

Medicare Preventive Services for Diabetes

How often is it covered?

Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance) covers screenings to check for diabetes. Based on the results of these tests, you may be eligible for 2 diabetes screenings each year.

Who's eligible?

Medicare covers these tests if you have any of these risk factors:

- High blood pressure (hypertension)
- History of abnormal cholesterol and triglyceride levels (dyslipidemia)
- Obesity
- History of high blood sugar (glucose)

Medicare also covers these tests if 2 or more of these apply to you:

- Age 65 or older
- Overweight
- Family history of diabetes (parents, brothers, sisters)
- History of gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy), or delivery of a baby weighing more than 9 pounds

Your costs in Original Medicare

You pay nothing for these tests.

Blood Sugar Self-testing Equipment & Supplies

Blood sugar (also called blood glucose) self-testing equipment and supplies are covered as durable medical equipment for all people with Medicare Part B who have diabetes, even if you don't use insulin.

Self-testing supplies include:

- Blood sugar monitors
- Blood sugar test strips
- Lancet devices and lancets
- Glucose control solutions for checking the accuracy of testing equipment and test strips

Part B covers the same type of blood sugar testing supplies for people with diabetes whether or not they use insulin. However, the amount of supplies that are covered varies. If you use insulin, you may be able to get up to 300 test strips and 300 lancets every 3 months.

If you don't use insulin, you may be able to get 100 test strips and 100 lancets every 3 months.

If your doctor says it's medically necessary, **Medicare will allow you to get additional test strips and lancets.** "medically necessary" means that services or supplies are needed for the diagnosis or treatment of your medical condition and meet accepted standards of medical practice. You may need to keep a record that shows how often you're actually testing yourself.

If you have questions about diabetes supplies, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

A national mail order program to save you money on diabetic testing supplies started in July 2013. You'll need to use a Medicare contract supplier for Medicare to pay for diabetic testing supplies if you choose to have the supplies delivered to your home. For more information about this program, visit Medicare.gov.

What do I need from my doctor to get these covered supplies?

Medicare will only cover your blood sugar self-testing equipment and supplies if you get a prescription from your doctor. The prescription should include:

Whether you have diabetes.

What kind of blood sugar monitor you need and why you need it. (If you need a special monitor because of vision problems, your doctor must explain that.)

Whether you use insulin.

How often you should test your blood sugar.

How many test strips and lancets you need for one month.

Where can I get these supplies?

You can order and pick up your supplies at your pharmacy.

You can order your supplies from a medical equipment supplier.

Generally you can order your supplies from a medical equipment supplier. Generally, a "supplier" is any company, person, or agency that gives you a medical item or service, except when you're an inpatient in a hospital or skilled nursing facility. If you get your supplies this way, you must place the order yourself. You'll need a prescription from your doctor to place your order, but your doctor can't order the supplies for you.

Keep this in mind:

You must ask for refills for your supplies.

You need a new prescription from your doctor for your lancets and test strips every 12 months.

Note: Medicare won't pay for any supplies you didn't ask for, or for any supplies that were sent to you automatically from suppliers, including blood sugar monitors, test strips, and lancets.

If you're getting supplies sent to you automatically, are getting advertisements that are misleading, or suspect fraud relating to your diabetes supplies, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

You must get supplies from a pharmacy or supplier that's enrolled in Medicare. If you go to a pharmacy or supplier that isn't enrolled in Medicare, Medicare won't pay. **You'll have to pay the entire bill for any supplies from non-enrolled pharmacies or non-enrolled suppliers.**