

Instructor Notes

To present this workshop, the Instructor should have a good and current understanding of diabetes and blood glucose monitoring.

Instructor Notes:

If possible, have samples of the supplies needed for testing to display for the participants.

(see slide 7)

Pass out the *Blood Sugar Testing handout* that goes along with this presentation. Have the participants start to fill it out as they are waiting. Refer to the handout as you moved through the presentation. The *Blood Sugar Made Easy handout* is for the participants to take home and is designed to get the participants thinking before the presentation. It contains information from the presentation, so they will not have to take notes. Be sure to tell them this.

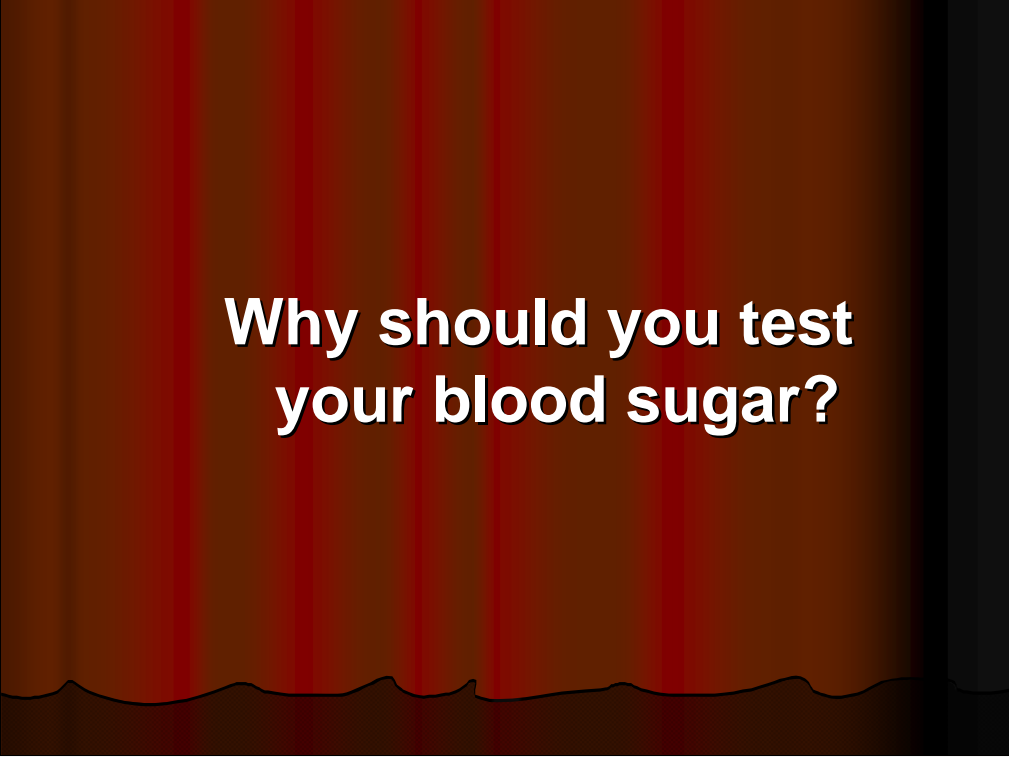
This additional material may be helpful:

- Basic diabetes information (see www.dagc.org under the “management” tab for basic handouts)
- free or low cost medical help
- patient assistance programs available
- Medicare and Medicaid coverage for people with diabetes.

Blood Sugar Testing Made Easy

A “survival skills” presentation
developed by the
Diabetes Association of Greater
Cleveland

Testing your blood sugar is an important survival skill for people with diabetes. As you looked through the ***Blood Sugar Testing Made Easy*** pamphlet, you can see that there is a lot to know about testing your blood sugar.



Why should you test your blood sugar?

Testing your blood sugar lets you, your diabetes team, and your doctor see how well your diabetes is being controlled.

