

Did You Know...?



A person with diabetes who regularly carries out SMBG, has learned how to interpret the results and uses the information SMBG provides to make changes, can see improvement in their glycemic control...



Diabetes and Self-Monitoring

For Health Care Professionals

People with diabetes** may not self-monitor blood glucose (SMBG) on a regular basis due to...

- **Cost:** People with diabetes have medical expenses about 2.4 times higher than people without diabetes. If you pay out of pocket for supplies, strips may each cost \$1 or more. Patients may not know what their insurance provider covers (either through DME or pharmacy benefits).
- **Pain:** Fear of pain or discomfort has been identified in the past as a barrier to patients monitoring at home.
- **Language, cognitive or physical handicaps:** One size does not fit all when it comes to meters. Difficulty following directions, complicated steps or language barriers will impact use.
- **Lack of education about or on the importance of testing:** If patients do not understand what their blood glucose results mean, they may not test or alter their behaviors. If they don't understand how to use the meter, they likely will not teach themselves.

Ways to reduce barriers to testing...

- ✓ Talk with people about concerns related to costs. Ask about total co-pays and pharmacy costs.
- ✓ Reducing the cost of blood testing supplies, or making them available at no charge, increases the frequency of SMBG testing.
- ✓ Suppliers and diabetes educators can assist with identifying a meter that meets the patient's needs.
- ✓ Increased frequency of self-monitoring has been associated with lower A1C levels.
- ✓ Blood glucose monitoring devices have significantly reduced the amount of blood needed for testing, resulting in reduced pain and frustration. Alternate site testing is available. Blood sample sizes are now the size of the tip of a pen!
- ✓ SMBG regimens need to reflect individual needs. Talk with your clients about their concerns around meter use. "Talking" glucose monitors are available for legally blind patients. Meters are available in a variety of languages for non-English speaking patients.
- ✓ Stress the importance of following a SMBG routine. The optimal impact of SMBG is achieved only when the data obtained are consistently applied in an individualized program of monitoring, assessment, reassessment, problem-solving, and decision making.
- ✓ Use SMBG within a care package that includes clear instructions on the use of their monitor, using results to make lifestyle changes, adjusting medication doses as directed, or alerting their providers earlier about significant blood glucose changes.