

## TIPS FOR TAKING BLOOD PRESSURE WITH AN AUTOMATED CUFF

1. Have patient seated comfortably with feet flat on the floor in a chair with back support.
2. Allow the patients a few minutes to rest before taking their blood pressure.
3. If they need to void first, allow them to go before taking their blood pressure.
4. Ask the patient to remove garments that are covering their arm and make sure their arm is supported at heart height during the procedure.
5. Slip their arm into an appropriately sized cuff and position the cuff on the upper arm 1 inch (2-3 cm) above the elbow. The tube should point in the direction of the lower arm.
6. The cuff should be snug but still allow you to fit two fingers under the cuff.
7. Tighten the free end of the cuff and close the cuff using the Velcro. The cuff should be snug on the upper arm so that 2 fingers will fit between the cuff and the patient's upper arm.
8. Check to be sure that the vertical line of the cuff ("Index Line" on the diagram to the right) is within the range of the horizontal markings ("range") that indicate that the cuff size is appropriate for the patient. If there are no lines on the cuff, then measure the circumference of the patient's mid upper arm in centimeters and then select a cuff based on the following measurements (small cuff < 22.9 cm; 22.9-31.9 cm regular cuff; 32-42 cm large cuff, > 42 cm thigh cuff).
9. Press the "START" button to inflate the cuff. The cuff will inflate and deflate automatically. Record the digital readings for systolic and diastolic blood pressures. Ask the patient to relax and remain silent while the blood pressure is being taken.  
Cuffs should have tags for dates of calibration. If none is present, check with the nursing director to make sure calibration has been performed within six months.

