

Checking Blood Glucose



It is important to measure your blood sugar levels as it helps you to make decisions about what food to eat, physical activities to be done and if you require medications. By making these decisions, you would feel better with time and will also be able to delay or prevent the complications that occur due to diabetes such as heart attack, stroke, or blindness.

How to check my blood glucose?

Blood glucose meter is used to check blood glucose levels. It is a small device that lets you know your blood glucose levels from a tiny drop of your blood. Your blood glucose values are displayed on a screen. A device called lancet is used to prick the skin to obtain a drop of blood.



What are the blood glucose targets for people with diabetes?

The American diabetes association recommends following targets for people with diabetes. However, you should consult your doctor to know if these targets are appropriate for you.



ADA targets:

- **When you wake up in the morning and before taking your meals:** 80 to 130 mg/dl
- **2 hours after having your meal:** It should be below 180 mg/dl

When is the best time to check my blood glucose in a day?

Blood glucose levels can be monitored early in the morning before eating anything or they can be monitored before you take your regular meals (known as fasting glucose). However, you can also check your blood glucose after taking your meals, it is the time when your glucose levels tend to be high (known as post prandial).



Other times for checking:

- When you feel symptoms of high or low blood glucose.
- In case you are ill or suffering from conditions such as vomiting or dehydration.
- Before, during or after performing a physical activity
- Before driving
- Before going to bed to sleep

Most people check their blood glucose early in the morning before eating or doing anything.

How many times do I need to check my blood glucose?

If you are type 1 diabetic or if you are taking insulin, you should check your blood glucose several times in a day. You should check your glucose more

often if you are pregnant, if you have made some changes in your physical activities, meal plan or medications. Your doctor will be able to help you in this regard.



Recently continuous glucose monitors (CGMs) have been introduced. These devices can monitor blood glucose levels at regular intervals. CGMs use a sensor which is attached to your skin. This sensor transmits signals about your blood glucose to a receiver, which recognizes if your blood glucose levels are lowering or increasing. By using such monitors you get a complete outlook on how your blood levels are changing through the day and night.

Can I get a blood sample without sticking my finger?

There are some glucose monitors which take blood samples from the part of your body other than finger such as fleshy parts of the hand, the forearm, the outer thigh, the calf, or the abdomen. However, at some times to get most accurate results, it is recommended to check your glucose levels from the sample of blood taken from your fingertips.

The times when blood sampling from fingertips is required:

- When you have a low blood glucose level or your glucose level is likely to be low.
- You have difficulty in realizing that you have low blood glucose levels.
- Time at which you are checking is less than two hours after you have had your meal.
- You have been active physically.
- If you do not want to get sores at your fingertips or if you are facing trouble obtaining blood samples from alternative sites, you should consult your doctor who can advise you on the other types of lancets available or other techniques.

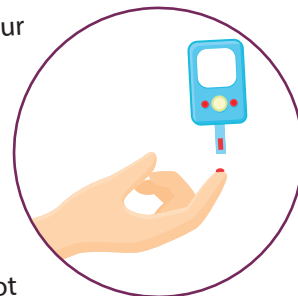
At least once in a year speak with your doctor or your diabetes educator on how you are using your meter.

How to be assured about the accurate results obtained by my meter?

The best thing would be to follow the instructions given in your meter's manual for the most accurate results.

This usually includes:

- Keeping your meter clean.
- Ascertain that your test strips have not expired.
- Store the test strips as per the recommendation given.
- Follow coding (setting up) of meter for your strips if it is necessary and use the recommended control solution.
- Ensure your blood sample is enough to be monitored.



In case your meter is not functioning at all, you may need to replace the batteries. If that does not help, check the back of your meter for the manufacturer's contact number and call them for assistance.

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