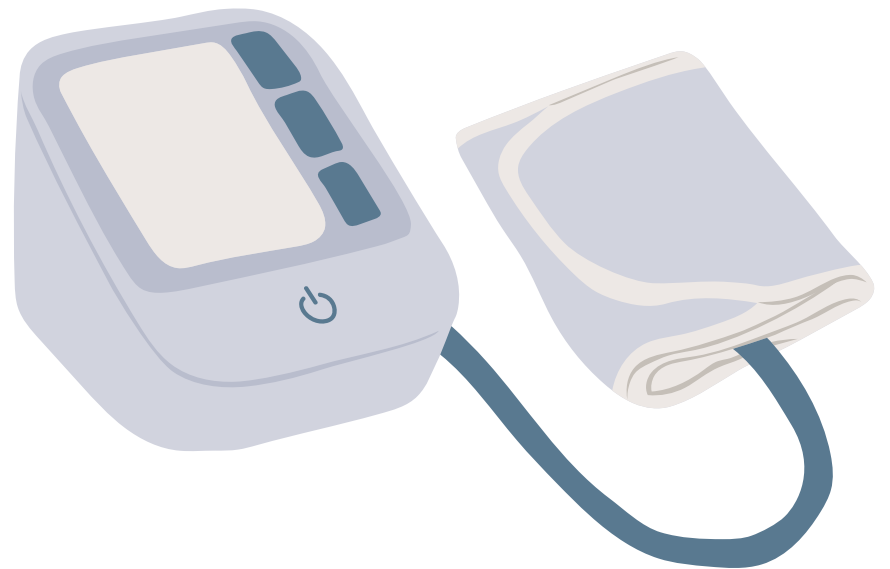


Tip: What to do with your asymptomatic patient who has VERY high blood pressure

Hypertensive Emergency is when an acute elevation in blood pressure (>180/120) causes target organ damage. These patients should be sent to the ED immediately for management. S+S that may signify acute target organ damage include: generalized neurologic symptoms (agitation, delirium, visual r), focal neurologic symptoms, flame hemorrhages, cotton wool spots, papilledema, nausea or vomiting, chest pain or discomfort, severe back pain, or acute dyspnea.

Hypertensive Urgency or **Severe Asymptomatic Hypertension**, often associated with a mild headache in office, is much more common.



TIP! In the absence of symptoms, there is no proven benefit from rapid lowering of blood pressure.

Those with imminent cardiovascular risks from known aortic or intracranial aneurysms should be considered for BP reduction over a period of hours and should be sent to the ED.

The reduction goal for these patients should be to **<160/<100** without reducing the MAP greater than 25% over a matter of hours.



TRICK!

What steps should be taken?

1. Repeat measurement after having allowed the patient to rest in a quiet room for 30 min. If ineffective consider antihypertensives.
2. Patients with previously treated HTN?
 - a. Reinstitute medications if non-adherent
 - b. Consider increasing dose of current antihypertensive(s)
 - c. Addition of a diuretic with consideration of the patient's renal function.
3. Patients with untreated HTN should be initiated on an anti-hypertensive most favourable for any underlying conditions, such as a CCB, BB, ACEi, or an ARB.



Check out the BC Emergency Medicine Network's Clinical Summary on the topic:

https://www.bcemergencynetwork.ca/clinical_resource/hypertensive-emergencies/

Refer to the UpToDate page on Management of Severe Asymptomatic Hypertension (see Table 2 for tx of HTN by underlying disease):

https://www.uptodate.com/contents/management-of-severe-asymptomatic-hypertension-hypertensive-urgencies-in-adults?search=hypertensive%20urgency&source=search_result&selectedTitle=1~33&usage_type=default&display_rank=1