

## Blood pressure

### RFQs

- Can I check: Do you get any pains in your chest? What about any episodes of weakness or difficulty speaking?

### Provide

Your blood pressure is (a little) high today. I'm not sure if that is normal for you. I would suggest that we get my nurse to repeat your blood pressure, and if it stays (a little) high, we can measure your blood pressure over a 24 hour period. Is that alright?

We worry about blood pressure being high since, over a long period of time, it increases the risk of heart attacks and strokes.

### Safety nets:

In the short term the risks of having high blood pressure are tiny. But, if you get a crushing pain in your chest, (with nausea or a cold sweat), then please call 999, just in case it's a heart attack. If you can't move your arm, leg or face, or speak properly, then please call 999, just in case it's a stroke.

### Provide

Your blood pressure is high (on average). You may not prefer to use medicine to bring it down at this time. There are several lifestyle changes that will almost certainly bring your blood pressure down more safely than tablets. Here is a decision aid that allows you to decide which changes you might be happy to make at this stage.

(The absolute CVD risk/benefit calculator at: <http://bestsciencemedicine.com/chd/calc2.html>)

If you are not keen on blood pressure tablets, but we decide together that lifestyle changes aren't being effective, then perhaps you would be happy to try very low doses of blood pressure tablets. One quarter or even an eighth of a tablet, per day, gives most of the benefit whilst minimising any side effects or risks.

(BP meds: 1/8–1/4 of maximal doses resulted in 60–70% fall in BP compared to maximum doses.

Half the maximum dose resulted in 90% fall in BP compared to maximum doses.)