



KAISER PERMANENTE®

Blood Glucose Monitoring

Since everyone reacts to diabetes differently, monitoring your blood sugar will give you vital information and help you make better decisions about how foods, exercise, medication, and even sickness will affect you personally.

Blood glucose monitoring is an easy and very accurate way for diabetics to stay on top of their condition. It's a more accurate home test, for instance, than testing your urine for glucose. Your doctor or health care professional will help you better understand how to monitor your blood glucose so that, together, you'll be able to keep your diabetes under control.

If you have diabetes, you'll want to maintain your blood glucose level within a specified range that you will help determine. By repeatedly testing before and after eating—and after physical activity—you will begin to see a pattern develop. For example, your blood glucose level may be lower before eating and higher after eating. The more information you have about your blood glucose levels, the better you and your health care professional will be able to adjust your activities, your nutritional plan, and your medication dosage.

Your health care professional will also help you determine how many times you should test in any given day. The intensity of your treatment should be matched with how stable your blood sugar is over time. If you are very stable, for instance, and not taking diabetes medications, you may be able to test less frequently. If you're taking insulin, on the other hand, you should check it at least one to five times a day. This should be decided along with your doctor or health care professional.

If you're using a blood glucose meter for the first time, be sure that you thoroughly read the operating manual that comes with it. You can also ask your pharmacist or diabetes health educator to show you how to use it.

To begin, you must assemble all the necessary supplies, including the lancet, cottonballs, test strips, rubbing alcohol, and a record book. Before using your test strips, be sure you have checked the expiration date and have read the package insert. This is important because each brand of test strips has its own unique procedure for successful completion of a blood test. And strips that are older than the expiration date will not give accurate information and should be discarded.

To obtain your blood sample, follow these ten steps:

- 1.) Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and warm water and dry them completely.
- 2.) Select the area on the side of any fingertip. The side of the finger is less sensitive than the tip

and pad of the finger.

- 3.) Hang your arm at your side for 30 seconds. This will increase the blood flow to the selected finger.
- 4.) Gently squeeze or milk the entire length of your finger to increase the blood supply to the selected site.
- 5.) Place the lancet into the automatic lancing device according to the instructions in the package insert. While steadying your hand, rest the point of the autolancet on the puncture site, release the lancet, and then withdraw the device.
- 6.) Gently squeeze from the base of the finger in a smooth outward motion to the tip to obtain a large hanging blood drop.
- 7.) Touch the blood drop to the test pad portion of the strip. Make certain that the blood completely covers the test pad portion of the strip without smearing.
- 8.) As soon as you have placed the drop of blood on the test pad of the strip, follow the sequence recommended by the manufacturer of your home blood glucose testing equipment.
- 9.) Immediately after you have completed your test, record your blood glucose results in your daily log book, along with any other important information. Discard the lancet in a puncture-proof container. This will prevent you and anyone else from accidentally getting punctured.
- 10.) Check and calibrate your blood glucose meter to make sure it gives you accurate results.

It's important that you know what actions to take based on your results. If your blood sugar levels are not within the ranges set with your doctor or health care professional, however, don't make any changes in your medications—unless you have received specific instructions to do so. Instead, call your health care professional. You should also call if you have any questions about the procedure.



For additional health information you can trust:

- Log on to our members-only Web site at www.kaiserpermanente.org/california, then click the "Kaiser Permanente Members Only" button
- Visit your local Kaiser Permanente Health Education Center
- Check your Kaiser Permanente Healthwise Handbook
- Listen to the Kaiser Permanente Healthphone messages at 1-800-33 ASK ME (1-800-332-7563)

To get your free Handbook and Healthphone Directory, call 1-800-464-4000.

The information presented here is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of

professional medical care. If you have persisatent health problems or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor or other health care professional.

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