

General Information for Self-Monitoring of Blood Glucose in People with Diabetes

Self-monitoring of blood glucose

Self-monitoring of blood glucose is required for people with type 1 diabetes, people with type 2 diabetes who are on insulin, and those taking some medications, such as sulfonylureas.¹

A key aim of the self-monitoring of blood glucose is to improve blood glucose control (glycaemic control). Measuring blood glucose gives immediate information for patients, but to give any benefit, this information must be acted upon.¹

Using blood glucose meters and strips to monitor blood glucose

Typically the blood glucose meters and strips used by people with diabetes to monitor their blood glucose levels work by taking a sample of blood from a capillary that has been 'punctured' by a lancet. The testing site is most commonly a fingertip.

Some, but not all, blood glucose meters may be able to use blood samples from alternative sites to a fingertip. However, test results from alternative sites may differ from those from a fingertip and it is important to talk with your doctor before you test from a site other than your fingertip.²

Accuracy of blood glucose meters

Hand held blood glucose monitoring meters and strips can never be as accurate as a laboratory test. A worldwide standard for blood glucose meters defines the accuracy criteria for these devices when compared to a laboratory test in a controlled assessment.

It is possible that two blood glucose meters will give different results, even if they are the same model from the same manufacturer, however, this does not mean either of the meters is wrong³. Comparison of results between meters is not recommended, although such comparisons may be useful for a short period of time whilst becoming familiar with the new meter. The results from any meter are only indicative and it is important to understand the trends of readings from only one type of meter, and what these readings mean for you and the management of your diabetes.⁴

Your blood glucose meter may give a wrong reading if you are dehydrated, are going into shock, or have a high red blood cell count (haematocrit). Even a very low blood glucose level can cause an incorrect reading.²

If you are unsure what the readings of your meter mean for your diabetes management, you should discuss your concerns with your health professional.³

If you suspect your blood glucose is too low or too high, seek expert medical advice.

Tips for Using Your Blood Glucose Meter²

Preparing to Test

- Read and save all instructions for your meter and test strips.
- Watch and practice with an experienced blood glucose meter user, a diabetes educator, or a healthcare professional. Don't be afraid to ask questions!
- Wash your hands. Even small amounts of food or sugar on your fingers can affect your results.
- Read the test strip packaging to make sure the strips will work with your meter.
- Do not use test strips from a cracked or damaged bottle.
- Do not use test strips that have passed their expiration dates.
- Make sure you have entered the correct calibration code (if your meter requires one).
- Test strips may look alike, but they are not all the same. Strips often have very specific chemical coatings or sizes.
- Even if an incorrect test strip fits in your meter, it could give you wrong results.

Testing Your Blood Glucose

- Use the correct blood drop size. If there is not enough blood on the test strip, the meter may not read the blood glucose level accurately. Repeat the test if you have any doubts.
- Let the blood flow freely from your fingertip; do not squeeze your finger. Squeezing your finger can affect the results.
- Use a whole new test strip each time you use your meter.
- Insert the test strip into the meter until you feel it stop against the end of the meter guide.

Maintaining Your Blood Glucose Meter

- Keep your meter clean.
- Test your meter regularly with the control solution appropriate to that meter.
- Keep extra batteries for your meter readily available.
- Store your meter and supplies properly. Heat and humidity can damage test strips.
- Replace the bottle cap promptly after removing a test strip.

Following Up

- Take your meter with you when you visit your doctor so you can compare it with your laboratory results.
- Talk with your doctor or call the manufacturer's toll-free phone number if you are having problems with your meter.

Information for Consumers using CareSens Blood Glucose Meters and Strips

All of the information regarding the monitoring of blood glucose that is provided above applies to all brands of hand-held blood glucose monitoring meters.

If you are using CareSens meters and test strips, in addition to following the important advice provided above, please read the Owner's manual, Quick Guide and Test Strip Package Insert. This information will provide guidance on the operation and maintenance of the CareSens products, and on the additional functions that are specific to these products.

For further advice about the management of your diabetes, please contact your health professional.



Pharmaco (NZ) Ltd, Auckland
www.caresens.co.nz

Toll Free Numbers

Consumer: 0800 GLUCOSE (0800 45 82 67)
Healthcare Professional: 0508 CARESENS (0508 227 373)

1. *bpac*^{nz} Best Practice Journal, Issue 10, 14 <http://www.bpac.org.nz/magazine/2007/december/diabetes.asp>
2. <http://www.fda.gov/MedicalDevices/Safety/AlertsandNotices/TipsandArticlesonDeviceSafety/ucm109371.htm>
3. <http://www.pharmac.health.nz>
4. *bpac*^{nz} Best Practice Journal, 2013, 53, News updates <http://www.bpac.org.nz/BPJ/2013/June/news.aspx>

PHARMACEUTICAL SCHEDULE:

CareSens II, CareSens N, CareSens N Pop: One CareSens meter per patient in eligible patients as outlined in the Pharmaceutical Schedule.

Blood Glucose Diagnostic Test Strips - CareSens, CareSens N: One box of 50 per prescription unless prescribed with insulin or sulphonylureas endorsed accordingly and for specific eligible patients as outlined in the Pharmaceutical Schedule.

Before using CareSens, please read the instructions in the Owner's Manuals, Quick Guides and Package Inserts. Always read the pack insert/user manual, and follow the manufacturer's instructions and the advice provided by your health professional/diabetes nurse.