How to measure a lying and standing BP
as part of a falls assessment

Lying

0 min
- Ask the patient to lie down for 5 minutes

5 mins
- Measure the blood pressure (BP) and pulse rate

0 - 1 mins
- Ask the patient to stand up (assist if needed)
- Measure BP and pulse rate immediately upon standing or within 1 minute

3 mins
- Measure BP and pulse rate again at 3 minutes total standing time

Standing

if BP still dropping or symptoms persist, and patient is able to continue...

...measure again at 5 minutes total standing time

Notice and document symptoms of: dizziness, light-headedness, vagueness, pallor, visual disturbance, feelings of weakness, palpitations.

A positive result is seen as:

- A drop in systolic BP of 20mmHg or more (with or without symptoms).
- A drop to below 100mmHg on standing even if the drop is less than 20mmHg (with or without symptoms).
- A drop in diastolic BP of 10mmHg is considered positive with symptoms (although usually clinically less significant than a drop in systolic BP).

A positive results should prompt a medical and nursing review.