

A guide to Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM)

Using a Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM) device could be one of the best steps you can take for your diabetes.¹

This quick reference guide answers questions you might have about a CGM device. If you choose to, it may also help you explain about your CGM device to family and friends.

CGM devices and how they work

What is a continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) device?

A CGM device is a wearable device with a tiny sensor that sits just under your skin.²

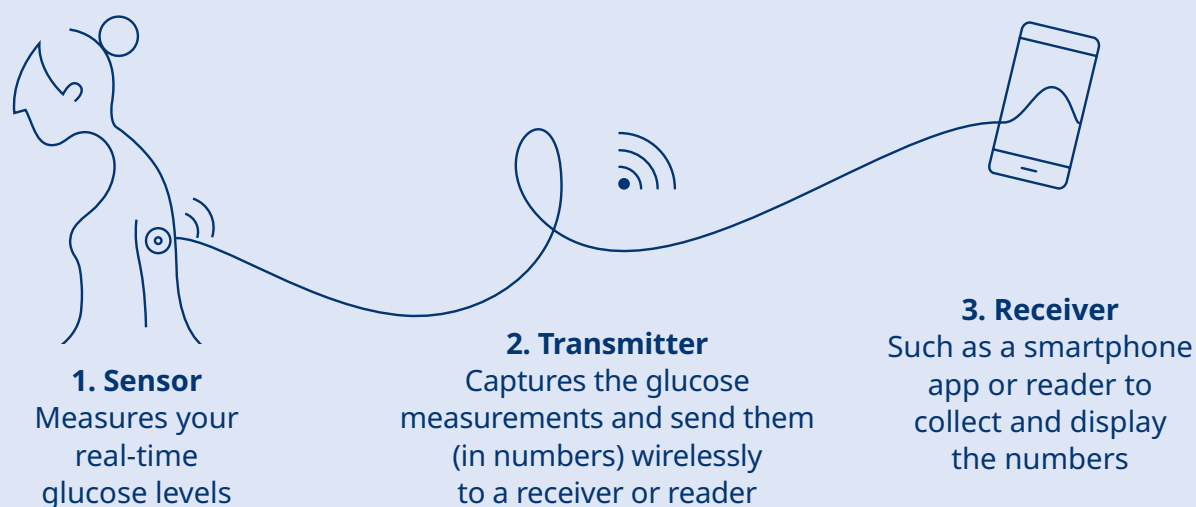
Why is a CGM device a smart move for diabetes management?

A CGM device can help improve diabetes management by showing the immediate effects of food choices, physical activity, and timing and dosage of medication.² It helps you avoid low blood glucose (hypoglycaemia) and high blood glucose (hyperglycaemia) so that you can better manage your diabetes by acting quickly to balance your glucose levels.²

How do CGM devices work?

A CGM device measures glucose levels in the fluid between your body cells, called 'interstitial fluid'.^{*} You can measure your glucose in 'real time' around the clock, without needing to prick your finger for every reading.^{2,3}

A CGM device has three basic parts:^{2,3}



Everyday life with a CGM device

Does attaching a CGM device hurt?

Some people say they feel mild discomfort when first inserting the sensor, but there is no pain afterwards.³

Where do you wear it on the body?

The CGM sensor is a small device that sits just beneath the skin on your abdomen or arm.²

The sensor is inserted using an applicator and it is held in place with special tape.^{3,4}

Are CGM devices easy to use?

Modern CGM devices have been described as easy to use.⁵ Your healthcare professional will show you how to insert the sensor.

Can I carry on with my life as normal with a CGM device in place?

Yes, you can. Once you get used to wearing it you might not even notice it.³

What if I get my CGM device wet?

The sensor can get wet, and can be comfortably worn while swimming, showering, or exercising. But if you plan to be in the water for over 30 minutes it is a good idea to get an adhesive 'performance' cover to protect it.³

Will this make exercise more difficult?

You can exercise as normal when wearing a CGM device – the sensor is water-resistant and clothing does not interfere with readings.³

The practicalities of a CGM device

Am I eligible for a CGM?

More and more people with diabetes are becoming eligible for a CGM device on prescription or through reimbursement schemes, as official guidelines have widened recommendations of use.^{3,6,7}

If you have either type 1 diabetes or type 2 diabetes and are on insulin therapy, or often have high or low blood glucose levels, speak to your healthcare professional about whether a CGM device is right for you.²

Are all CGM devices the same?

Many different CGM devices are available, but they all basically do the same thing and glucose measurements are sent to your phone or a reader every few minutes.^{2,4} A 'flash monitor' is a slightly different device, where you need to wave (scan) your phone or reader over the sensor to see the results.⁴

Is a CGM device the same as an insulin pump?

