

6 - Monitoring blood glucose levels at home

Monitoring blood sugar levels at home means you have to keep a record of the figures you measure so you can adapt your treatment to your situation. This is important in managing your diabetes so you can learn to understand how your blood sugar levels change, and make any necessary changes to your treatment and/or lifestyle.

Six stages in understanding “how your diabetes” is changing



If you have diabetes, it is fairly easy to see how your blood sugar levels change. You must try to keep them between the following levels:

| | |
|------------------------|------------|
| In fasting conditions: | <90 mg/dL |
| 1 hour after meals: | <130 mg/dL |
| 2 hours after meals: | <120 mg/dL |

You will need the following instruments: automatic reader, strips, and lancet.

1. The first thing to do is to wash and dry your hands properly.
2. If your instrument so requires, insert a strip into the reader and follow the instructions that appear on the display.
3. Prepare the lancet and prick your fingertip on the fleshy side.
4. Let a small drop of your blood go onto the test area of the strip.
5. Take the reading and note it down in your diary.
6. Put the used lancet and strip into a special disposer (if required).

How often should I measure my blood sugar?



Your Diabetes Team will tell you how often you should measure your blood sugar based on the type of treatment you are following: the idea is to collect useful information to manage your diabetes as best as possible during your pregnancy.

Continuous Glucose Monitor (CGM)



This is an instrument for monitoring blood sugar levels throughout the whole day and night, using a sensor under the skin of your abdomen. It is used in certain special cases, and must be prescribed by a doctor.

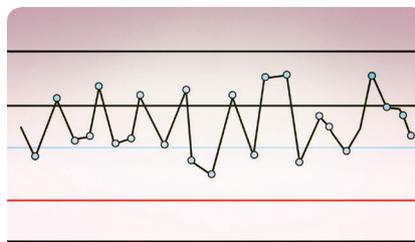
Checking ketone bodies in urine



It is very important to check for ketone bodies in urine as their presence can indicate that your body does not have sufficient insulin. Warn your doctor if the test is positive.



If you are taking insulin, measure blood sugar levels first thing in the morning before breakfast and before every meal so that you take the right amount of insulin according to your blood sugar levels, and after meals to see if you have taken enough insulin. Even if you are not taking insulin, it is best to check your blood sugar levels to see if they are what your doctor says they should be.



It is used when blood sugar levels fluctuate up and down wildly or very frequently for no apparent reason, or for gestational diabetes (during pregnancy). Very few of the CGM systems currently available can be used for treatment decision-making and, therefore, the value should be reconfirmed by measuring capillary blood glucose.



Women with type 1 diabetes before they became pregnant who experience hyperglycaemia should check the ketone bodies in their urine at home, before eating anything. Use strips you dip into the urine; they will change colour according to the result.