

Blood glucose testing products for people with diabetes

NHS Great Yarmouth and Waveney CCG has recently reviewed the prescribing of blood glucose testing strips and made the decision that it will no longer support the prescribing of these to most people with Type 2 diabetes who do not use insulin.

The CCG has made this decision because NICE guidelines recommend that people with Type 2 diabetes who do not use insulin do not need to test their blood glucose levels routinely.

Medical research has shown that testing does not make any difference to how well diabetes is controlled and it is inconvenient and can cause some people to become depressed and anxious.

The change takes place from September 2017 and will affect prescriptions for blood glucose testing products issued from then onwards.

Patients will no longer be prescribed blood glucose testing products unless they are in one of the following groups of patients. These people should still be self-monitoring:

- 1 You are insulin treated
- 2 You need to be regularly testing for driving to comply with DVLA rules (including rules for people who drive Class 2 vehicles) (see further information)
- 3 You have had or are having hypoglycaemic episodes (“Hypos”)
- 4 You are taking medication that may increase the risk of hypoglycaemia (“Hypos”) whilst driving or operating machinery. Most people take metformin tablets; you do not need to test your glucose levels if this is the only medication you are taking. If you are on any other tablets, check with your practice.
- 5 You are pregnant or planning to become pregnant (see NICE guidelines on diabetes in pregnancy)
- 6 You have agreed with your GP a period of short term self-monitoring e.g. to see if insulin is needed, or when you start taking other medication that might affect your diabetes, or to confirm suspected hypoglycaemia
- 8 You have an acute illnesses and have been advised to test e.g. chest or urine infections
- 9 At diagnosis when there is a concern about possible diagnosis of Type 1 diabetes.

Patients should tell the GP practice if they think they fall into one of these groups as you can still be prescribed blood testing products. Please be aware that the CCG only supports the prescription of low cost testing products.

We do understand that some people like to be able to self-monitor, and if patients are not prescribed blood testing products, they can buy their own products from pharmacies or other suppliers.

Having a regular diabetes review

It is important that patients with type 2 diabetes have their diabetes reviewed by their GP practice nurse once or twice a year for a check-up. This usually involves a non-fasting blood test called glycosylated haemoglobin (HbA1c). Please contact the practice to check if it is due if you think it is time for you to have a review

Diabetes Info: Information and Advice for People with Type 2 Diabetes

A range of online videos and audio podcasts on a range of subjects produced by the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital and funded by the Elsie Bertram Diabetes Centre Trust. Download for free from:

<http://www.nnuh.nhs.uk/departments/diabetes-and-endocrinology/diabetes/adult-diabetes-videos/>

<http://www.nnuh.nhs.uk/departments/diabetes-and-endocrinology/diabetes/adult-diabetes-podcasts/>

Diabetes UK

A wide range of information and links to local groups and support networks available on the website including a list of 15 Healthcare Essentials

www.diabetes.org.uk

For more information

NICE Guideline NG28 Type 2 diabetes in adults; management Dec 2015 (Updated May 2017) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng28>

Nice Guideline NG3 on diabetes in pregnancy Feb 2015 (Updated Aug 2015) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng3>

Diabetes mellitus: assessing fitness to drive - Advice for medical professionals for drivers with diabetes mellitus.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/diabetes-mellitus-assessing-fitness-to-drive>

Information for drivers with diabetes - Advice for drivers with diabetes treated by non-insulin medication, diet, or both.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/561792/inf188x2-information-for-drivers-with-diabetes-treated-by-non-insulin-medication-diet-or-both.pdf