

# Diabetes Control

## Information for Young People

Yes! We all know young people with diabetes don't like to write down their blood glucose levels. We have heard all the excuses such as:

- 'being too busy and not having the time'
- 'can remember the results so don't need to write it down'
- 'can't find the BG book'
- 'can't find a pen'

Whatever the reason for not recording your blood glucose levels (BGL's), it results in you not thinking about what your levels mean. Seriously, there's no point in taking your BGL if you're not going to think about what the results mean.

If you at least write your BGL's down it gives you a chance to see if there are any patterns in the levels e.g. consistently high in the mornings, consistently low at dinner time.

Staying on top of what's going on with you and your diabetes will mean fewer problems and more time to just enjoy life.

### Why do I need Good Diabetes Control?

Too much glucose in the blood stream for a long time causes diabetes related complications. High blood glucose levels (BGL's) damage many parts of the body, such as the heart, blood vessels, eyes, and kidneys. Heart and blood vessel disease can lead to heart attacks and strokes. By keeping your BGL's as close to normal as possible (between 4 and 8 mmol/L most of the time) your long term health will be better and more importantly you will feel better and have a lot more energy as well as reduce the risk of developing diabetes related complications.

### BGL's Monitoring & Recording

It is important to understand that your blood glucose level will vary with day-to-day activities. For example, your blood glucose level will usually go down after exercise, and will go up after you have eaten or if you are unwell or stressed.

Knowing how your blood glucose levels change in response to these things helps you to plan your day and adjust your insulin to help control your BGL. Monitoring your BGL also tells you how well your insulin doses and dosage adjustments are working.

I know it's a drag but writing down your blood glucose levels in a log book will help you see patterns in your blood glucose levels e.g. if every morning your BGL is above 15 mmol/L then you need more overnight insulin. If you are not writing the levels down you might not notice patterns and therefore not make any insulin dosage changes to fix the

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levels. If you can't remember or don't have the time to write them down every day what about just writing them down 3 days per week. This is not perfect but it will at least give you some information to make adjustments to your insulin doses.

### What is a HbA1c?

A HbA<sub>1c</sub> test shows the average amount of glucose that has been in your blood stream during the past 2 to 3 months. This test is usually done every 3 months and gives you valuable information about your diabetes control. Most hospital clinics have a machine that can test the HbA<sub>1c</sub> and give you the result in just a few minutes and is done by taking a finger prick blood test.

The result is given as a percentage e.g. 9%. This does not mean that your average BGL has been 9 mmol/L for the past 3 months. The table below will show what your HbA<sub>1c</sub> results mean.

<b>What Your HbA1C Results Mean</b>	
<b>HbA1C Result</b>	<b>Average Blood Glucose Level (mmol/L)</b>
<b>4%</b>	<b>2.6</b>
<b>5%</b>	<b>4.7</b>
<b>6%</b>	<b>6.3</b>
<b>7%</b>	<b>8.2</b>
<b>8%</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>9%</b>	<b>11.9</b>
<b>10%</b>	<b>13.7</b>
<b>11%</b>	<b>15.6</b>
<b>12%</b>	<b>17.4</b>
<b>13%</b>	<b>19.3</b>
<b>14%</b>	<b>21.1</b>

### What should my HbA1c Result Be?

You need to aim for a result of 7% or lower. Discuss with your doctor what level you should be aiming for. The lower your HbA<sub>1c</sub> is, the smaller your chance of having health problems in the future.

If your result is more than 8%, you may need changes in the day-to-day management of your diabetes. You may need to change your eating plan, your insulin doses or your activity levels.

### Website

For more information on diabetes control visit the Queensland Government Diabetes Care Website: Module 4: Monitoring and Control

[www.workingwonders.com.au/rchsubsites/diabetes26042005/html/m\\_05..htm](http://www.workingwonders.com.au/rchsubsites/diabetes26042005/html/m_05..htm)

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