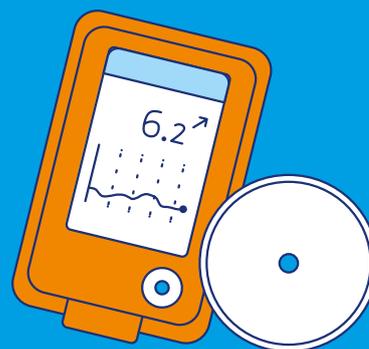


How can I access Flash Glucose Monitoring if I need it? Support pack



This pack will help you to find out more about
Flash and how you can access it.

Reviewed: January 2018

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Introduction

Following a major campaign victory, Flash Glucose Monitoring (Flash GM) can now be made available on the NHS.

Flash GM is a new exciting and innovative technology that is potentially life changing for many people with diabetes.

The next step is for local decision makers to agree policies about prescribing Flash GM in their area.

This pack will help you to find out more about Flash GM and decide if it would be right for you. It will help you to make your individual case for why you would benefit from using Flash GM and also highlights our campaign to make Flash GM available across the UK.

What is Flash Glucose Monitoring?

Flash GM uses a small sensor that you wear on your skin. It measures the amount of glucose (sugar) in the fluid that surrounds your body cells.

It measures these levels continuously and you can access them by scanning the sensor with a reader whenever you want to. The system can also show any trends in your levels using an arrow that tells you which direction your glucose level is heading. The sensor will need to be replaced with a new one about every 14 days.

There are similarities between Flash GM and Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM), but whilst CGM monitors your glucose levels and sends data to your display device continuously, Flash GM only tells you your readings and trends when you scan the sensor. This means

that it cannot alert you if you're having a hypo through an alarm like CGM devices do.

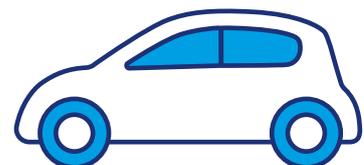
Flash GM replaces routine blood glucose monitoring but you will still need to perform a blood test when your glucose is rising or falling fast, or if your symptoms don't match your reading, and before driving.



You can read more about Flash GM here:
[www.diabetes.org.uk/
/flash-glucose-monitoring](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/flash-glucose-monitoring)

Flash GM and driving

The DVLA guidance does not currently recognise Flash GM results. So you must continue to use a meter and test strips at times relevant to driving.



What we think about Flash GM

We believe everyone with diabetes should have access to the right technology to support them, not just those who can afford it.

That's why we campaigned with you, to fight for Flash GM to be able to be provided free on the NHS. And together, we made change happen.

But the fight is only just beginning. It's now up to local decision makers to make local policies so that people with diabetes can access this technology wherever they live.

You can find out more about the campaign for Flash GM on page 9 and can sign up to receive updates on how you get involved on our campaign page:

www.diabetes.org.uk/flash

Who is Flash GM for?

We brought together a group of experts to look at this question, taking account of the scientific and clinical evidence available and the experiences of those using Flash GM to determine who it will benefit and is appropriate for.



We've made this into a guideline which can be found on our Flash GM web page:

www.diabetes.org.uk/flash

Our recommendation is that Flash GM is suitable for adults and children who use insulin to manage their diabetes, principally those with Type 1 diabetes using multiple daily injections or an insulin pump. It would also be suitable for patients with other types of diabetes when intensive insulin therapy becomes necessary because of severely reduced pancreatic function.

Flash GM may also be suitable for people with highly variable blood glucose levels, hospital inpatients who need regular monitoring and people with diabetes who have learning difficulties or have a fear of needles.

Using Flash GM may benefit people in certain jobs where finger-prick testing is not always practical and they struggle to test regularly.

People with diabetes have reported how Flash GM supports them to carry on with their daily lives, (sports, work, performances, and exercise) with greater ease and confidence.

We recommend that Flash GM is not suitable for those who have completely lost their hypo awareness. This is because continuous glucose monitoring (CGM), which has an alarm function, is more appropriate for you if you're not able to recognise when your glucose levels are dangerously low.

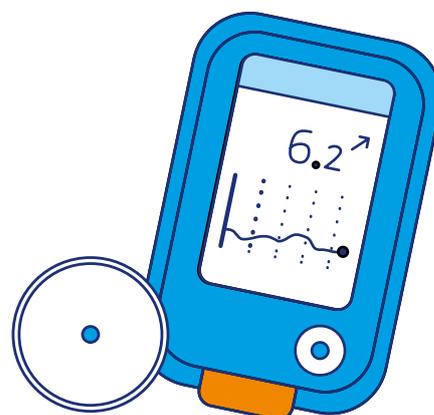
There is currently no NICE guidance on who is suitable for Flash GM, but NICE have produced a technology briefing which reviews current evidence with comments from clinical experts:

www.nice.org.uk/advice/mib110/chapter/Summary

What are the potential benefits to using Flash GM?