No, they are different. A CGM device measures your glucose levels and insulin pumps deliver insulin throughout the day. You can use both devices at the same time.^{2,8}

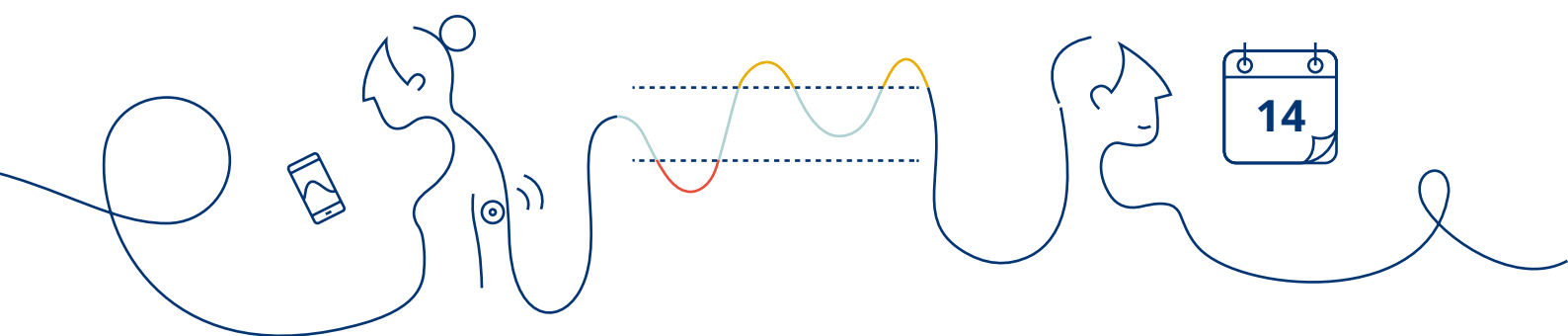
Monitoring diabetes with a CGM device

What will my CGM device tell me?

You will see a lot of new information when you start using a CGM device, including new measures like **Time in Range**.⁶ Your healthcare team will help you make sense of the numbers on your reader so that you can understand your daily glucose levels better.⁶

What is Time in Range?

Time in Range is an up-and-coming diabetes measure produced by your CGM device. It shows the amount of time you spend within your target glucose range (between 70 and 180 mg/dL or 3.9–10 mmol/L for most people). It has been shown to protect the health and improve mood and quality of life for people with diabetes.⁹



Your Time In Range is measured using numbers from your CGM device.^{6,10}

Your Time in Range is shown in colour on a one-page report called the 'AGP', which is automatically generated by your CGM device.⁶ You can look at the AGP with your healthcare professional and you can learn how to read it yourself!⁶

The AGP shows a coloured visualisation of all your glucose readings over 14 days and also shows each individual day.⁶ You can see everyday effects of lifestyle, food, medication, and any changes you make.⁶

How does all this CGM information help me to manage my diabetes?

Some of the important measurements you will see are your Time in Range, Time below Range and Time above Range.⁶ Experts recommend most people with diabetes should spend at least 17 hours per day in range, with no more than an hour below range and 6 hours above range.⁶ Your healthcare professional will tell you your personal target glucose range.

Together with your healthcare professional, you can use these measurements to check your diabetes treatment and discuss lifestyle changes to keep your glucose levels more stable, which will improve your diabetes management.⁶ More time spent in range means a lower risk of diabetes-related health complications.⁶

Keeping CGM diabetes management simple

Isn't CGM too time-consuming?

With CGM you can check your glucose levels at a glance, any time you want.² When you see your healthcare professional, the CGM device will have your readings stored to help you make accurate decisions together to manage your diabetes.⁵

Will CGM mean a more restrictive lifestyle?

People report that CGM, particularly that measure Time in Range, helps them feel better about living with diabetes.⁹ Many report significantly better quality of life, higher well-being and less hypoglycaemia fear with CGM.⁹

Will my healthcare professional expect me to provide all the CGM information?

Absolutely not – the CGM device will have saved all the information you need.^{6,10} The extra information will help you understand the peaks and dips in your glucose levels more quickly than the HbA_{1c} test, and you can discuss with your healthcare professional how you can spend more time in range.⁶

Will knowing more about how food affects my blood glucose make eating more restrictive?

CGM does not stop you from eating normally – you are absolutely free to eat the foods you enjoy, and follow a diet that works for you and diabetes management. But you will be able to see your glucose levels before, during and after you eat, so you can see the effect of food, and act immediately to bring levels down if needed.^{10,11}

Remember! If you have any questions about your diabetes, CGM devices or Time in Range speak to your doctor or nurse.

References

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