

Diabetes – Blood sugar testing

Why do I need to test my blood sugar?

It is important to test your blood sugar regularly. When you test regularly, you can see the patterns of your blood sugars. You will know if there are certain times of day when your blood sugars go up or down. This information will help you and your diabetes care team adjust your treatment plan.

Follow the company's directions on how to use your monitor. Ask for help from your diabetes educator when needed.



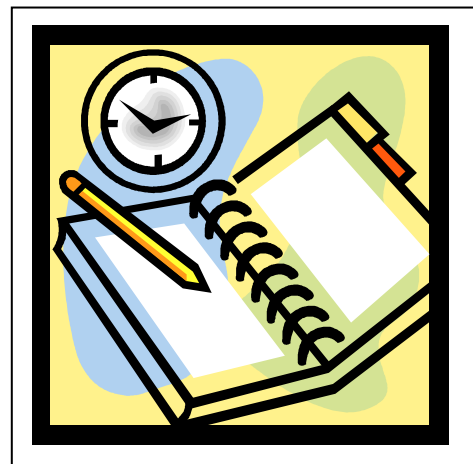
How often should I test my blood sugar?

How often you test depends on your treatment plan. There are many types of treatment plans:

- meal planning alone
- meal planning and pills
- meal planning and insulin
- meal planning, pills and insulin

Here are some testing guidelines:

- test at least once a day
- vary the times during the day that you test
- keep a record
- show your record to members of your diabetes care team



Sample Test Chart

Date	Before Breakfast	2 hours after	Before Lunch	2 hours after	Before supper	2 hours after	Bedtime
May 1	8:00 am 7.2				5:30 pm 3.3		
May 3	8:30 am 5.2	10:30 am 12.3					
May 5			12:00 noon 6.4				9:30 pm 8.4
May 7					6:00 pm 6.1	8:00 pm 7.9	

What are my blood sugar targets?

Your target blood sugar levels are:

Before meals	4.0 to 7.0
2 hours after meals	5.0 to 10.0

What do I do with my blood sugar results?

- Write all your blood sugars in a book along with the time of day. Write the results in a book even though your monitor has a memory. This will help you and your diabetes care team see the patterns in your blood sugar levels.
- When you test your blood sugars on a regular basis, you can see if your blood sugars are in good control.
- If you see a pattern of blood sugars higher or lower than your goal, you should contact a member of your diabetes care team. You may need to review your meal plan, activity, or have your medication adjusted.

Monitors

You can get a monitor at most pharmacies or at your diabetes centre. They vary in price. Some insurance companies will pay for the cost of the monitor and/or the strips. If you are over 65 years of age, OHIP will pay for the strips you use to test your blood sugars, with a prescription from your doctor.

Most people test blood sugar from their fingers. If you buy a monitor that tests blood sugars from your arms, make sure you use your fingertips for testing when:

- you think you may be having a low blood sugar
- you are testing less than 2 hours since eating

Finger testing is more accurate.

How often should the monitor be checked?

You should have your monitor checked with your finger blood at a lab each year. When you are having your blood sugar tested at a lab, bring your monitor and test your blood sugar with your monitor while you are there. Your results should be within 20% of the laboratory results.

What is A₁C?

A₁C is also called glycosolated hemoglobin. A₁C shows the 3 month average blood sugar level before the test was taken. You do not have to fast before this test.

When your A₁C result is less than 7%, you decrease your risk of complications.

The A₁C is not the same as your blood sugar results.

The chart below will help you know what your A₁C results mean.

Comments	A₁C Results:	Your average blood sugar during the past 3 months:
Normal Range: 4.0% to 6.0%	5%	5.0
Lowest risk of complications	6%	6.0 to 7.0
Low risk of complications	7%	8.0 to 9.0
Higher risk of complications: Need to make changes to improve blood sugar control	8%	9.0 to 11.0
	9%	11.0 to 13.0
	10%	12.0 to 15.0
	11%	14.0 to 17.0
	12%	15.0 to 19.0