Flash GM has a number of benefits that can improve people's diabetes clinical outcomes over and above glucose testing. It provides data to support someone's self-management of their condition and can improve their quality of life. It can:

- Provide freedom to test more frequently, reducing the need for painful, stressful and inconvenient finger prick glucose monitoring.
- Reduce costs associated with glucose test strips.
- Give more confidence in managing your diabetes as you have more data to base decisions on.
- Prevent false high readings resulting from performing a blood test using unwashed hands.
- Let you see trends when your blood sugar levels are starting to rise or drop, so you can take action earlier.
- Let you see what your levels are like at times when you don't normally test such as during the night (either by looking at your own data or by someone scanning your sensor for you while you're asleep).
- Enable you to improve your HbA1c and reduce fluctuation in blood glucose levels. This can help to prevent future health complications. In turn this would save the NHS the cost of treating those complications and provide better health outcomes.
- Suit those doing a high amount of intense physical exercise.
- Improve general quality of life and benefit people in the workplace.
- Suit those who suffer with anxiety or have needle phobia.



How do I make my case for Flash GM?

1 As a first step, you should find out if there is a local policy about prescribing Flash GM in your area.

We are in the process of putting together a map of where Flash GM is available in the UK. You can find the 'Flash Map' on our website:

www.diabetes.org.uk/flash

Alternatively, you can call our Helpline on 0345 123 2399 between 9am and 6pm

You can also ask your GP or diabetes clinic about the availability in your area. You can ask for a copy of your Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) or Local Health Board's policy.

If it has not been approved locally, no policy exists (and there is no plan to review the position in the near future), you can join our campaign and help to get Flash GM made available in your area by signing up on our website.

2 If there is a policy and Flash GM is being prescribed locally, you should check what the policy says about who is eligible.

You can speak to your healthcare team if you are unsure if you meet the criteria.

3 If you don't meet the local criteria, you will need to make your individual case for why you think you would benefit from using Flash GM.

When making your case to your health professional, you will need to explain how and why using Flash GM will help you to look after your diabetes. You can also write or email your CCG or Health Board outlining why you should be provided with Flash GM.

You could think about what your answer to these three questions would be and write them down. Try to be as clear and concise as you can:

Have you been self-funding Flash GM? If you have then what did you notice about your diabetes management before, during and after using the device?

- You could compare your HbA1c results for when you have and have not been using Flash GM.

What are the challenges you're currently facing with your diabetes management?

- How do you think using Flash GM would help you with your blood glucose control?
- Do you test as often as you have been advised or would like to?
- Do you experience regular hypos and what are the effects of this on your day-to-day life?

What about your lifestyle makes it hard to monitor your diabetes without Flash GM?

- Do you struggle to perform finger prick tests regularly as part of your everyday routine?
- Do you work in an environment where it is difficult to perform finger prick tests regularly? For example, are you a car mechanic or builder who has dirty hands and struggles to get them clean? Or a teacher, shop worker or healthcare professional who finds performing finger prick tests challenging over the course of the day?
- Do you play sport and how would Flash GM benefit you?

Other useful information to help you make your case



Guidance has been produced for local prescribing committees and diabetes specialists. You could draw attention to this guidance if your decision maker or your local diabetes team is not aware it exists:

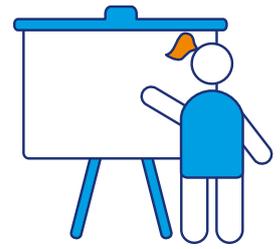
Guidance to Area Prescribing Committees in England who are, and will be, considering the applications submitted by clinicians to list Flash GM on local tariffs:

www.sps.nhs.uk/articles/regional-medicines-optimisation-committee-freestyle-libre-position-statement/

Documents from the Association of British Clinical Diabetologists and the Type 1 Diabetes Clinical Collaborative aimed at supporting clinicians to get Flash GM onto the formulary in local areas. This includes a letter to all diabetes teams and information to help make a case for Flash GM:

<https://abcd.care/getting-freestyle-libre-your-formulary>

Diabetes Education Courses



If you are considering using Flash GM, you could benefit from going on a diabetes education course, as recommended by NICE.

When using Flash GM, it's essential that you have the knowledge needed to make sure that you can use the information the system provides to improve management of your glucose levels. Even people who have been living with diabetes for 20 or more years tell us how life changing these educational courses can be.

You can ask your GP to refer you to a diabetes education programme. You can find more information about education courses on our website:

www.diabetes.org.uk/diabetes-education

Flash GM training



Abbott, who supply the Freestyle Libre, provide free online learning for both healthcare professionals and people with diabetes using the technology:

There are 9 'bite-size' modules in total, which will introduce you to the system, and help you get the most out of your data to manage your diabetes:

www.FreeStyleLibreAcademy.co.uk

What can I do if I'm unhappy with the response I receive?

