Testing My Blood Sugar

"You expect me to do WHAT NOW?"

What's in it for me?

Meet Grace the glucometer who will answer this question and many more for you
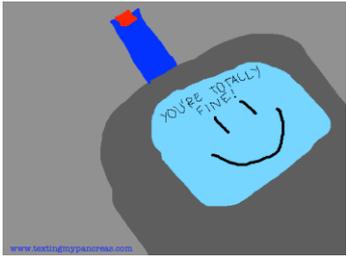
For children and if you are pregnant, please check with your provider

Question

Is testing my blood sugar the same as getting the HgA1c test my doctor talks about?

Answer = No

The HgA1c test represents the average of the up and downs of your blood sugar over the last 2 – 3 months.
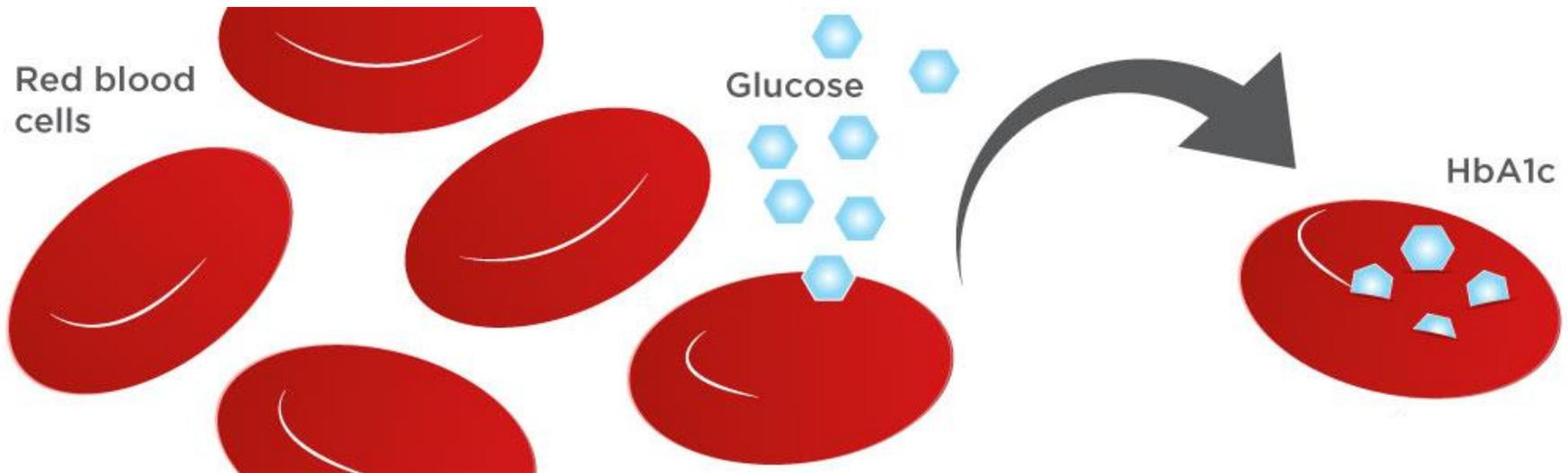
It is a number followed by a %

HgA1c – How does this work?

- We all have red blood cells that that circulate through our bodies.

- These red blood cells have a life of about 3 months before they die and new ones take over.

Then what?

- During their life, circulating glucose sticks to the red blood cell and once stuck, it is there for the duration of that red blood cells life.

What Should A HgA1c Be?

- There are different answers to this question depending on your age and even the type of diabetes you have.

- Usually providers look for a HgA1c of 7% which is an average blood sugar of 154mg over the last 3 months.

- Check the chart in the resource section to see what your HgA1c is equal to!
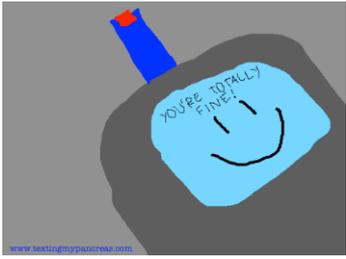
Then why test?

