

Can I get access to Flash? The situation in England:

From 1st April 2019, flash glucose monitoring will be available on prescription across England to everyone who meets the NHS criteria - no matter where you live. This is a huge step forward for people with type 1 diabetes and means thousands more people will soon have access to this life-changing technology.

To qualify, you will need to undergo training on using Flash and book an appointment with your diabetes team to be prescribed it.

The full criteria in England: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/national-arrangements-for-funding-of-relevant-diabetes-patients-v1.2.pdf>

From April 1st 2019, the below single criteria will become national policy. To qualify, you must:

- Receive education on Flash Glucose Monitoring (online or in person) and have previously attended, or have considered future attendance, at a Type 1 diabetes structured education programme (DAFNE or equivalent if available locally)
- Agree to scan glucose levels no less than 8 times per day and use the sensor >70% of the time.
- Agree to regular reviews with the local clinical team.

In addition to these, you must fulfil one or more of the following criteria:

You test regularly:

- You have type 1 diabetes and are clinically indicated as requiring intensive monitoring >8 times daily.

On Hemodialysis:

- You have any form of diabetes on hemodialysis and on insulin treatment and are clinically indicated as requiring intensive monitoring >8 times daily.

Cystic Fibrosis:

- If you have diabetes associated with cystic fibrosis on insulin treatment, you will also qualify.

Pregnant women:

- You're a pregnant women with type 1 diabetes

Inability to routinely test:

- You have type 1 diabetes and are unable to routinely self-monitor blood glucose due to disability who require carers to support glucose monitoring and insulin management.

Special occupational or psychosocial circumstances:

- You have type 1 diabetes and are someone whom the specialist diabetes MDT determines have occupational (e.g. working in insufficiently hygienic conditions to safely facilitate finger-prick testing) or psychosocial circumstances that warrant a 6- month trial of Libre with appropriate adjunct support.

Previously self-funding Flash:

- You have type 1 diabetes and have previously self-funded and can demonstrate they have improved their HbA1c

Severe hypoglycemia or impaired awareness of hypoglycaemia:

- You have type 1 diabetes and recurrent severe hypoglycemia or impaired awareness of hypoglycaemia. In these circumstances, if you and your clinician consider that a Flash Glucose Monitoring system would be more appropriate for your specific situation, then this can be considered.

Accessing Flash

We are actively campaigning for people with diabetes to get access to the best treatments and technology for them, and will work to ensure that those who can benefit from Flash are enabled to access through these criteria. We will monitor the situation as it develops during the year and ensure that the funding allocated is spent on increasing access for those who seek it.

It is also important to note that these are minimum criteria and CCGs are encouraged to continue to make Flash available to additional groups who may be able to benefit, and for those who were already funded under existing CCG policies and are showing observable improvements in their glucose management or psychosocial wellbeing.

What happens if you don't meet the criteria or are refused access?

You can also advocate for access to Flash – we have created an advocacy pack (https://www.diabetes.org.uk/resources-s3/2018-01/1303-Flash_Advocacy_pack-DL-digital.pdf) you can find which gives pointers about what things to highlight when making your case for Flash with your diabetes team. There are also potential things you could do if Flash is still not being prescribed in your area.

If you are not able to get Flash GM on prescription now, or after April, it can also be bought directly from the manufacturer. A starter pack for the Freestyle Libre (one read and two sensors) cost around £170, and further sensors are about £60 each.

Some pharmacies and shops also sell the Freestyle Libre over the counter at varying prices. There are some restrictions on self-funding Flash – with a limit to the number of sensors you can buy at once. It is also still only available for existing customers. We are working with Abbott to increase access to Flash privately.

