

Children and Young People's Diabetes Service

HbA1c @ Home

Information for patients, parents and carers

Why measure my HbA_{1c} at home?

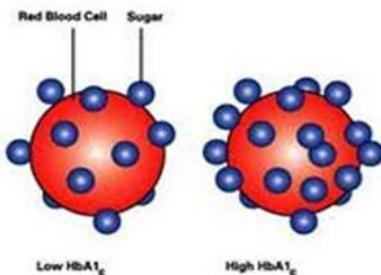
HbA_{1c} is the measure of blood glucose control over the previous 3 months. It is usually measured each time you attend clinic and occasionally inbetween if changes have been made to your insulin doses. Now that face to face clinics are not being held due to the COVID-19 restrictions we are able to provide the HbA_{1c} test for you to perform at home.

We will provide the equipment you need and a means of posting the sample back to Alder Hey. The test will be carried out by the laboratory team, your results will be available within a few days of you collecting the sample

What is HbA_{1c}?

HbA_{1c} stands for glycosylated haemoglobin.

HbA_{1c} is a measure of how much glucose is stuck to the haemoglobin in your red blood cells. We have a target range for good diabetes control that is needed to be well & healthy now and in the future. Red blood cells have a 12 week life span.



If your blood glucose is generally raised, more glucose attaches to the outside of red blood cells, if your blood glucose is generally low to normal – less glucose attaches to the red blood cells.

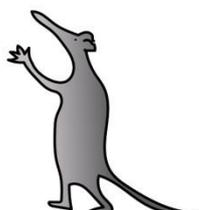
The HbA_{1c} test counts how much glucose is attached to the red blood cells in your sample and displays this as a number. It is possible to take the HbA_{1c} result and calculate what your average blood glucose has been for the last 3 months.

What should your HbA_{1c} level be?

The aim is to keep your HbA_{1c} below 48mmol/mol as much of the time as possible. A lower HbA_{1c} means a lower risk of diabetes related complications in the future.

We know at times it can be more difficult to keep good diabetes control. The diabetes team are here to help you with this.

If you need more help and support let us know.



HbA _{1c}	What does it mean ?
20-41	Normal range
42-48	Excellent diabetes control
49-57	Very Good diabetes control
58-69	Outside target range How can we help you lower this?
70-99	Needs to improve now - how can we help you lower this?
100+	High risk - how can we help you lower this now?

How to do the HbA1c@Home test:

You will need:

1. Your normal finger pricking device (Fastclix or Unistik lancet).
2. The Brown HbA_{1c} sample tube – with the clear inner tube removed and ready to collect the blood.
3. Clean, dry hands.
4. The transport container to place the Brown sample tube in.
5. Sample order sticker.
6. A pen.
7. The return postage paid envelope to post your sample back to Alder Hey.



How to collect the sample:

1. Take the Brown sample tube and pull out the clear conical inner part.
2. Detach the small orange cap and keep in a safe place.
3. Wash and dry your hands well (use warm water).
4. Use your finger pricker on the side of a finger.
5. Wait 3 seconds before 'milking' some blood.
6. Hold your finger so that the blood drop is facing the ground.
7. Using the clear conical inner tube, touch the small end into the blood – the drop will be sucked into the tube.
8. Repeat the milking / drawing step 3 times.
9. Take the orange cap and place it on the small end of the tube (don't worry – this won't push the blood out)
10. Press the larger orange lid on the top of the sample tube.
11. Push the inner tube back into the brown sample tube.
12. Write the date and time on the sample order sticker (IF THE SAMPLE DOES NOT HAVE A TIMED AND DATED STICKER IT WILL NOT BE TESTED).
13. Place the brown sample tube in the transport container.
14. Seal the transport container in the return postage paid envelope.
15. Post back to Alder Hey on the same day as the sample is collected.



Samples that do not have a date / time or are received more than 24 hours after collection will not be tested by the laboratory – this is to prevent giving you an inaccurate result.

Where can I get more help?

There is an HbA_{1c}@Home video guide on our website (alderhey.nhs.uk/services/diabetes/video-guides-1) or you can call the diabetes emergency line for help (Monday-Friday 8am – 6pm) 0151 252 5766

Follow us on Twitter: @AlderHeyDiab

Website: <https://alderhey.nhs.uk/parents-and-patients/services/diabetes>

This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

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