- Remember, the HgA1c is a 3 month average.
- Blood sugar testing gives you the details at that particular point in time, and….

Blood Glucose Testing – find the balance!

Testing lets you know how well your medications are working and/or the impact of your exercise, what you have had to eat and *much* more.

Different times you might test include;

- before a meal

- 2 hours after you start your meal

- first thing in the morning

- before bed

- before driving

- before and after exercise

- when you are not feeling well

There are two sets of guidelines

American Diabetes Association	American College of Clinical Endocrinologists
• Before meals - 80-130mg • 2 hours after a meal- less than 180mg	• Before meals - less than 110mg • 2 hours after a meal - less than 140mg

Check with your provider or Diabetes Care and Education Specialist for what will work best for you. For children and if you are pregnant, please check with your provider.

What supplies are best for me?

You will need: a glucometer, the directions that came with your meter, testing strips, lancets and a container for your used lancets along with a place to wash and dry your hands..

Step one; check with your insurance company to see what meter, test strips and lancets they will cover.

Step two; have your provider send a requisition to your pharmacy or check with your Diabetes Care and Education Specialist as they may have the meter.

Step three Make sure to have the testing guidelines specific to you, from your provider.

Step four The directions that came with your meter will walk you through setting the date and time and use of the lancet device.

Testing steps to remember

Remember, all this test is looking for is your "sugar" or glucose at the time you test. Blood sugar will vary throughout the day.

First - Assemble everything you will need on a clean surface along with the meter directions.

Second - Wash your hands!! Preferably with warm water as this will bring more blood flow to your fingers, and dry them thoroughly.

Third - Put a new lancet into your lancet device and adjust the depth of the poke.

Fourth - Put the testing strip into your glucometer.

Fifth - Put the lancet device firmly up against the side of your finger and hit the button on the side to poke.

Sixth - Line the testing strip with the drop of blood.

What will happen next?

After a number of seconds, your blood sugar reading will show up on the screen.

Write this down. Yes, all glucometers have a memory, and with some, you are able to "tag" the reading as before or after a meal. However, there is not a place to record what you had to eat prior or if/when you took medication.
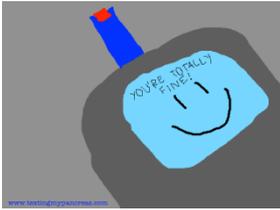
Use your computer: Some glucometers have the option of transferring your data to a program specific to that company. If you are interested in this, contact the glucometer company directly.

Final Steps

1. Remove and dispose of your testing strips in the garbage.

2. Remove and dispose of your lancet in a sharps container. This needs to be a container that is heavy plastic.

3. Store the rest of your supplies in the provided case and always have it with you.

4. Make sure to take your records with you to your next appointment with your provider.

Some Additional Tips

An Error Message - All meters come with a book of directions which will give you information on any messages you are getting along with a solution.

Can't get enough blood? Gently squeeze your finger

When should you get a new meter? The general recommendation is to get a new meter every 2 years.

Storing test strips - Always store your test strips in the container they came in. These strips are sensitive to humidity and temperatures. If stored in the open, this could impact your reading.

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Expiration dates - All testing supplies come with an expiration date on the container. If the test strip is used after this date, there is no guarantee that the results are accurate.

When you need new testing supplies - Please get them from a reputable source!

Still Have Questions?
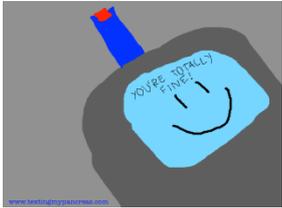
Every glucometer has an 800 number on the back. Give them a call!

In addition, call your local **Diabetes Care and Resource Specialist**. This is the new name for your local *Diabetes Educator* who, in many cases is *Certified*. These individuals are specially trained to help you unravel the mystery of this disease.

If you are seeing results that are higher than what your provider gave you for guidelines, *call them*, let them know! Don't wait until your next appointment which may be several months from now.

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