

Department of endocrinology

Checking your blood glucose levels

Why is the nurse checking my blood glucose levels?

You are at risk of developing higher than normal blood glucose (sugar) levels if you are receiving:

- steroids e.g. dexamethasone, prednisolone
- total parenteral nutrition (TPN) or artificial feeding
- octreotide
- or have pancreatic cancer, or have had pancreatic surgery

When will the nurse check my blood glucose?

The nurse will check your blood glucose (sugar) before meals and before bed for 48 hours. They will then decide how often your blood glucose needs to be checked, based on these results. The frequency of testing may remain the same or reduce to twice daily.

If you have not had your blood glucose checked, please remind the nurse who is looking after you.

Will I have to check my blood glucose when I am discharged?

You may be required to continue checking your glucose when you are discharged, but please do not worry about this as the nurse will show you and a family member how to do this.

For further advice, please ask your ward nurse to contact the diabetes specialist nurse.



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Why is it important to know what my blood glucose is?

High blood glucose results (over 12 mmols/l) can make you feel unwell. You may feel tired, thirsty, pass more urine than usual and have to get up to visit the bathroom overnight. You may have blurry vision or develop genital thrush. Sometimes it is difficult to know whether you are feeling like this due to your cancer or because your blood glucose level is higher than normal.

Will I need to take medication if my blood glucose remains higher than normal?

If your blood glucose is regularly over 12 mmols/l we will discuss with you the benefit of starting medication to lower your blood glucose.

Do I have to restrict any food or drink during this time?

We would advise that you try to avoid drinking full sugar drinks, such as Lucozade, Coca-Cola, large quantities of fresh orange juice or eating sugary sweets as these products can make your blood glucose increase.

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

The Christie is committed to producing high quality, evidence based information for patients. Our patient information adheres to the principles and quality statements of the Information Standard. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham, Salford or Macclesfield. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.

Contact The Christie Hotline for urgent support and specialist advice
The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

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