

How to Check Your Blood Sugar

Checking your child's blood sugar is an important part of managing diabetes. In this handout, you will learn how to check your child's blood sugar.

If your child is old enough to check his blood sugar on his own, read this handout with him.

WHY IS CHECKING MY CHILD'S BLOOD SUGAR IMPORTANT?

Checking your child's blood sugar (also called **blood glucose**) is an important way to manage diabetes. Checking blood sugar helps you see when blood sugar levels are too high, too low or just right. It also helps you understand how diet, exercise, illness and stress affect blood sugar levels.

YOU WILL NEED:

- Glucose meter (glucometer)
- Blood sugar strips
- Lancing device and lancet (tiny needle)
- Soap and water (or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer)
- A sharps container
- Bandages, if needed

HOW TO CHECK YOUR BLOOD SUGAR

1. Gather your supplies.
2. Wash your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
3. Set up the lancing device by twisting the cap off the device. Insert a new lancet into the device.
4. Twist the cap off the lancet to show the tiny needle. Replace the cap for the lancing device.
5. Pull back on the primer button to load the lancet into place.
6. Adjust the dial on the lancing device. One or 2 are good settings to start with. If 1 or 2 do not draw enough blood, try 3 or 4.
7. Insert a blood sugar strip into the glucometer.
8. Press down on the small round button to release the needle and poke your child's finger. The poke might hurt at first, but it will be over quickly.
9. Bring the drop of blood to the blood sugar strip. You should see the drop of blood get drawn into the strip.
10. Write down your child's blood sugar level when the glucometer is done reading.
11. Wrap your child's finger with a bandage, if needed. Throw away the strip.
12. Get the sharps container. Press down on the ejector of the lancing device to release the lancet into the container.

COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT CHECKING BLOOD SUGAR

Call the pediatric endocrine and diabetes center if you have questions or are worried about anything.

617-726-2909

Which end of the strip goes into the glucometer?

The end of the strip that looks black and white (like piano keys) goes into the glucometer. The other end is where you draw in the drop of blood.

The glucometer says “Error.” What should I do?

This usually happens when there is not enough blood on the strip. Check your child’s blood sugar again using a larger drop of blood.

The glucometer says “HI” or “LO.” What does that mean?

If the glucometer reads “HI,” it means the blood sugar level is too high for the numbers that the glucometer can read. If it reads “LO,” the numbers are too low for the numbers that the glucometer can read.

The drop of blood was not large enough. What can I do to get a larger drop?

There are two things you can do:

- Rub your child’s finger in an upward motion toward the small drop to bring more blood to the skin’s surface.
- Adjust the dial on the lancet to a larger number. Test your child’s blood sugar again.

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Pediatric Endocrine and Diabetes Center

For more information please call

Mass General Hospital for Children
55 Fruit Street, Suite 6C
Boston, MA 02114

617-726-2909

www.massgeneralforchildren.org/endocrine

888-MGHfC4U (888-644-3248) | massgeneralforchildren.org

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