2-58E The systolic and diastolic pressures of a healthy person are given in mmHg. These pressures are to be expressed in kPa, psi, and meter water column.

Assumptions Both mercury and water are incompressible substances.

Properties We take the densities of water and mercury to be 1000 kg/m^3 and 13,600 kg/m^3, respectively.

Analysis Using the relation $P = \rho g h$ for gage pressure, the high and low pressures are expressed as

$$P_{\text{high}} = \rho g h_{\text{high}} = (13{,}600\ \text{kg/m}^3)(9.81\ \text{m/s}^2)(0.12\ \text{m})\left(\frac{1\,\text{N}}{1\,\text{kg}\cdot\text{m/s}^2}\right)\left(\frac{1\,\text{kPa}}{1000\,\text{N/m}^2}\right) = \mathbf{16.0\ kPa}$$

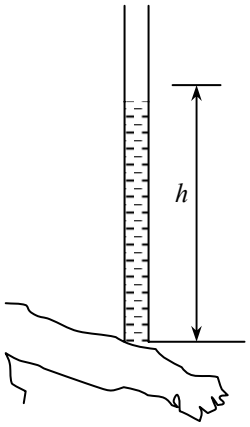
$$P_{\text{low}} = \rho g h_{\text{low}} = (13{,}600\ \text{kg/m}^3)(9.81\ \text{m/s}^2)(0.08\ \text{m})\left(\frac{1\,\text{N}}{1\,\text{kg}\cdot\text{m/s}^2}\right)\left(\frac{1\,\text{kPa}}{1000\,\text{N/m}^2}\right) = \mathbf{10.7\ kPa}$$

Noting that 1 psi = 6.895 kPa,

$$P_{\text{high}} = (16.0\,\text{Pa})\left(\frac{1\ \text{psi}}{6.895\,\text{kPa}}\right) = \mathbf{2.32\ psi} \qquad \text{and} \qquad P_{\text{low}} = (10.7\ \text{Pa})\left(\frac{1\ \text{psi}}{6.895\,\text{kPa}}\right) = \mathbf{1.55\ psi}$$

For a given pressure, the relation $P = \rho g h$ can be expressed for mercury and water as $P = \rho_{\text{water}} g h_{\text{water}}$ and $P = \rho_{\text{mercury}} g h_{\text{mercury}}$. Setting these two relations equal to each other and solving for water height gives

$$P = \rho_{\text{water}} g h_{\text{water}} = \rho_{\text{mercury}} g h_{\text{mercury}} \quad \rightarrow \quad h_{\text{water}} = \frac{\rho_{\text{mercury}}}{\rho_{\text{water}}} h_{\text{mercury}}$$



Therefore,

$$h_{\text{water, high}} = \frac{\rho_{\text{mercury}}}{\rho_{\text{water}}} h_{\text{mercury, high}} = \frac{13{,}600\,\text{kg/m}^3}{1000\,\text{kg/m}^3}(0.12\,\text{m}) = \mathbf{1.63\,m}$$

$$h_{\text{water, low}} = \frac{\rho_{\text{mercury}}}{\rho_{\text{water}}} h_{\text{mercury, low}} = \frac{13{,}600\,\text{kg/m}^3}{1000\,\text{kg/m}^3}(0.08\,\text{m}) = \mathbf{1.09\,m}$$

Discussion Note that measuring blood pressure with a "water" monometer would involve differential fluid heights higher than the person, and thus it is impractical. This problem shows why mercury is a suitable fluid for blood pressure measurement devices.

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