

NHS

*Liverpool
Clinical Commissioning Group*

Florence

Your guide to
blood pressure
and Florence

Name

Healthcare Advisor

HT Number

pss*
person shaped support

I do it

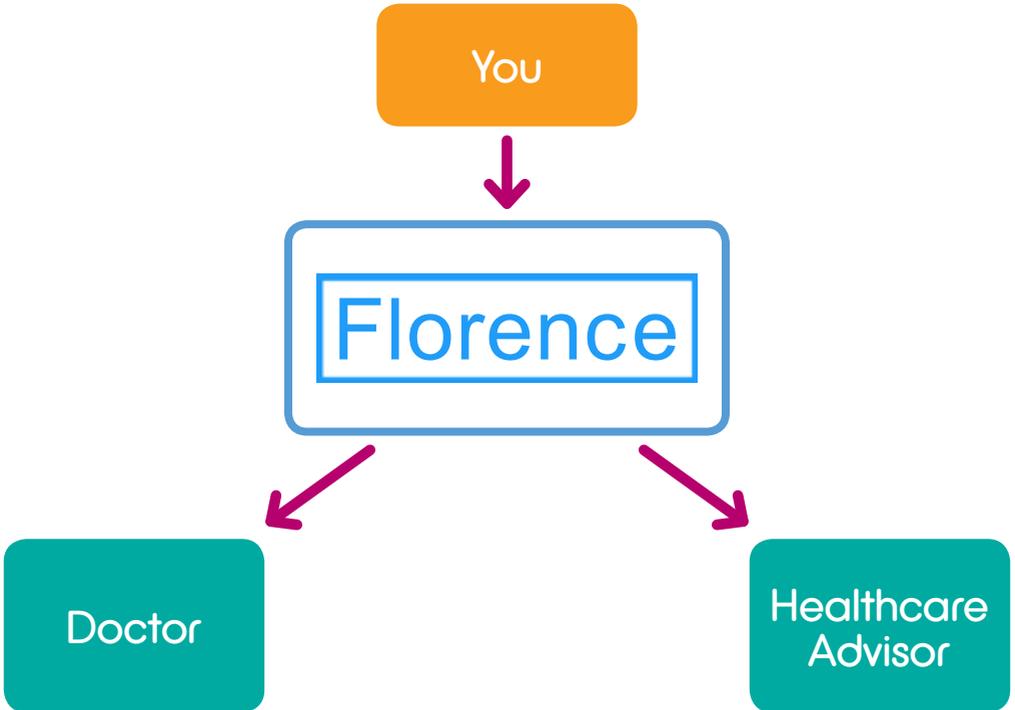
Mi[®]
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Meet Florence

Florence, or Flo, is a free and easy to use service that works with your mobile phone to quickly and conveniently provide support and advice to help you manage your condition. Designed by the NHS, Flo makes it easier for you to connect with your healthcare team by sending you regular prompts and advice for you to act on.

Flo allows you to monitor things like your blood pressure, by giving you a simple way to send readings to your healthcare team from the comfort of your own home at a time to suit you. You'll receive reminders when you need to take readings and get instant feedback after you've sent them, advising you on what you need to do next.



Your information will be shared across your healthcare team, which allows them to track your progress and work together with you to make better decisions about your healthcare.



What can Flo do for you?

- Monitor your blood pressure at home.
- Send in your readings at a time to suit you.
- Schedule reminders to check your readings.
- Give instant advice on your readings telling you if there's anything you need to do.
- Provide personalised reminders on anything that you've agreed with your healthcare advisor.
- Help your healthcare team spot problems earlier.

It's all free and easy to use, you'll be provided with the equipment to take your measurements at home and all you have to do is follow the instructions and text your results to Flo.

Please be aware that your readings will not be constantly monitored, so if you feel unwell you still need to contact your healthcare team in the usual way.

How to monitor your blood pressure with Flo

If you've agreed with your healthcare advisor that you'll be monitoring your blood pressure (BP) at home you'll need to learn how to use Flo. It's a very simple and easy process that's completed in just 5 simple steps...

