

# Self-Monitoring of Blood Glucose

## What is “self-monitoring of blood glucose”?

Self-monitoring of blood glucose means using a home glucose meter to check and track your own blood sugar levels. Being able to check your blood sugar levels on a day-to-day basis can greatly improve your diabetes control. Today’s meters can measure your blood sugar quickly and easily.

## What meter should I choose?

There are more than 20 different meters that vary in size, shape, test time, and memory features. You can choose based on your own preferences and needs.

Your health care provider can recommend specific features you might want to look for. Most meters now require only a very small amount of blood. This means that testing is less painful than in the past and that some meters can now use blood from your forearm or thigh instead of your fingertip.

## Should everyone with diabetes check their blood sugar?

The American Diabetes Association recommends that all people with diabetes who are treated with insulin check their blood sugar. For people whose diabetes is not treated with insulin, checking blood sugar is still very helpful in deciding which and how much medicine you may need.

## How often should I check my blood sugar?

How often you need to check your blood sugar depends on your own situation. Most experts agree that patients who use insulin should check at least four times a day, usually before meals and at bedtime. For patients who do not use insulin, how often to check depends on how well your diabetes is controlled. If your blood sugar is very well controlled, you may only need to check once in a while. If your blood sugar is not in your target range, checking more often can provide information about how to get your

diabetes under better control. Your health care provider can recommend a schedule for you.

## How do I learn how to use a blood glucose meter?

Your doctor, diabetes educator, or pharmacist can teach you how to check your blood sugar. Most patients quickly learn to use the meter and to record their results in a logbook or use their meter’s memory function to record results.

## What should I do with my results?

You and your health care provider will use your blood sugar testing results to help create the best diabetes regimen for you. The results will let your health care provider tailor your treatment to help you avoid both high and dangerously low blood sugar levels. By using your meter frequently and reviewing the results with your health care team, you will be able to achieve the lowest, safest blood sugar level possible.

