

FreeStyle Libre® – Frequently asked questions for patients



FreeStyle Libre® device and sensors

What is FreeStyle Libre®?

The FreeStyle Libre® flash glucose monitoring system is a device to help you self-monitor your glucose levels. Unlike traditional finger-prick devices (that measure glucose levels in the blood), FreeStyle Libre® measures the glucose in your interstitial fluid. This is via a sensor the size of a two pound coin, applied to the upper arm.

It can provide a near-continuous record of your glucose levels, which is produced by scanning the sensor with a reader-device (see image) or a mobile phone (via an application).

For more information, please visit www.freestylelibre.co.uk/libre/help/tutorials.html

Is this a replacement for finger-prick blood glucose testing?

No, it is not a complete substitute for finger-prick blood glucose testing. Finger-prick blood glucose measurements will still be required in certain circumstances, including:

- during times of rapidly changing glucose levels when interstitial fluid glucose levels may not accurately reflect blood glucose levels
- before and during driving to meet Driving and Vehicle Licensing Authority requirements www.gov.uk/diabetes-driving
- when scanned glucose results do not correspond with the user's symptoms of a low or high glucose level
- to use the bolus calculator function (e.g. on an insulin pump or app)
- where the FreeStyle Libre® reader indicates a low glucose reading.

Who is eligible to receive NHS prescriptions for FreeStyle Libre®?

The device is only available for people with **Type 1** diabetes, **aged four years or over**. Additionally, you must understand the basic principles of insulin dose adjustment, appropriate management of hypoglycaemia (low glucose levels) and hyperglycaemia (high glucose levels) **and** fulfil one of the criteria listed below:

1. You have Type 1 diabetes, test frequently and can reduce strip usage by eight strips a day

2. You have Type 1 diabetes with HbA1c >8.5% (69.4mmol/mol) or disabling hypoglycaemia (low glucose levels) and are eligible for insulin pump therapy
3. You have Type 1 diabetes, are taking multiple daily injections or insulin pump therapy where monitoring of glucose levels is not possible with finger-prick devices.

Who decides if I am able to be prescribed the FreeStyle Libre®?

A decision will be made by your local diabetes specialist team at your **next routine appointment**.

If you are not currently under the care of a local diabetes specialist team you can ask your GP to refer you for an appointment.

Who will be able to prescribe FreeStyle Libre®?

Initially FreeStyle Libre® will be prescribed by your local diabetes specialist team, who will also monitor your progress and assess the benefits of you using the system. Prescribing will be transferred to your GP once your diabetes specialist team and your GP feel this is appropriate.

What if I am currently paying for the FreeStyle Libre® sensors myself?

If you fulfil the criteria above and have shown sustained improvements, when using FreeStyle Libre® over a period of six months or more, your local diabetes specialist team will assess your eligibility for NHS prescribing at your **next routine appointment**.