



HEALTH FOR LIFE

Vital Signs at Home After a Transplant

You need to measure your temperature, blood pressure, pulse, and weight (vital signs) at home. This information will help us keep track of how well you are doing. Let the Transplant Office know your vital sign results at the same time you report your blood results. You and / or a family member will be taught how to do your vital signs and record the results. You will be given record sheets where you can write down the results. During your one month clinic visit after transplant surgery, you will learn how to use your touchtone phone to send your vital signs and lab information to the post transplant office. By using the phone, you will not have to wait for an operator to take your information.

Temperature

Prednisone can mask a fever, and for this reason you should take your temperature at least four (4) times a day when you return home.



Find a time to take your temperature that fits your own schedule. One suggestion is to take your temperature when you get up in the morning, before lunch, before supper, and before bedtime.

If your temperature is 101 degrees or higher, take Tylenol 650 mg. If your fever persists or increases after 2 hours, call the post transplant office. If you have had a kidney transplant, take only Tylenol for a fever. Never use aspirin or aspirin products. After an episode of a fever, provide a urine specimen at your next lab visit.

Blood Pressure

Take your blood pressure 2 - 4 times a day after you return home. Both prednisone and Cyclosporine may raise your blood pressure.

You may be taking medicines to control high blood pressure. If so, you need to check your blood pressure 4 times a day, and before taking each dose of your medicine.

If you have had a kidney transplant, your kidney function will improve. As a result, your prednisone will be reduced and your blood pressure may return to normal or near normal. When this happens you will not need all the blood pressure medicines that you are now on. The Transplant Office must know what your blood pressures have been to decide if a change in medicine is needed.



(over)

Call the Transplant Office if you have:

- Frequent headaches
- Blurred vision
- Pounding in your ears
- Dizzy spells

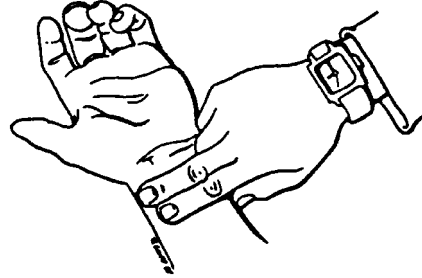
A change in your treatment for blood pressure might be needed.

Pulse

Certain medicines may cause your heart rate to speed up or slow down. You will need to learn how to take your pulse rate before taking these medicines.

If you are on Inderal, Lopressor, Lanoxin, Normodyne, or Tenormin, skip the next dose if your heart rate is less than 60 beats a minute.

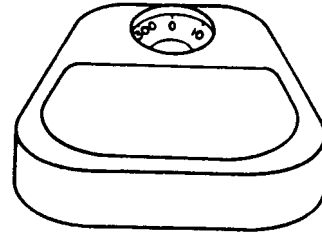
If you are taking Apresoline, do not take your next dose if your heart rate is greater than 120 beats a minute.



Weight

Weigh yourself, using the same scale when you get up in the morning and before breakfast every day. Some of your medicines will be adjusted to your body weight. Changes in weight will affect what dose you will take.

Following your weight every day may help check if fluid is building up in your body. Fluid build up may be a warning sign of a rejection episode. You do not need to measure your intake and output at home because you are checking your weight every day.



Taking your vital signs and keeping a record of the results is an important part of your home care. Problems that you might have after your transplant can often be prevented if you take and report your vital signs on a regular basis.

Even if your lab faxes your bloodwork results to the post transplant office, call them with your vital signs every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

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Transplant Program
The Ohio State University Medical Center

- ▶ Upon request all patient education handouts are available in other formats for people with hearing, vision and language problems, call (614) 293-3191. For more information, please call (614) 293-3707.