

## Tips for Testing

- ◆ Always wash your hands before testing
- ◆ Always ensure your strips are 'in date'
- ◆ Use a new strip and lancet for each test and dispose of them safely.
- ◆ Follow the instructions in your 'management plan' about how and when to test.
- ◆ Know your target range.
- ◆ If your readings are consistently outside your target range contact your diabetic nurse/GP.
- ◆ Remember you may need to test more frequently if you are ill.
- ◆ Look after your glucose testing machine. It should be calibrated regularly in accordance with the metres instructions.
- ◆ If you have an old machine it may be worth considering replacing it with a new model. Speak to your GP/diabetic nurse about suitable devices.



## Summary



HbA1c is the Gold Standard measure of glucose control. It gives details of your control over the last 2-3months



Not everybody needs to self test their blood sugars at home.



It is important to attend regular diabetic reviews.



A healthy lifestyle and controlled blood pressure are needed to reduce the cardiovascular complications linked to Diabetes .



Good glucose control can reduce some other complications associated with Diabetes.



East Lancashire Health Economy  
Medicines Management Board

[www.elmmb.nhs.uk](http://www.elmmb.nhs.uk) 



## A GUIDE TO BLOOD GLUCOSE (SUGAR) MONITORING

INFORMATION FOR  
PATIENTS

For More Information see [www.elmmb.nhs.uk](http://www.elmmb.nhs.uk)

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## Managing Your Diabetes

Although this leaflet is about blood glucose (sugar) this is only one part of managing your Diabetes. Good glucose control can help reduce complications of Diabetes including loss of eye-sight, kidney problems and painful nerve damage. It is also extremely important to control your blood pressure and adopt a healthy life-style to reduce the extra risk of heart disease that comes with having Diabetes.

## Monitoring your Diabetes

The most reliable way to assess how well your glucose has been controlled over the previous 2-3 months is to have a blood test known as HbA1c. This is a measure of how much glucose has stuck to a protein called haemoglobin that is found in your red blood cells.

It is important to attend regular check ups with your doctor or nurse in order for them to measure your HbA1c as this gives an accurate reflection of how well controlled your blood sugars have been. If this test result is good your will have a reduced risk of diabetic complications.



## Who Should Self-test?

Not everybody needs to monitor their own glucose at home. Evidence has shown that for patients not taking insulin, self-monitoring of blood glucose does not lead to better control of their glucose levels than having regular HbA1c checks.

Patients who use insulin, or who take certain medications that increase the risk of having Hypoglycaemia or “hypo’s” (low blood sugar) may be advised to test at home. This test measures how much sugar is in the blood at that moment in time. It does not give an indication of long-term control but is useful for individuals who have a “management plan” that explains what action to take based on the results of the test.

**Patients taking Metformin alone do NOT need to routinely self-test their blood sugars.**

Sometimes it may be necessary for certain individuals to test their sugars eg. if they are ill, have had a medication change, or are pregnant. Your Healthcare Professional will advise you if it is necessary to self-test. If it is you will be given a written “management plan” explaining how often to test, your target range, and what to do if your results fall outside this range.

## Glucose Meters

For adults who need to self monitor their blood glucose they will be given a FREE glucose meter and will be able to get test strips for this machine on prescription.

**There are numerous blood glucose meters available. East Lancashire Medicine Management Board have reviewed the devices available and it is our policy to only provide test strips for the formulary approved meters.**



It is important that all diabetics who drive have an awareness of hypoglycaemia and know the signs and symptoms of 'low' blood sugar and what to do if they experience this. For some individuals who take certain medication (but not all diabetic medications) it may be appropriate to test blood sugars at times associated with driving. This should be discussed as part of your clinical management plan. For more information on diabetes and driving Please see the DVLA website—[www.dvla.gov.uk](http://www.dvla.gov.uk)