Step 1

Register

Before you start using Flo you need to register. Give your mobile phone number to a member of your healthcare team, Flo will then text you to confirm that you want to join. If you're happy to receive texts from Flo and to share your information with the doctors and nurses who look after you, simply reply to the message with YES.

Step 2

Take your blood pressure

Using the monitor that you've been given, take your blood pressure reading as instructed by your healthcare advisor or Mi Health Trainer.

Step 3

Record your readings

You should already have a plan agreed with your healthcare advisor about what to do if your blood pressure increases, Flo will help to support this. There are 2 numbers included in your blood pressure reading, the pressure when your heart beats and the pressure between heart beats, write this down and get your phone ready.

Step 4

Text Flo your readings

The number you need to text your readings to is 64711. When sending blood pressure readings by phone you need to start your text message with BP followed by the numbers from your reading. You don't need to include any of the other letters in your measurement. For example, a reading of 130/85MMHG would be sent as BP 130 85

Step 5

Follow any instructions

You should quickly receive a text message back from Flo advising you about your blood pressure reading. This may tell you everything is fine or tell you what you need to do if your reading is unusual. It may also ask you to follow the advice given in your management plan. Your Mi Health Trainer will go over this in more detail with you.

Frequently Asked Questions

Does it cost me anything?

No the NHS pays for it, so it's completely free if you're in the UK. Even if you have a pay as you go SIM with no credit. Flo can be used abroad but you will be charged your normal network rate for the messages. Monitoring equipment may also be provided free of charge.

How do I stop messages?

Text STOP to the number sending you messages and you'll be permanently removed from the system. You can also text HOLIDAY or AWAY if you'd like a break from the messages, you can then restart the service by texting HOME.

I'm finding it stressful, what should I do?

If you're struggling to take your blood pressure, leave it for a day or two and discuss it with your healthcare advisor if these feelings don't settle.

What else can I do to manage my blood pressure?

You may find that certain things affect your blood pressure and once you know what they are you can make simple lifestyle changes to avoid these pressures. Flo may also suggest ways to reduce your blood pressure, which could make you feel better and reduce the amount of tablets you need, but don't alter your tablets without discussing it with your doctor or practice nurse first.

What is blood pressure?

You need a certain amount of pressure in your arteries to keep the blood flowing around your body. This is called blood pressure and relates to the pressure of the blood in your arteries. Your heart pumps your blood around the body and this pressure varies at different times in the heartbeat cycle.

- Systolic blood pressure is the highest level your blood pressure reaches. This occurs when your heart contracts and blood is forced through the arteries.
- Diastolic blood pressure is the lowest level your blood pressure reaches when your heart relaxes between each beat.
- Your blood pressure is written as two numbers, for example 120/80mmHg. The first number is the systolic pressure and the second is the diastolic pressure ('mmHg' is the unit used for measuring blood pressure; it stands for millimetres of mercury).



What does high blood pressure mean?

High blood pressure greatly increases your risk of heart attack or stroke. If high blood pressure is left untreated for a long time, it can lead to some serious health problems like kidney failure and even damage to your sight.

High blood pressure develops if the walls of the larger arteries lose their natural elasticity and become rigid, and if the smaller blood vessels become narrower. This can also make the heart muscle abnormally thick and stiffer, a condition called 'left ventricular hypertrophy', which causes the heart to become enlarged. This can lead to heart failure.

To avoid unnecessary complications, it's important that you understand what high blood pressure is, what causes it and what to look out for.



If your blood pressure is 140/90mmHg or above you may have high blood pressure.



It could be caused by a number of risk factors, including not doing enough physical activity, being overweight or obese, having too much salt in your diet or drinking too much alcohol.



It can be genetic. If one or both of your parents have or had high blood pressure you could have a higher chance of developing it too.



A rare cause of high blood pressure involves the narrowing of an artery to a kidney, or an abnormal production of hormones from the adrenal glands. Severe kidney disease can also cause high blood pressure.



Some medicines, like oral contraceptives and alternative remedies can cause a rise in blood pressure. If you're concerned that any medicine or remedy might affect your blood pressure, ask your doctor or pharmacist about it.

