

BACK TO BASICS!

# Beginner's guide

## BLOOD GLUCOSE CHECKS

Your blood glucose will rise and fall throughout the day depending on factors such as what you eat and how active you are. Many people with diabetes—especially those on insulin—use frequent blood glucose checks to monitor their levels and guide their diabetes self-management.

TOOLS



Meter



Lancing Device



New Lancet



Test Strip

# 63%

AMERICANS WITH DIABETES AGES 18 AND OVER WHO CHECK THEIR BLOOD GLUCOSE DAILY

—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



### WHERE TO CHECK

Fingers are best. Some devices allow you to draw blood from your upper arm, thigh, or calf, though readings from these sites can lag behind finger-stick readings and shouldn't be used if you think your blood glucose is low or when your blood glucose is changing rapidly, such as after a meal.



Always use a fresh lancet. This ensures it's clean (for an accurate reading) and sharp (for less pain).



Prick the side of your finger instead of the more-sensitive tip. Alternate fingers if one becomes sore or develops a callus.



To draw blood more easily, try warming your hands beforehand. You can also drop your arm to your side for a few moments to let gravity pull blood toward the fingers.

## STAY ON TARGET

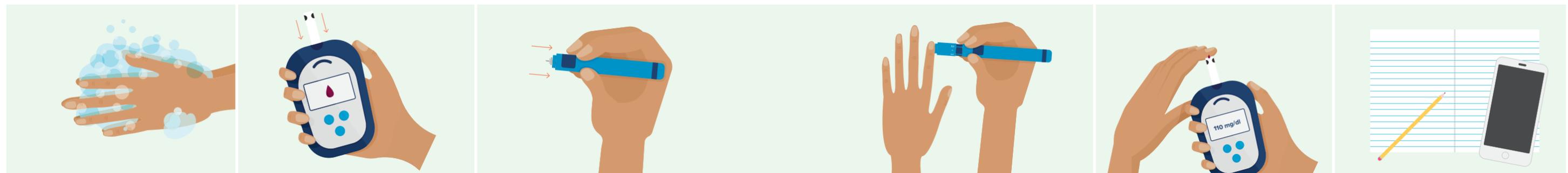
Blood glucose targets can vary depending on age, how long you've had diabetes, diabetes-related complications, and pregnancy, but the American Diabetes Association recommends the following for most adults with diabetes.

### BEFORE A MEAL

80 to 130 mg/dl

### 1 TO 2 HOURS AFTER BEGINNING A MEAL

Less than 180 mg/dl



1

Wash your hands with soap and water.

2

Insert a test strip into your meter.

3

Insert a new lancet into your lancing device.

4

Use the lancing device to draw blood from your fingertip.

5

Touch the test strip to the blood and hold until a result appears on the meter.

6

Record your reading in a logbook or tracking app. Referring back to it every few days can help you spot trends.



### HOW OFTEN SHOULD I CHECK MY BLOOD GLUCOSE?

This depends on the medications you take and your lifestyle. People with type 2 diabetes who don't take a medication that raises the risk for low blood glucose (such as insulin or sulfonylureas) can check less often than those on insulin. People with type 1 and type 2 who use insulin, especially those who use both long- and rapid-acting insulins, might do several finger sticks a day. People with tighter glucose targets may need to check more frequently to avoid lows. Work with your health care team to come up with a plan that works best for you.



### I KNOW MY NUMBERS. NOW WHAT?

Log those results! Keeping track of your numbers electronically or with a paper logbook will help you figure out the foods and activities that most affect your glucose levels. Share with your health care team and work together to fine-tune your management plan.

Becca Koebrick/Becca Koebrick Design Studio

Sources: John Bucheit, PharmD, BCACP, CDE, certified diabetes educator and assistant professor at Virginia Commonwealth University School of Pharmacy in Richmond, Virginia; Joseph Tibaldi, MD, endocrinologist with NewYork-Presbyterian Medical Group Queens in Queens, New York