

## Monitoring

### Tech Time

#### Diabetes technology

What is a Continuous Glucose Monitor (CGM) and is it right for me?

A CGM is a wearable patch with a small sensor that is inserted under your skin. It can be worn alone or paired with an insulin pump. It is usually placed on your belly or the back or your arm and will need to be replaced every 10-14 days. The CGM tracks your glucose levels 24 hours a day and you can see your glucose level at anytime just by swiping a reader device, or in some cases, your smart phone over your patch.



#### How does it work?

The sensor contains a tiny probe that measures interstitial glucose, which is the glucose found in the fluid between cells just under your skin. The sensor tests the glucose levels every few minutes and can be useful in helping you know which direction your glucose level is moving. Arrows on your reading device will signify if the glucose is rising, falling, or holding steady. Some CGM's have alarms that go off when glucose levels are reaching higher or lower than the programmed limits.

#### Dexcom G6 (Dexcom)

Sensor + Transmitter;  
Receiver or  
Smartphone app

Sensor applied by  
user

Warm up: 1 hour

No calibrations

Length of wear:  
10 days

#### Freestyle Libre (Abbott)

Sensor  
Receiver or  
Smartphone app

Sensor applied by  
user

Warm up: 1 hour

No calibrations

Length of wear:  
14 days

#### Guardian (Medtronic)

Sensor + Transmitter;  
Smartphone app for  
receiver

Sensor applied by  
user

Warm up: 2 hours

Calibrations: 2 per  
day

Length of wear:  
7 days

#### Eversense (Senseonics)

Sensor  
Smart transmitter  
Smartphone app

Sensor surgically  
implanted

Warm up: 24 hours

Calibrations: 2 per  
day

Length of wear:  
180 days

For more information, check out these websites for the CGMs:

- Dexcom G6: <https://www.dexcom.com/g6-cgm-system>
- Freestyle Libre 14-day or Libre 2: <https://www.freestyle.abott/us-en/home.html>
- Guardian by Medtronic: <https://www.medtronic.com/us-en/healthcare-professionals/products/diabetes/continuous-glucose-monitoring-systems/guardian-sensor-3.html>
- Eversense by Senseonics: <https://www.ascensiadiabetes.com/eversense/>

**KEEP  
YOUR  
DIABETES  
ON A  
STABLE  
PATH**

# Problem Solving



## Understanding your health insurance

Annual enrollment may be fast approaching, or you may be considering taking a new job and want to compare your healthcare benefits. We know that navigating insurance with a chronic disease can seem overwhelming. Even if you don't change insurance companies or your medication, your coverage of the medication or diabetes devices can change from year to year. Sometimes this can happen mid-year.

It is important to check with your health insurance company when you start with a new insurance plan or during annual enrollment. Check online on the insurance company website or call to get a list of medications that are on the formulary. This formulary is the list of medications and devices that the insurance company has negotiated the best rate for. Others may be available at a higher cost or after your provider has filled out a prior authorization. A PA or prior authorization is a form that insurance companies require your provider to fill out for non-formulary items. This PA usually wants you to have met certain requirements before they will approve paying for the drug.

### Two examples of a PA being needed:

1. Want to switch from a meter to a CGM such as the Libre 3 or the Dexcom G6? Some insurance companies want you to be testing a certain number of times per day for several weeks before they approve it, or the requirement can be based on whether or not you take insulin.
2. You are taking a certain brand name drug in one of the diabetes class of medications and your insurance now covers a different brand name in the same class. The insurance company may require you to try the drug that they cover and only allow for you to stick with the current one you are taking, once you have tried the new one that is on formulary, and it did not work. Many times, switching drugs will make no difference and other times, there are slight changes in the drug that makes it not work as effectively.

If you learn that your medication or device may no longer be covered, speak to your provider about how this will affect your diabetes plan. This will keep you from paying higher costs for your currently prescribed drugs or worse, keeping you from being able to take your medication or monitor your glucose.

### For additional information, check out these websites:

- <https://beyondtype1.org/cgm-insurance-coverage-faqs/>
- <https://beyondtype2.org/cgm-access-private-insurance/>

# Coach's Corner



## Q & A sessions

Dear Coach,  
I'm so tired of pricking my fingers to check my blood sugar. Is there another way?  
Pin Cushion in Pittsfield

Dear Pin Cushion,  
Although checking blood sugars is an important part of diabetes management, it certainly can be inconvenient at times. One alternative to finger sticks is a continuous glucose monitor, or CGM (see page one for more information). Your choice of equipment, whether it's a blood sugar meter or a CGM, is usually determined by your insurance coverage and may be considered a pharmacy benefit or classified as durable medical equipment, or DME. (see article on insurance)

Not able to get a CGM? Here are some strategies to make the fingerstick process go a little smoother:

- Prick the sides of the finger instead of the tips or center of the finger pad.
- Warm up your hand to get the blood flowing before pricking your finger. Try washing your hands with soap and warm water then dry them with a clean paper towel.
- Get the thinnest lancets possible and change them regularly (after each glucose check)
- Use a lancing device that has an adjustable tip and set it to the lowest setting that still allows you to get enough of a sample to be read.
- Set the lancing device firmly on the side of the finger before you hit the button.

Need some additional motivation and ideas for monitoring and managing your blood glucose? Check out this tip sheet on glucose monitoring:

- [ADCES glucose monitoring tips and tricks](#)

Talk to your coach for more information - Start reducing your risks - Small steps can lead to big changes.

## COACH SUPPORT:

Reach out when you have a question or concern.

You don't have to wait for your scheduled appointment.

Three ways to reach us: email, phone, MyStablePath portal