

Information for adults with insulin-treated diabetes who use a continuous glucose monitor (CGM) on admission to hospital

Other formats

If you need this leaflet in another format such as Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
- 01271 314090 (for North Devon services)
- rduh.pals@nhs.net

Overview

This leaflet provides information for adults with insulin-treated diabetes who use a continuous glucose monitor (CGM).

Common examples of CGM are Freestyle Libre and Dexcom One. A CGM sensor is usually worn on the arm or abdomen for 10 - 15 days. A mobile phone or a handheld receiver is used to view the data from the sensor.

If you are not too unwell and are able to make decisions about your glucose levels and insulin, we encourage you to keep the CGM sensor on and use it as you would at home.

If you need further advice on the management of your diabetes, you can ask the staff on your ward to contact the inpatient diabetes team.

If you are unwell or unable to manage your diabetes, the nursing staff will need to monitor your blood sugars using finger-prick blood tests, even if you have a working CGM sensor.

Obtaining advice about your diabetes before a planned admission to hospital

You can seek advice from the adult Diabetes Specialist Nurse (DSN) team at your hospital prior to your admission - contact details are below. If your call goes to answerphone, please leave a short message with your name, contact details, and a brief description of your problem or question. Depending on the time of day, a member of the team will call you back later that day or the following morning.

Exeter – The adult DSN on call can usually be contacted between 9am and 1pm via the hospital switchboard on 01392 411611. Please ask the automated service for the operator. When speaking with the operator, ask for the adult Diabetes Specialist Nurse on call. You will then be transferred to a mobile number.

Barnstaple – Please call 01271 322726 between 9am and 5pm.

Please bring any relevant CGM equipment with you

In addition to your medication, clothes and other things:

- Please bring the mobile phone or receiver that you use to read your CGM sensor
- Please bring any chargers needed for your phone or receiver
- Please bring a spare sensor or sensors, either if you expect to be in hospital when your sensor needs to be changed, or in case it has to be removed. Unfortunately, our pharmacy does not stock replacement sensors and it will not usually be possible to provide a new one during your stay.

Using CGM to record glucose levels in hospital

If it is appropriate to continue to use CGM readings, the ward nursing staff should ask to see your sensor reading instead of doing a finger-prick blood test. If they ask to do a finger-prick blood test but you have a CGM sensor on, please let them know. Please also remember that we may not be able to rely on a CGM reading and may need to do a blood test even though you have a CGM sensor on.

When staff ask to see your sensor reading, please show your phone or receiver so they can read the screen directly. Please also make sure that it is showing a current reading. If you have a CGM that you can “scan”, such as Freestyle Libre, then please do a scan.

CGM sensor readings will be documented in your hospital records in a similar way to finger-prick blood tests.

Situations where a CGM sensor may be removed or not used

For MRI scans your CGM sensor will need to be removed. For CT scans and X-rays, please note that some CGM manufacturers say that their sensors are safe to stay on, and other manufacturers say that their sensors could become inaccurate.

For certain types of surgery, your CGM sensor will need to be removed. If the CGM sensor is left in place, it must be away from the surgical site and any diathermy pads

Finger-prick blood tests are needed, even if you have a working CGM sensor, in the following situations:

- If you have a diabetes emergency such as DKA (diabetic ketoacidosis) or HHS (hyperglycaemic hyperosmolar state)
- If you are septic or seriously unwell for any other reason
- In the intensive care unit

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern, please contact PALS:

- 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services)
- 01271 314090 (for North Devon services)
- rduh.pals@nhs.net

Have your say

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You can also share your feedback on the Care Opinion website at www.careopinion.org.uk or freephone 0800 122 3135.



Scan the QR code to visit the Care Opinion website →

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