



I learned to see diabetes as a challenge that I have to rise to each and every day. ~ Alex Reidy, person with diabetes

CHAP Weekly Update

October 9, 2020

Glucose Monitoring in Diabetes

Why Do It?

Short term

Low blood sugar is very uncomfortable, makes people anxious and can lead to unconsciousness and death. High blood sugar may cause thirst, abdominal pain, vomiting, fatigue and a decreased level of consciousness.

Long term

Good control of blood sugar means fewer complications and less damage to blood vessels, kidneys, and retinas. This means fewer infections, amputations and heart attacks.



What is a Normal Hgb A1C?

The answer depends on who you are:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| 9% and higher | Person with diabetes who may benefit from better glucose control |
| Less than 8% | Person with diabetes and other medical problems Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elderly Has limited mobility Cannot sense or treat quickly when sugars are dropping |
| Less than 7% | Most people with diabetes |
| Less than 6.5% | Person with diabetes who may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be young, active Want to prevent complications Can sense low blood sugar and quickly treat it |
| 5.7 – 6.4% | Prediabetes |
| Less than 5.7% | Healthy person without diabetes |

Hgb A1C

This is a measure of glucose in the blood averaged over 3 months. Hemoglobin in the red blood cell (RBC) is like a sticky sponge for glucose. The glucose attaches to the hemoglobin and doesn't let go. If there is lots of glucose in the blood, many RBCs will be full of glucose.

Red blood cells live about 120 days. Every day some cells die and are recycled and new ones are released from the bone marrow. As they are released they collect glucose on their hemoglobin that reflects the blood sugar that day. This means a one-time measure of the Hgb A1C gives us a good picture of what the blood sugar has averaged over the past 3 months.



Thanks to Judy Thompson, PharmD for her talk about the importance of glucose monitoring and how to do it. More questions? Contact Judy: jbthompson@anthc.org



How Often Do We Check Hgb A1C?

- Healthy People without diabetes = Follow regional guidelines
- People with prediabetes = Every year
- People with diabetes = Every 3-6 months



Let us know what you think! aka-CHAPCOVID-19weeklyupdates@anthc.org
Send questions for presenters and each other, and suggest topics for discussion.



Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.
~ Albert Einstein



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Options for Glucose Monitoring

Self Monitoring Blood Glucose



Regular Monitors

Most THOs are using the FreeStyle Freedom Monitor

Tips for patients:

- Have equipment ready: monitor, lancet device, lancet, test strip
- Wash hands; don't need to use alcohol unless unable to wash hands
- Where to test:
 - Tips of fingers on the side
 - Pads of fingers have more nerves, so more sensitive
 - Alternate fingers so a callus doesn't develop.
- Warm hands before testing to draw blood more easily

How often should patients test their blood sugar?

Test blood sugar whenever it might provide useful information to adjust eating or exercise or before calling the Health Aide.

Examples: Fasting, 2 hours after eating, right before bed. Ask your referral doctor for guidance.

What is a good number?

Fasting: 80-130

2 hours after meals: 80-180

Some patients will need tighter control, such as a woman who is pregnant or wants to become pregnant. For some patients, having a low blood sugar is too dangerous, so higher numbers are OK.

Communicating glucose values with healthcare providers:

Monitors will store up to 400 values. Alternatively, ask patients to write values down.

Safety:

Every patient should have their own glucose monitor, if possible. Clinics should have cleaning protocols for glucose monitors. Talk with your infection control.

Continuous Blood Glucose Monitoring

There are tools for measuring blood glucose constantly.

Examples:

Freestyle Libre



Dexcom G6



These monitors are usually used with patients who are taking several doses of insulin each day or with children.

Freestyle Libre provides arrows to show if glucose is rising or falling, allowing people to make decisions about needing to eat before an activity or adjust their insulin.

Dexcom G6 has alarms and alerts that are especially important if the sugar is dropping fast.

Both of these monitors use a phone app or scanning device and the information can be shared with other people, like parents or other care givers.

These small devices are usually worn on the back of the arm or abdomen for two weeks at a time.

Want more information on how they work?

Visit: myFreeStyle.com or Dexcom.com

Cautions:



Some people react to the adhesive.

The monitors aren't supposed to be used at temps > 105 degrees F; a steam bath or hot tub might be a problem.

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We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails.
- Dolly Parton

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Hgb A1C vs Daily Monitoring

Hgb A1C: Gives a better big picture of the blood sugar trend; High A1C values are associated with a higher rate of long-term complications.

Daily glucose monitoring: Gives real-time blood sugar values. It allows patients and providers to make changes in diet, exercise and medications. It gives good information when patients are experiencing low blood sugars, so they can make changes.



How Can Health Aides Help Patients With Diabetes?

- Discuss the importance of glucose monitoring
- Make sure patients know how to use their machines
- Be an example of healthy eating and daily exercise
- Talk about what to do with the numbers they get after testing
- If a patient stops checking her blood sugar, find out why and problem solve with her



Fun Facts

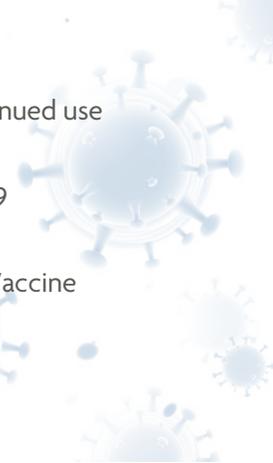
People at risk of diabetes or who have Prediabetes can reduce their risk by:

- **Losing weight:** 7% is good enough and twice as effective as metformin
- **Moderate exercise:** 150 minutes/week (moderate = able to talk but too short of breath to sing)
- **Take metformin**



COVID-19 Updates

- ❖ The Abbott ID Now instructions have changed. Currently, the sample must be run within 1 hour of being collected.
- ❖ Daily case counts across Alaska remain high. Encourage continued use of face masks and social distancing.
- ❖ New study shows the COVID-19 Virus lives on skin for up to 9 hours! Good news – hand sanitizer kills it in 15 seconds!
- ❖ Alaska Department of Health and Social Services COVID-19 Vaccine Information:
 - [COVID-19 Vaccine information for the general public.](#)
 - [COVID-19 Vaccine information for healthcare workers.](#)



CHAP on Facebook



Community Health Aide/Practitioner Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AlaskaCommunityHealthAidesPractitioners>



Share your digital stories:
Check out Facebook or the CHAP Weekly Update from September 25th.

Save the Date



Next session: October 13, 2020 Dr. Benjamin Katz will talk about Septic Arthritis in Children: An emergency you do not want to miss.



Continuing Education

Check out all of the CE options available at AKCHAP.org

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