

Frequently Asked Questions about Monitoring

People who are new to blood sugar self-monitoring often ask “why?” *Why* do I have to test, and *why* do I need to record my numbers when my meter has a memory? The answers to these and other common questions follow. Be sure to ask your own questions of your healthcare provider so you have the information you need to monitor your blood sugar as prescribed.

Why do I have to check my blood sugar?

Keeping diabetes in good control can help prevent complications from the disease in the future. Knowing your blood sugar level requires that you test it, rather than just relying on how you feel. When you know your level of control, you and your healthcare team can make decisions on your diabetes care plan.

Why do I need to write down my numbers?

Keeping a written record serves several purposes. You can identify trends in blood sugar levels over time by scanning the results you’ve recorded. You and your healthcare provider can see how your treatment plan affects your diabetes control, and then make any changes needed to achieve your targets.



My Blood Sugar Results								
Make copies of this log page to record your blood sugar results.								
DATE	Breakfast Before	Breakfast After	Lunch Before	Lunch After	Dinner Before	Dinner After	3:00 A.M.	Bedtime
S								
M								
T								
W								
T								
F								
S								
M								
T								
W								
T								
F								
S								

Medicare Part B patients: Call 1-877-231-5199 and mention reference code ED06500 to order your diabetes testing supplies.
 Web site: diabetes.RxSolutions.com
 Prescription Solutions is an affiliate of UnitedHealthCare Insurance Company.

If you have Medicare Part B and you test your blood sugar, read on. Generally, coverage by Medicare Part B covers the cost of testing once per day if you are not on insulin, and three times a day if you are on insulin. However, Medicare will cover the cost for testing more often if your doctor has ordered it AND if you can provide documentation of testing as often as prescribed. Copies of your log book would provide this documentation. You can also download a 30-day log record from the www.RxSolutions.com/diabetes Web site.

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What should my numbers be at different times of the day?

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) provides guidelines of 90–130 mg/dL before meals and less than 180 mg/dL two hours after meals. However, many healthcare providers use the guidelines of other diabetes organizations with different target ranges. Your target numbers should be individually set to be sure you know what your personal goals should be.



What should I do if my results are out of my target range for several days?

Ask your diabetes care team when you should call if your blood sugar levels are not in your target range. You may also want to look at both your food and your physical activity habits on the days when your blood sugar has been out of target range. Consider whether you may have missed doses of your diabetes medication. Other causes for unexpected changes in blood sugar levels include feeling sick or having a fever, stressful or emotional times, consuming more or different foods than usual, or being less active than usual.

How can I get a sample of blood with very little pain?

Consider using the thinnest lancet that will allow you to get the size of blood sample you need for the test. Usually this will be a 30-gauge or higher lancet. Consider using a blood sugar meter that requires a very small blood sample, such as the Bayer Contour®, Freestyle Flash® or the AccuCheck® Aviva®. Set your lancing device to poke just deep enough to get a sample, and not so deep that it is painful. Many lancing devices dial to 5 or more depths. The lower the number, the more shallow the poke. Some meters and their strips can be used to obtain blood samples from sites other than from the fingertips. Check the manufacturer's instructions for where and when alternate sites may be used and appropriate changes to make on your lancing device.



What are the guidelines for testing on a site other than my fingertip?

Avoid using an alternate site in times when your blood sugar is likely to be rapidly changing:

- Within two hours of eating a meal, taking insulin or exercising
- When you think your blood sugar level is low
- If you have been diagnosed with hypoglycemia unawareness
- When your test results don't match the way you feel

Your healthcare provider may have additional suggestions.

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How often should I test?

This is individualized, and designed to help achieve blood sugar control. You may need to test several times a day while your diabetes treatment plan is being established and your blood sugar begins to come under control. If you use insulin, you may also test several times a day. If you are managing your diabetes with lifestyle changes you may test just a few times a week. The key is using the information to achieve control of your blood sugar levels.

When should I test?

Work with your diabetes care team for answers. Most people test at standard times, such as before meals and bedtime, but many healthcare professionals are now asking their patients to test after meals. Testing two hours after the start of a meal provides information on how well your treatment plan is working to keep your blood sugar in control in between meals.



For example, if you eat at 5:30, check your blood sugar at 7:30.

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