Yes. High blood pressure often causes no noticeable symptoms, even when it has been raised for a long time. You can feel well, carry on with your usual routine and still have hypertension. That is why a **blood pressure check** matters: it can identify a problem before it leads to serious complications.

High blood pressure, also called hypertension, puts extra strain on the heart and blood vessels. If it remains untreated, it can increase the risk of heart attack, stroke, kidney disease and other health problems. Finding it early gives you and your healthcare team the chance to act.

Community pharmacies can play a useful part in that process. They are not just places to collect medicines: depending on the pharmacy and the service available locally, you may be able to get your blood pressure checked, receive advice, access NHS Pharmacy First care for certain conditions, and ask about vaccinations or travel health.

Why can high blood pressure have no symptoms?

Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the walls of your arteries. It naturally changes throughout the day, for example with activity, stress or illness. When it stays higher than recommended over time, this is called hypertension.

Many people with hypertension do not feel different. There may be no headache, dizziness or other obvious warning. These symptoms can happen for many reasons and are not a reliable way to tell whether your blood pressure is high. Equally, feeling well does not rule it out.

This is why the phrase **"high blood pressure no symptoms"** is so important. Waiting until you feel unwell could mean a raised reading goes unnoticed. A check is the only practical way to find out what your blood pressure is at that moment, and further monitoring may be needed to confirm a diagnosis.

What counts as high blood pressure?

Blood pressure readings have two numbers. The first, or higher, number is the systolic pressure: the pressure when your heart pumps. The second, or lower, number is the diastolic pressure: the pressure between beats. Readings are usually written as, for example, 120/80 mmHg.

In general, a reading taken in a clinic or pharmacy is considered high if it is 140/90 mmHg or above. For readings taken at home, the usual threshold is lower: an average of 135/85 mmHg or above. These figures are guidelines, not a diagnosis based on one isolated measurement. Your age, health and circumstances may affect what advice is appropriate.

Where the reading is taken A reading that may be considered high What to remember Clinic or pharmacy 140/90 mmHg or above A high result may need repeat checks or further monitoring. At home An average of 135/85 mmHg or above Use a suitable monitor and follow the instructions given by a health professional.

A professional may arrange ambulatory blood pressure monitoring (ABPM), which uses a portable monitor to take readings over a day, or ask you to take readings at home. This helps show whether your blood pressure is consistently raised rather nhs pharmacy first than temporarily higher because of nerves, activity or other factors.

Getting a blood pressure check at a pharmacy

A **blood pressure check pharmacy** service can be a convenient first step, particularly if you have not had a recent reading. In England, NHS community pharmacies may offer a blood pressure check through a

commissioned service. What is available, who is eligible and whether you need to book can vary, so contact your local pharmacy or check its website before visiting.

A pharmacist or trained team member will usually ask you to sit down and rest before taking a reading. The cuff should fit properly around your upper arm. If the result is raised, the pharmacy may repeat the measurement, offer advice or refer you to your GP practice for further checks. The pharmacy check can identify a possible concern, but a single reading does not usually confirm hypertension.



For a more reliable reading, try to:

- Avoid strenuous exercise, smoking and caffeine for around 30 minutes beforehand, if possible.
- Sit quietly with your back supported and feet flat on the floor.
- Keep your arm relaxed and supported at about heart level.
- Tell the person taking the reading if you feel unwell or are taking medicines that may affect your blood pressure.

If you already have a diagnosis or take blood pressure medicine, follow the monitoring plan agreed with your GP or other clinician. A pharmacy check can be helpful, but it should not replace a scheduled review or prompt you to change your medication without professional advice.

Early detection of hypertension in the UK

Early detection hypertension UK services matter because high blood pressure can damage blood vessels gradually, without a person noticing. A check may be especially worth considering if you are getting older, have a family history of hypertension, have diabetes or kidney disease, or have been advised by a health professional to monitor your blood pressure.

