

## Monitoring Blood Sugar in Type 2 Diabetes

Monitoring your blood sugar can help you know how your food, activity and medications are working together. Blood sugar monitoring assists you in keeping your blood sugars as close to the target range as possible.



### What are the benefits of monitoring your blood sugar?

Monitoring your blood sugar provides immediate feedback on how you may be feeling (high or low) and lets you know if you are in the target range. Keeping your blood sugars in the target range will help delay or prevent the complications of diabetes such as problems with your heart, eyes, feet or kidneys.

Target blood sugar levels		
	Before a Meal (mmol/L)	2 Hours After a Meal (mmol/L)
Less than 6 years of age	6 – 10	
6-12 years of age	4 – 10	
13-18 years of age	4 – 7	5 – 10
Most adults		

### Blood sugar meters

Meters for monitoring your blood sugar are available at pharmacies and at the diabetes education clinic. They are free with a prescription for or purchase of 100 test strips. Directions for using the meter are included with the meter. A pharmacist or diabetes educator can also show you how to use a meter.

**Always bring your meter and blood sugar records to diabetes education appointments.**

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### How do you monitor blood sugar using a meter?

1. Start by washing your hands.



2. Load your lancing device with a new lancet and poke the side of your fingertip.



3. 'Milk' the finger from the palm of your hand to the tip of your finger to get a blood drop. You only need a very small drop.



4. Put a test strip into the meter.
5. Look for the flashing 'blood drop' on the screen.
6. Touch the blood drop to the strip. The strip will 'suck up' the drop of blood like a straw.



7. Wait for the blood sugar number to appear on the screen.  
Write down the blood sugar number in your logbook.



8. Dispose of the lancet in a sharps container.

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### How often should you monitor your blood sugar?

How often you should monitor will depend on whether you inject insulin or on the type of medications you are taking for diabetes. Increased monitoring is usually recommended:

- When medications or insulin doses are being adjusted;
- If you are starting insulin;
- During illness;
- If your blood sugars are not in the target range, or;
- Before you drive (See *Driving Safety and Diabetes* handout)

In Ontario there are rules about the maximum number of test strips that both government and private plans will cover based on how your diabetes is treated. If you are taking oral medications with a higher risk of low blood sugar, you will be covered for a larger number of strips. If you are unsure if you qualify for more test strips check with your physician, pharmacist or diabetes educator.

Ontario Test Strip Coverage Allowance			
Treatment	# strips per year	Maximum # tests per day	Maximum # tests per week
Insulin	3000	8	
Oral medication with higher risk of low blood sugar	400		7-8
No medications for diabetes or oral medications with a lower risk of low blood sugar	200		3-4

**If you have questions about this or other Ontario Disability Benefits Program questions, please visit [Ontario.ca/heath](http://Ontario.ca/heath) or call Service Ontario at 1-866-532-3161.**

### When should you monitor your blood sugar?

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When you choose to monitor is based on the information you want. Usually it is best to monitor at different times of the day, usually before meals. However, you may want to monitor 2 hours after a meal to assess how the meal you ate affected your blood sugar.

Your diabetes educator can suggest a monitoring routine to suit your needs. Even though you may not be monitoring as often as the chart shown below, it is a good idea to document your results in a chart to help you identify patterns and trends. You can review your blood sugar weekly to monitor for patterns of highs and lows outside of your target range. Logbooks are available from your diabetes educator or pharmacist to document your results.

If you are taking insulin, you may want to monitor your blood sugar before you give your insulin and again when the insulin is supposed to be working. It is a good idea to note your insulin dose and time since it may help you adjust insulin doses. Some people also find it helpful to document the amount of carbohydrate eaten.

Date	Breakfast			Lunch			Dinner			Bedtime			Other	Notes
	Before	After	Insulin	Before	After	Insulin	Before	After	Insulin	Before	After	Insulin		
			Carbs			Carbs			Carbs			Carbs		

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Notes: