

## Sample Outline for Demonstration Speech - COM 181

### WATCH YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

- Specific Purpose: To inform my audience of the steps in measuring blood pressure.
- Central Idea: Blood pressure is a vital sign that can be measured by utilizing three important steps.
- Method of Organization: Chronological

#### Introduction

How many of you know what blood pressure is? It is the pressure exerted by the blood against the walls of the arteries. How many of you know this exact moment if you have high or low blood pressure? Not many people do. On his 24th birthday, Jim Thompson, husky and tanned after a vacation, looked the picture of vigorous health. He felt great, except for occasional episodes of slight dizziness which he found annoying. That day he was due for a medical checkup and tolerantly, he went to see his doctor.

As part of the routine examination, the doctor took Jim's blood pressure. He preceded to tell Jim that he had mild hypertension . . . even a little hypertension could become dangerous. According to the book High Blood Pressure, hypertension contributes directly or indirectly to about one million deaths per year. It affects over 35 million people, approximately one out of every four or five American adults. To keep a check on an individual's blood pressure, there is a simple, painless, inexpensive test that only takes about 30 seconds. As a radiography student, I was taught this procedure. Blood pressure can be measured by utilizing three important steps. Today I would like to demonstrate these three steps: gathering the materials, following a specific procedure, and interpreting the blood pressure reading.

#### Body

- I. All the materials needed for the blood pressure measurement should be gathered.
  - A. You will need a sphygmomanometer with a gauge and a special cuff.
  - B. You will also need a stethoscope.
- II. The specific procedure for taking blood pressure can be broken into four steps.
  - A. The special cuff is wrapped snugly, with the bottom of the cuff just above the antecubital space.
  - B. The gauge of the sphygmomanometer is placed for easy visibility of the dial.
  - C. The stethoscope diaphragm is placed over the brachial artery.
  - D. The pump valve is closed and the cuff is inflated, then released slowly to obtain a reading.
- III. A blood pressure reading is usually expressed in two figures.

- A. The top figure (systolic) is a measure of the pumping action of the heart muscle itself.
- B. The bottom figure (diastolic) indicates the ability of the arterial system to accept the blood forced into the system.
- C. Normal blood pressure is 120/80 for the ages 18 through 45. (factual example - Wodetski 74)

### Conclusion

It is estimated that about half of the nation's hypertensives are undetected. One problem is that, unlike a toothache or backache, high or low blood pressure doesn't usually produce symptoms. People may not know they have either until it begins to cause trouble with the heart, brain, or kidneys.

Checking one's blood pressure should be a part of every regular physical examination. As mentioned before, there is a simple, painless, inexpensive test that only takes about 30 seconds to keep a check on an individual's blood pressure. Also, the American Red Cross offers a "vital signs" course that lasts about 2 or 3 hours. Blood pressure measurement is included in this course. I urge you to put forth the extra time and the little effort needed to help yourself live a long, healthy life; watch your blood pressure!

## Works Cited

Biggs, Loraine. High Blood Pressure. New York: McGraw Hill, 1996.

Wodetski, Cynthia. "The Effects of High Blood Pressure on Youthful Vigor." Medical News 36 (1996):  
73-78.

Adapted from an original speech by an LCC student.