

Blood Glucose Testing Guidance for Adult patients with Diabetes

How often should I test?
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What is my target range?
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Contact Name (if I am concerned about my home test results):

Name:.....

Phone number:.....

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How often should I test my blood glucose level?

Your doctor or nurse will advise you about how often you should test your blood glucose at home. There is a section on this leaflet for you to make a record.

These are some general guidelines. If you have recently been diagnosed with diabetes, feel hypo or if you are unwell, you may be asked to test more often.

If you are pregnant or if you use an insulin pump, you may have to test your blood glucose more frequently.

If you are not using insulin:

Stability of diabetes	How often to test (individually agreed)	How many test strips needed per year
Stable Control (individually agreed as per care plan)	1-2 times weekly, at different times of the day	2 boxes of 50 strips a year

If using insulin:

Frequency of insulin injection	How often to test (minimum)	How many test strips needed per year
Once a day (night time)	Once a day, first thing in the morning (more if unwell or feel hypo)	7 boxes of 50 strips a year
Twice a day	Twice a day, vary the times - before meals (more if unwell or hypo)	15 boxes of 50 strips per year
Four times a day	Four times a day (more if unwell, poor awareness or active)	30 boxes of 50 strips per year

Diabetes Specialist Nurses – Maple Unit
01908 243089 MK General Hospital
MK Diabetes Care 01908 619765

Developed by PCT Pharmaceutical Advisers in association with MK Diabetes Care /DSNs Maple Unit

Why it is important to monitor blood glucose

All people with diabetes have a higher chance of developing certain serious health complications. The nearer you can keep your blood glucose to normal, the lower the risk of complications.

Part of the treatment plan is to monitor blood glucose at home to reduce the risk of the following complications:

- ❖ Stroke
- ❖ Heart attack
- ❖ High blood pressure
- ❖ Poor circulation
- ❖ Foot problems
- ❖ Nerve damage
- ❖ Eye disease
- ❖ Kidney disease

The doctor or nurse will explain to you what to do if your blood glucose levels go outside the acceptable range. If in doubt you should contact your diabetes specialist nurse or Practice Nurse.

What tests are there?

HbA_{1c} - (Usually at surgery / hospital)
This is used to assess your long-term diabetes control over the previous two or three months.

Blood glucose monitoring –

Using a finger-pricker and meter. This tells you your current glucose levels. This allows you to see the different effects food and exercise can have on your blood glucose levels.

It is important that the test is done accurately to get a true result. It can tell you if your blood glucose levels are low as well as high.

Always record your results and take them with you to your surgery or hospital appointments. This will help you agree a management plan with your diabetes team.

How do I control my blood sugar level?

Controlling blood glucose is a balance between food, exercise and medication.

- Eat a healthy diet
- Take regular exercise
- Take your diabetes medication as prescribed
- Understand how your medication works in your body

What do I do if my blood sugar level is low?

If your blood glucose level is below 4mmol/l you have hypoglycaemia (low blood glucose). You need to eat or drink some sugar promptly. A sweet drink such as lemonade (not a diet drink) or fruit juice, will raise your blood glucose quickly. Three dextrose tablets can also be used. Follow this up with a snack such as a biscuit or sandwich. Contact your diabetes care team for advice if your blood glucose is often below 4mmol/l. You may require a change in your medication or advice about diet or lifestyle to avoid hypoglycaemia.

What do I do if my blood glucose is high?

If your blood glucose is consistently above 8mmol/l before meals you will be at increased risk of health problems caused by diabetes. You may require a change in your medication or advice about avoiding high blood sugar. Contact your diabetes care team for advice if your blood sugar is often above 8mmol/l before meals.