It also helps you to make changes necessary for better diabetes control. These changes may include changes in your meal plan, medications or activity plan.

Normal blood sugar guidelines for people with diabetes

Fasting or before meals	90-110 mg/dl
2 hours after eating	140 mg/dl or less
At bedtime	100-140 mg/dl

Ask audience if their doctor or diabetes educator has give them guidelines for where their blood glucose levels should be at different times during the day.

These guidelines, from AACE (American College of Clinical Endocrinology), are also know as TARGET RANGES. Be sure to talk with your doctor about where your blood sugar levels should be at different times during the day.

Blood glucose guidelines also include an A-1-C test. This is a blood test that measures average blood glucose over a 3 month period. Guidelines from AACE (American College of Clinical Endocrinology) is 6.5% or less. Talk to your doctor about what you're a-1-c should be.

How often should you test your blood sugar?

Testing more than once a day
is not a bad thing!

Talk to your doctor or diabetes educator about how often you should be testing.

Testing 3-4 times a day or more is not unusual. You may test more often if you are taking insulin, using an insulin pump, starting new medications, changing the amount of diabetes medicine you are taking, or changing your meal or exercise plan.

If your diabetes is in good control, once a day may be fine. If you are checking your blood sugar once per day, check at different times each day to get a total picture over several days

Good Times to Test Your Blood Sugar

- Before a meal
- 2 hours after a meal
- At bedtime

Ask your doctor how often you should be checking your blood sugar. If you are taking insulin, you should be checking your blood sugar more often during the day, especially before meals.

Fasting or before meals shows:

shows blood sugar before you eat in order to compare it to results after a meal

indicates if medication is keeping blood sugar in target range

After meals shows:

how well your body is using the food you have eaten

how well your medication is working

At bedtime shows:

how your body uses food during the day

helps you decide if you need a snack or not

Additional testing times may include:

during the middle of the night

anytime you are sick

before, during or after exercise

whenever you do not feel right

Supplies you will need to test your blood sugar

- Monitor or meter
- Testing strips
- Control solution
- Lancing devices
- Lancets
- Cotton balls
- Soap and water
- Container for used lancets
- Storage container for supplies

These items are all needed for testing your blood sugar. We will talk about each of these things in the next few slides.

Instructor:

If you have samples of these items, display them now and refer to them during the remainder of the presentation.

Blood Glucose Monitors



Meters or Monitors? Ask the audience what term they use. Remind audience that we use these terms interchangeably. Meters come in different shapes and sizes. They need different amounts of blood and may take the sample differently. All meters must meet the same FDA requirements to be on the market.

All meters have a **display screen**. They may be different sizes or you may be able to adjust the brightness of the screen. The display screen shows prompts that include code numbers, when the machine is ready to test, test results, etc.

Most meters have strips that are inserted into the **test strip port**, usually located at the top or bottom of the meter. Some meters have strips that are on a disk or in a drum. These strips are contained in the meter and do not have to be inserted at each test.

Many meters have **data ports** that allow test results to be downloaded on to a computer.

The **buttons** on the front of the meter are used to change features like code number or date and time or get test results that are stored in the meter memory.

Meters come with a **storage bag** that hold all of the supplies and protect the meter. Remember to use it!

Meters should be kept at room temperature...not too hot or too cold. So, it's not a good idea to leave your meter in the car or a steamy bathroom.

Testing Strips



Every meter has test strips that are specific to that meter...they are not interchangeable.

Strips have an **expiration date** which is listed on the package as well as the container that holds the strips. Once opened, most strips are good for only 90 days regardless of the expiration date on the package.

(NOTE: Most people are unaware of this!)

Be sure to check the instruction manual that came with your monitor for information on how long your strips will last once the container has been opened. **It is important that you do not use expired strips.**

Keep strips at room temperature and away from dampness. For example, don't leave strips in the car or a steamy bathroom. Keep strips in their container until needed. Handle them carefully...don't bend or twist them when putting them into the meter.



