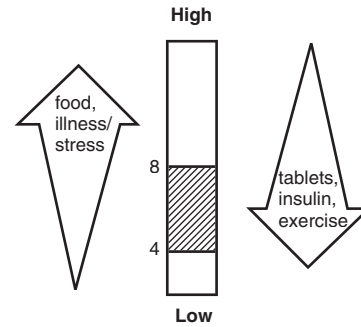
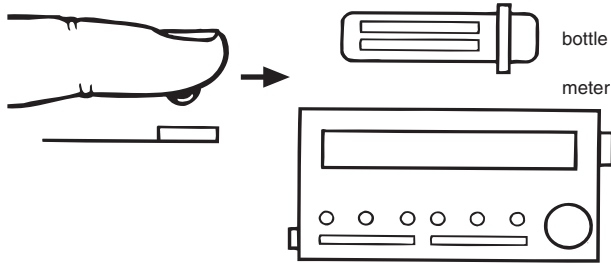


Diabetes: blood glucose monitoring at home

How do you check blood glucose levels?

Put blood from a finger prick on a strip. Blot off excess blood with a tissue. Read the strip either by comparing the colour with the colour chart on a bottle or by using an electronic meter. It is important to follow the instructions on the bottle or meter carefully.



What are the ideal levels?

Ideal blood glucose levels are 4–6 mmol/L before meals and 4–8 mmol/L 2 hours after meals.

Fair control is 6–8 mmol/L before meals and 8–11 mmol/L after meals.

Poor control is over 8 mmol/L before meals and over 11 mmol/L after meals.

When should you check the levels?

Routinely

For type 2 diabetes (usually controlled by diet and tablets, or by diet alone), 2–3 times each week at different times of the day is enough.

For type 1 diabetes (which requires insulin), more regular checking is required; that is, at least once a day, usually first thing before breakfast and then about 2 hours after a meal.

Your blood glucose levels are likely to be *low* before meals, and *high* 2 hours after meals.

Special circumstances

Stress, illness or too much food will push your blood glucose *up*. Exercise and your medications will pull the blood glucose *down*.

When you are ill or under a lot of stress or exercising more than usual, you may need to check your blood glucose level more often than usual.

Key points

1. Check your blood glucose regularly, and record the result and the date and time of the test.
2. Be careful to follow the instructions accurately.
3. Ideal blood glucose levels are between 4 and 8 mmol/L.
4. If you are ill or under stress, your blood glucose level is likely to go up. You should check it more often than usual, and see your doctor if it does go up.

Don't forget to record the date, time and result of your blood tests.