Stay in control of your blood pressure using your shared management plan

This section contains your shared management plan. It advises you how you can stay in control of your blood pressure when taking it at home. Your Mi Health Trainer will cover this section with you in more detail, as it is important that you know what to look for, and what you should do if you see anything unusual.

Less than 135/85 mmHg ↓

Your blood pressure is under control when the top (systolic) measurement is less than 135 mmHg and the bottom (diastolic) measurement is less than 85 mmHg. We hope your blood pressure readings will be below 135/85 mmHg when you take them at home.



Eat a healthy balanced diet



Take plenty of exercise



Keep your weight down



If you smoke, think about stopping

Your Mi Health Trainer will discuss your readings with you at the end of the monitoring period.

No more than 170/105 mmHg →

Sometimes your blood pressure may be raised, and your reading may be as high as 170/105 mmHg. Although this is a high reading, it might settle if this is an unusual reading.



Think if there is anything which might have made your blood pressure worse and, if you can identify it, take action to alter what has taken place. E.g. were you angry or stressed?

You do not need to take any action - Your Mi Health Trainer will be in contact with you at the end of the monitoring period, to discuss the next steps after they have looked at the blood pressure readings you have texted in.

Below 70/50 mmHg ↓

Please note that if you send in a reading that is lower than an acceptable range, (e.g. you text 70/50 mmHg or lower), Flo will ask you to take your blood pressure again.

If it is still as low as this an hour later you should call your doctor as soon as possible. Phone the surgery, or if it's at night or the weekend phone 111. They can talk through any other symptoms you have and advise if you should be seen urgently.

Above 170/105 mmHg ↑

If your blood pressure reading rises further: above 170/105 mmHg (that is above either 170 mmHg and/or 105 mmHg). Very high blood pressure can be a symptom of serious health problems, so it's important to contact your doctor as soon as possible.



Stay calm. Try some relaxation techniques. Just sitting still and thinking about your breathing can help to calm you down. Or think about a relaxing time you've had in the past (e.g. holiday, long soak in the bath).

ACTION - If you repeat your blood pressure reading an hour later, and it's still as high, see your doctor or practice nurse in the next couple of days.

ACTION - If your blood pressure reaches 200/105 mmHg, or even higher, and you confirm this is still as high one hour later, this is very high and you should contact your doctor urgently. Phone the surgery, or if it's at night or the weekend phone 111.

Being more active can help

Regular physical activity can help to reduce and manage your blood pressure. Try and do some activity every day and where possible keep the amount of time that you're inactive to a minimum.

The type of activity recommended for managing your blood pressure and improving your heart health is known as 'moderate intensity activity'. This simply means any activity that makes you feel warm and slightly out of breath, it doesn't have to be anything too strenuous and can often be built into your daily routine.

- **Brisk walking, cycling or swimming are great examples of appropriate physical activity.**
- **Try starting with short sessions of at least 10 minutes. Any physical activity is better than none at all.**
- **Aim to do 30 minutes a day, at least five days a week. You can also split the 30 minutes further – for example, doing two sessions of 15 minutes, or three sessions of 10 minutes.**

If your blood pressure is not well controlled, or you have any other heart or medical conditions, check with your doctor before doing any new activity.

Extra advice and support

Try working with a Health Trainer.

Creating a personal health plan with a Health Trainer can really help you achieve your goals; they'll work with you for up to 12 weeks on a one-to-one basis to help you stay healthy. Either ask your GP to refer you or contact them directly by calling 0800 1313 141.

For more information on blood pressure visit:

www.bhf.org.uk/heart-health/conditions/high-blood-pressure.aspx

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/Blood-pressure-\(high\)/Pages/Introduction.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Blood-pressure-(high)/Pages/Introduction.aspx)

See how small changes can lower your blood pressure here:

www.nhs.uk/change4life/Pages/change-for-life.aspx

[www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Blood-pressure-\(high\)/Pages/Prevention.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Blood-pressure-(high)/Pages/Prevention.aspx)

Your review dates

Make sure you don't miss any important reviews by writing the date and times below.

Date	<input type="text"/>	Time	<input type="text"/>
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Find out more about Florence at www.simple.uk.net

See how you can be more independent www.moreindependent.co.uk