Does your meter need to be coded?

“Coding” or “calibrating” your meter means you are doing **something** to let your meter **read** the strips properly.

You may be inserting a special chip or strip, found in each container of strips, into your meter. You may need to use the buttons on the front of your meter to match the code number on your bottle of strips to the number on the meter.

Many meters are “self coding”. This means every time you insert a strip, the meter automatically codes itself.

It is very important to know if your meter needs to be coded or not. It may not work properly or it may give out false information if it is not coded. Check the owners manual to see if your meter needs to be coded.

Control Solution



How many of you use control solution?

Control solution is used to tell if your meter is working the right way. As you can see, it comes in a small bottle.

There is an expiration date on the bottle of solution as well as the package it comes in. Once opened, most control solution is only good for 90 days.

(NOTE: Most people are unaware of this!)

Be sure to check the instruction manual that came with your meter for information on how long your control solution will last once the container has been opened. **It is important that you do not use expired control solution.**

Your meter owner's manual will tell you how to do a control test. Essentially, it is the same as doing a blood test except you are using a drop of control solution in place of a drop of blood.

Your package of test strips will have a control range on it. When you perform a control test, the test result must fall in this range. If it does not, something may be wrong with your test strips or meter.

Lancets and Lancing Device



The lancing devices are used along with the lancets to get a drop of blood for testing. Your meter's owners manual will describe how to place the lancet into the lancing device.

If you are having trouble getting a blood sample, try washing your hands in warm water, shaking hand down below heart level, or rubbing your hands together.

Sometimes, people do not like to test their blood sugar because it hurts their fingers. You may find that pricking your finger on the sides may be less painful. Changing the "depth setting" on the lancing device may also help.

You should use a new lancet every time you test. This will also help with any discomfort you may feel.

Sanitizing the Test Area

- Wash hands with warm, soapy water, rinse and dry
- Alcohol is not necessary unless you cannot get to soap and water



Alcohol can cause skin to dry out. You do not need to use alcohol if soap and water are available.

Recording Your Results

- Record your results in your record booklet or in a notebook
- Take those records with you to the doctor



Record results in log book along with testing time even though the monitor has a memory.

This will help you to see patterns and trends.

Learn how to interpret the numbers! Use the glucose guidelines we saw earlier to see how well your diabetes is in control. If your numbers are out of the target range, play detective and find out why!!

Take your meter and log book with you to doctor appointments. **Don't wait to be asked...**

take them out and show the doctor or diabetes educator.

**Dispose of
used lancet
and test strip
in appropriate
container**



Place used lancet into metal coffee can or heavy plastic bleach or detergent bottle. Do not use glass! It can break.

If you use cotton balls or tissue to stop the blood, you may dispose of them in the trash. The test strips may also go into the trash.

Check with your city to find out how sharps should be disposed. Most cities allow sharps container to be sealed with duck tape and put into trash. Do not put in with recyclables.

Storing your Supplies

**Keep supplies
together to
make testing
easier**



All monitors come with a carrying case. Use that or keep supplies together in some type of a container...box or basket. This makes testing easier and lets you see when you are running low on supplies

Resources for Testing Supplies

- Do you have health insurance?
- If **YES**, ask these questions:
 - Are my medications covered?
 - Are testing supplies covered?
 - Is diabetes education covered?
- Ask how to access these benefits.

Read and discuss slide

Resources for Testing Supplies

- If you **do not** have health insurance, there are patient assistance programs that may help.

Discuss assistance programs available in your area and discuss \$4.00 formulary at local discount and drug stores.

Many pharmaceutical companies have Patient Assistance programs. You can “google” the name of your medicines to see if a patient assistance program is available. If so, you will have to print out the forms. There will be information you will fill out and information your doctor needs to fill out.

**What questions
do you have?**

**If you have questions
or need help
call 216-591-0800**



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