



## Pharmacists own blood pressure problem leads Coventry chemists to offer free tests

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22nd March 2007, A Coventry man's chance discovery of a significant blood pressure problem has led to five Coventry pharmacies offering a week of free blood pressure tests starting Monday 26th March.

Coventry Pharmacy technician Carl Rose decided to use the blood pressure equipment in the Alliance Pharmacy he worked for to test his own blood pressure. He discovered a problem that required specialist medical care from a University of Warwick Medical School researcher Professor Donald Singer.

Carl was obviously glad to have had the opportunity to uncover his own particular need for treatment but the experience led him to think that more people should be more aware that pharmacists can often offer blood pressure checks. He therefore persuaded his employer Alliance Pharmacy to offer a week of free blood pressure checks across its five Coventry branches starting Monday 26th March. Carl said:

"My problem was a particularly serious one but it struck me that there are many people who could be unaware that they have a range of high blood pressure problems and unaware of how easy it is to get it checked in their own local high street pharmacy."

Professor Donald Singer, the Warwick Medical School researcher who treated Carl, said:

"I am delighted that these free blood pressure checks are being made available. High blood pressure is very common and is treatable but if undetected it can be a "silent killer" through heart disease and stroke. The only way to know whether you have developed high blood pressure is to check it regularly."

Alliance Pharmacy is offering the free blood pressure test as part of the Healthy Heart Check campaign. In over 90% of cases of high blood pressure, there is no single underlying cause and reversible lifestyle factors are major contributors to the problem. Pharmacists are able to offer many practical tips on keeping your blood pressure under control such as: eating less salt, eating a healthy diet, including more fruit and vegetables, drinking alcohol only in moderation, taking regular exercise, maintaining an ideal weight and waist measurement and having regular blood pressure measurements. Pharmacists will also advise if you need to see your doctor for them to consider whether they need to prescribe medication to reduce your risk of heart attack, stroke and other complications of high blood pressure.

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