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive about getting access to Flash GM, you have the right to complain and to have your complaint investigated.

Anyone who provides care on the NHS must have a complaints procedure. They must publicise their procedure and give clear information about how to make a complaint. Ask a member of staff for details, look on the surgery, hospital board, or CCG's website or contact their complaints department for a copy of the complaints procedure.

You can look at our support pack on making a complaint about healthcare for more information on the Health Board or NHS complaints procedure:

www.diabetes.org.uk/advocacy



You may then, following making a complaint, also like to raise the issue with your local political representative, your MP, MSP, AM or MLA:

In England, to find your MP:

www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps



In Wales to find your AM:

www.assembly.wales/en/memhome/Pages/memhome.aspx



In Scotland, to find your MSP:

www.parliament.scot/mspfinder/index.html



In Northern Ireland to find your MLA:

www.niassembly.gov.uk/your-mlas/



What else are Diabetes UK doing?

We want to ensure that everyone who could benefit from using Flash GM has access to this potentially life changing technology. Working with you, other diabetes organisations and health professionals we made the first step forward in November 2017.

But there now is much more work to do. In each nation and locally, we are working with Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), Health Boards, Trusts and Local Health Boards (LHBs) to persuade them to put policies in place so people can access Flash GM.

Flash GM is a new technology and therefore many people are not aware of its benefits. We are also raising awareness amongst health professionals and people with diabetes about this new technology.

Going forward, we will be monitoring access, encouraging areas to develop policies and will need your help to make sure that we make as much noise as possible where this doesn't happen. We can only make change happen with your support, so if you haven't already joined the campaign, sign up at:

www.diabetes.org.uk/flash



How else can we help you?

Call our helpline

Our Helpline is staffed by trained counsellors who really know diabetes. They can help you with information about diabetes, take the time to talk things through and explore any emotional, social, psychological or practical difficulties. For more information and support about your rights and how to get on a diabetes education course they're the people to call.



Call: 0345 123 2399*

Monday to Friday, 9am–6pm*

Email: helpline@diabetes.org.uk

Web: www.diabetes.org.uk/helpline

If you're in Scotland

Call: 0141 212 8710*

Monday to Friday, 9am–6pm.

Email: helpline.scotland@diabetes.org.uk

Join our online communities

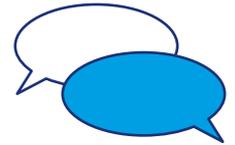
Our online Support Forum and Facebook and Twitter communities are a great place to meet other people with diabetes. Morning, noon and night you'll find loads of people sharing their experiences, offering each other support offering plenty of advice about life with diabetes.



Web: forum.diabetes.org.uk

Join a local support group

The members of our 380 support groups up and down the UK have been there, down that and got the Diabetes UK t-shirt. They normally meet once a month to share experiences, offer support and learn more about diabetes. Find your local group on our website.



Web: www.diabetes.org.uk/groups

Call: 0345 123 2399*

Type 2 Diabetes and Me

Our free interactive online tool helps people with Type 2 diabetes understand and manage their condition well. It gives people the chance to learn what they want when they want. It was developed by Diabetes UK, in partnership with Bupa.



Web: www.type2diabetesandme.co.uk

Type 1 Events

Our events for children, teenagers, adults and families have run for over 80 years and are designed to make sure diabetes holds no one back. The events are about sharing experiences, building confidence and creating more freedom to live with diabetes.

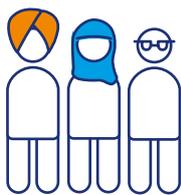


Web: www.diabetes.org.uk/type-1-events

Join Diabetes Voices

Diabetes Voices are members of the public who campaign with us to improvements in diabetes services and care across the UK.

If you would like to become a Diabetes Voice, or for more information, get in touch.



Web: www.diabetes.org.uk/voices

Email: diabetesvoices@diabetes.org.uk

Call: 0345 123 2399*

For help making a complaint

If you're unhappy with any of the care you've received we've got all the information and advice you'll need on our website in our Making a complaint about healthcare support pack.



Web: www.diabetes.org.uk/advocacy

Call: 0345 123 2399* (ask to have the pack sent out to you).

Find out more on our website

We've got loads of free information, advice, tips and guides on our website to help you live well with diabetes. If you prefer you can also order printed magazines and information leaflets from our online shop.



Web: www.diabetes.org.uk

Web: shop.diabetes.org.uk

Call: 0345 123 2399*

INPUT



INPUT are a charity that supports access to diabetes technology. You can contact them through their website:

www.inputdiabetes.org.uk

or email **nfo@inputdiabetes.org.uk**

JDRF



JDRF funds type 1 diabetes research to improve lives and one day eradicate the condition for good.

www.jdrf.org.uk

info@jdrf.org.uk

020 7713 2030