Healthy habits can help reduce blood pressure and support heart health. These may include being physically active, eating a balanced diet with less salt, moderating alcohol, stopping smoking and maintaining a healthy weight. The right approach depends on your circumstances. If your reading is high, ask a healthcare professional what steps are suitable for you; lifestyle changes do not mean you should stop prescribed treatment.

If a reading is high, do not panic or assume the worst. Make a note of the result and follow the advice you are given. Your GP practice may arrange repeat readings or ABPM and discuss whether lifestyle support or medication is needed. Seek urgent medical help for severe symptoms such as chest pain, sudden weakness on one side, difficulty speaking or severe breathlessness, regardless of what a previous blood pressure reading showed.



Community pharmacies do more than dispense medicines

For many people, a local pharmacy is an accessible place to ask a health question or get support without first arranging a GP appointment. Services differ across England, and not every pharmacy offers every service, but the role of community pharmacy has broadened well beyond dispensing prescriptions.

NHS England sets out and supports a range of community pharmacy services in England. One important example is **NHS Pharmacy First**, which enables participating pharmacies to assess and, where appropriate, treat people with certain common conditions. This can offer faster access to advice and treatment, while helping people choose the right service for their needs. It does not replace urgent or emergency care, and the pharmacist may recommend a GP or another service if that is more appropriate.

Common conditions that may be treated through NHS Pharmacy First

Depending on the service criteria and the individual's circumstances, Pharmacy First can cover conditions such as:

- Sinusitis
- Sore throat
- Earache in children
- Infected insect bites
- Impetigo
- Shingles
- Uncomplicated urinary tract infections in eligible women

The pharmacist will ask questions to understand your symptoms, check whether the service is suitable and explain the next steps. Some people may be offered treatment under the service; others may be advised to contact their GP or seek urgent care. Age limits, exclusions and clinical criteria apply, so ask your pharmacy what it can provide or check the current NHS information.

Vaccinations and travel health at a pharmacy

Many community pharmacies also provide vaccination services. Depending on local arrangements and eligibility, a pharmacy may offer NHS vaccinations or private services such as **flu vaccinations**. Access and availability can change by season and location, so check with the pharmacy before making a journey.

Some pharmacies provide **travel vaccinations** and **travel health consultations with risk assessment**. A travel consultation can consider your destination, itinerary, activities, medical history and previous vaccinations. It may help identify which precautions or vaccines to discuss. Not every vaccine is available at every pharmacy, and some travel vaccines or health needs may require a GP or specialist travel clinic. It is sensible to seek advice well before departure, as some courses need time to take effect.

These services show how a pharmacy can support prevention as well as treatment: checking blood pressure, helping people manage common conditions, and offering advice to reduce health risks. Ask what is available locally, since services and eligibility can differ.

Are blood pressure checks and pharmacy services free?

No prices were stated in the scraped content. That means it would be misleading to quote a price or suggest that every service is free. Some services may be NHS-funded for eligible people, while others may be privately provided or have conditions attached. Availability and charges can vary by pharmacy and service.

Before booking, ask the pharmacy whether the service is NHS-funded or private, whether you meet the eligibility criteria, and whether there is a charge. This is particularly useful for travel vaccinations and consultations, where the service and vaccine costs may differ. Do not assume that a service is free simply because it is offered in a pharmacy.

What to do next if you feel fine

If you have not had your blood pressure checked recently, consider arranging a check through your GP practice or a participating pharmacy. If you receive a raised reading, follow up as advised rather than relying on how you feel. Hypertension often gives no warning, but finding it early can help you take steps to protect your health.

1. Ask your local pharmacy or GP practice whether a blood pressure check is available.
2. Follow the instructions for the check and share relevant medical information.
3. Make sure you understand whether a raised result needs repeat readings or referral.
4. Discuss your results and any next steps with a healthcare professional.

Feeling well is good news, but it cannot tell you whether your blood pressure is in a healthy range. A simple check is a practical way to find out—and community pharmacies may be able to make that first step easier.