







Guide to Alternate Site Testing

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Fingertips are generally the most common area of the body to obtain blood for self-monitoring of blood sugar. However, it may be possible for you to test from other sites to provide more flexibility and choice.

Why would I use alternate site testing?

Fingertips are filled with nerve endings, so using them for a blood sample may hurt more than using other sites with less nerve endings.

How accurate is alternate site testing?

Studies* have shown that readings may vary when blood sugar testing is done on other areas of the body. This is partially due to the circulation of the blood. While alternate site testing works well for people with diabetes who have relatively stable blood sugar levels, the fingertips will provide a more accurate reading when blood sugar levels are rapidly changing. This is important to understand when you are determining your insulin injections or watching for hypoglycemia.

When is alternate site testing right for me?

- Routine testing before meals.
- When fasting.
- Near bedtime, at least 2 hours after eating.

When should I NOT use alternate site testing?

There may be times when alternate site results are different from fingertip results. This happens when glucose levels are changing rapidly. Alternate site testing is not appropriate when:

- You think your blood sugar may be low.
- The results do not match the way you feel. If the results do not match the way you feel, repeat the test using a fingertip.
- Within two hours of eating a meal, taking insulin or exercising.
- You have been diagnosed with hypoglycemia unawareness (no symptoms when your blood sugar is low).

Here are some other factors to consider when looking into alternate site testing:

- The amount of body hair in the allowed testing areas can interfere with the test by causing blood to smear.
- Do you have easy access to the alternate sites you can test on? Or do you wear stockings, long pants, or long sleeves?
- Do you bleed easily and could this be a concern for the clothing covering those areas?

Consult your diabetes healthcare professional for other times not to use alternate site testing. And always review and follow the blood sugar meter manufacturer's recommendations for alternate site testing.

*1. Jungheim K, Koschinsky T. Risky Delay of Hypoglycemia Detection by Glucose Monitoring at the Arm. Diabetes Care 24:1303-4, 2001.

2. Peled N, Wong D, Gwalani SL. Comparison of Glucose Levels in Capillary Blood Samples Obtained from a Variety of Blood Sites. Diabetes Technology and Therapeutics. 4(1): 45-7, 2002.

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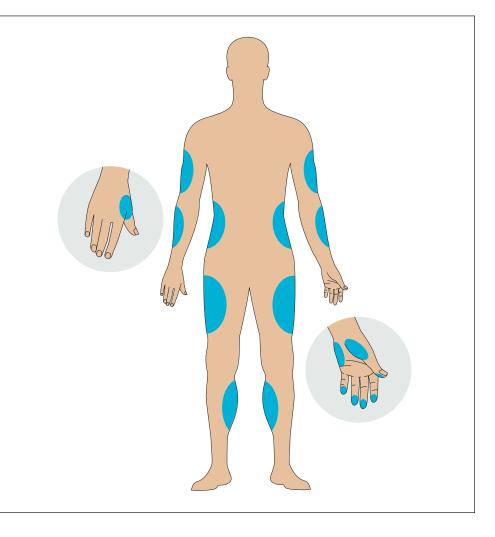
How do I get a sample with alternate site testing?

- Use the clear tip for your lancing device.
- Use a fresh lancet with every test.
- Be sure your lancing device and lancet are dialed to the depth you need to obtain an adequate sample.
- Vigorously massage the area you plan to use for your test.
- Place the cocked lancing device against your test site.
- Release the lancet but do not remove the lancing device from the test site until your blood sample is adequate.
- Remove the lancing device.
- Apply the sample to your test strip.

Where are the alternate testing sites?

Each meter and its strip have different sites approved for use of alternate site testing. Check the manufacturer's instructions. Sites might include any or all of the following.

- Forearm
- Upper arm
- Palm
- Thigh
- Calf
- Abdomen
- Thumb base
- Fingertips





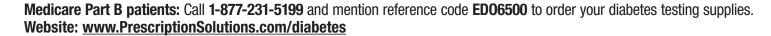




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