

Checking Blood Glucose

Have a home health nurse observe you. This skill requires practice.

1. Have the person wash their hands thoroughly in warm water for 15 seconds, then dry.
2. You will need the following supplies:
 - a. Alcohol wipe
 - b. Cotton ball or small gauze pad
 - c. A sterile lancet device and lancet to stick the finger (use lancet specific to lancet device)
 - d. Paper towel
 - e. Blood glucose meter
 - f. Blood glucose test strips
 - g. Pair of clean disposable gloves
 - h. Plastic grocery bag
 - i. Sharps container
 - j. Blood Glucose Log
3. Wash **your** hands thoroughly for 15 seconds, rinse and dry.
4. Help the person into a comfortable position, such as sitting in a chair or up in bed.
5. Read the manufacturer's directions for the meter carefully.
6. **Prepare The Meter:**
 - a. Remove a test strip from the container, and then tightly re-seal the cap. In some cases you remove a strip from a foil packet.
 - b. Insert the test strip into the meter. This turns the glucose meter on.
 - c. In older meters, you may need to push a button to turn the meter on.
 - d. For newer meters, check the code of the strip and be sure it matches the code in the meter. This ensures the meter is correctly calibrated.
 - e. Many meters have a control solution for testing the accuracy of the machine. Follow manufacturer's directions for correct set-up. You will use the test solution with each new box of test strips and when you question or want to test the accuracy of the machine.
7. Put on the pair of clean gloves.
8. Choose a site for the skin puncture. The most common site is the side of a finger, **not** the tip. You can also use the palm of the hand or forearm. The sides of the finger have fewer nerve endings, so the stick is less painful.
9. **Never use the feet or toes to get a blood drop!!!!** This can cause a serious risk for infection.
10. **Performing a Skin Puncture**
 - a. Ask the person where he or she was stuck last so you can choose a different site.
 - b. Take the person's finger and have them point the finger downward, keeping the hand down at the level of their waist.
 - c. Gently massage the finger toward the chosen puncture site. This moves blood into the site.

- d. Some health nurses will only have a person wash their hands. Others suggest using an alcohol wipe before a stick. Take the wipe and vigorously cleanse the chosen puncture site. **Let the area dry completely, this is important.**
 - e. Be sure to know how to use the lancet device.
 - f. Place the end of a lancet device firmly against the side of the finger and push the release button on the device. This will cause the needle to automatically puncture the skin.
 - g. Or, if you only have a lancet. Remove the cover of the lancet. Hold the lancet at a 90-degree angle to the skin. Pierce the finger or palm quickly in one continuous motion.
 - h. Wipe away the first droplet of blood with a clean cotton ball (this may vary depending on type of meter used)
11. Lightly squeeze the skin of the finger on each side of the puncture site. Do NOT touch the skin/puncture site. Be sure a large drop of blood forms.
12. **Get Meter Reading**
- a. With the meter still on, bring the test strip in the meter to the drop of blood. The blood will wick onto the test strip.
 - b. The glucose reading will appear on the screen in a few seconds. Some meters beep when a result is ready.
 - c. Write down the reading on the person's blood glucose log.
13. Remove the test strip to turn the meter off.
14. Throw away the test strip and gloves in a plastic grocery bag. Tie off the bag and dispose in the trash.
15. Place the lancet in a sharps container.
16. Wash your hands

To Clean A Meter

1. Read the instruction manual that comes with the meter.
2. Do not use alcohol (unless recommended in the instructions), cleansers with ammonia, glass cleaners, or abrasive cleaners.
3. Some meters need regular cleaning to be accurate. Many are cleaned using a soft cloth that has been dampened with a small amount of soap and water. To avoid damage to the meter's sensitive parts, do not saturate the soft cloth.
4. Some meters do not require regular cleaning but contain electronic alerts indicating when you should clean them. Other meters can be cleaned only by the manufacturer.