

Diabetes – do I need to test my blood glucose level?

When you find out that you have diabetes, it may be the first time you hear about blood glucose (sugar) testing to help you understand your disease. Once your diabetes has been brought under control then:

- If you have Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes and you are using insulin, you will need to test your blood glucose on a regular basis
- If you have Type 2 diabetes and are taking a type of drug called a sulphonylurea (for example gliclazide) or a glinide (for example rapaglinide) you may need to test your blood glucose a few times a week and for driving – check this with your doctor or nurse
- If you have Type 2 diabetes and do not take medication that is either a sulphonylurea or a glinide you will not need to check your blood glucose on a regular basis or for driving

Your doctor or nurse may advise you to test for a short period in the following situations:

- During acute illness
- If you have made lifestyle changes, such as diet
- If you are fasting, for example during Ramadan
- During energetic activities and exercise



Just come out of hospital? Talk to your GP or pharmacist about your medicines.

When you go into hospital your medicines may be changed. This can be confusing and it is okay to ask for any changes to be explained to you.

Once you have left hospital speak to your GP or pharmacist to make sure you are taking the right medicines.

Old medicines at home may no longer be the right ones. Your GP can make sure that your repeat prescription is up to date. You can also ask your pharmacist for a free medicines check-up.

Remember: Always take your medicines with you when you go into hospital.

Free medicines check-up

Pharmacists are experts in medicine and a Medicines Use Review is a free NHS service offered by most pharmacies so you can discuss your medicines, understand more about them and solve any problems you may have.

You can ask your pharmacist for a review if:

- You regularly take more than one prescription medicine
- You are taking medicines for a long-term illness (like asthma, arthritis, diabetes, heart conditions or epilepsy)
- You have recently come out of hospital

Remember: anyone can ask their pharmacist for medicines advice at any time.

www.lambethccg.nhs.uk



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NEED HELP WITH YOUR MEDICINES?

It's okay to ask your GP or pharmacist.

Find out inside how you can take control of your medicines.



"IT'S OKAY TO ASK"
about medicines...



Tell your GP or pharmacist if you've stopped taking your medicine

GPs and pharmacists understand that sometimes people struggle with taking their medicines.

You may be worried about side effects or you may not want to take a medicine if you think it isn't helping you.

Don't be afraid to tell your GP or pharmacist if you've stopped taking any of your medicines.

It's important to take your medicines properly and they will be happy to help.

Not taking your medicines correctly could make your condition worse and waste NHS time and money.

You can make decisions with your GP and pharmacist to make sure your medicines work well for you.

If you find it difficult to remember to take your medicines, you can also talk to them about daily medicine boxes, reminder charts and dose record charts. Larger, easier to read labels are also available.



Only order what you need

Every prescription costs the NHS money, even if you pay for your own prescription.

It is estimated that medicines waste costs around £9 million every year in South East London.*

This is money that could be spent on vital NHS services.

We all have a responsibility to use medicines responsibly.

You can help reduce medicines waste by:

- Checking what medicines you still have at home before ordering your prescription
- Only ticking the boxes on your repeat prescription forms for medicines you really need
- If you use the electronic prescription service, tell your pharmacist if they give you medicines you're no longer using or already have enough of at home
- Telling your GP or pharmacist if you've stopped taking any medicines, so they can be removed from your repeat list
- Not stockpiling medicines
- Ordering online via your GP website which may also be quicker and more convenient for you

Remember: if you need the medicine in the future you can still request it. Stockpiling medicines increases the risk for children and others that may accidentally take them. Unused medicines can not be recycled and issued again even if they have never been opened. Please return unused medicines to your pharmacy.

**estimate based on national figures.*

Check your asthma inhaler technique

Using an inhaler is the most common way of taking asthma medicines. However, it is easy to use an inhaler wrongly. People can forget to shake it before pressing, inhale at the wrong time or not hold their breath for long enough.

For information about using your inhaler in the right way, talk to your asthma nurse, pharmacist or GP.

The Asthma UK website shows how to use different types of inhaler – www.asthma.org.uk

The most common inhaler is the Metered Dose Inhaler. To use it:

1. Remove cap and shake inhaler
2. Place your index finger on top of the metal canister and your thumb on the bottom of the plastic mouthpiece
3. Tilt your head back slightly and breathe out gently
4. Put mouthpiece in mouth and breathe in slowly, press canister down and inhale steadily and deeply
5. Hold breath for 10 seconds, or for as long as is comfortable
6. If you need a second dose, wait 30 seconds first. Use only for the number of doses given on label
7. Replace cap when finished

