

FreeStyle Libre® primary care information sheet

What is FreeStyle Libre®?

The FreeStyle Libre® flash glucose monitoring system is a device for the self-monitoring of glucose levels. Unlike traditional finger-prick devices (that measure the glucose level in the blood), Libre® measures the glucose level in the interstitial fluid, via a sensor that sits just under the skin. It updates readings every minute and stores data every 15 minutes giving a near-continuous record of measurements which can be accessed on demand. FreeStyle Libre does not provide real-time continuous glucose monitoring or a hypoglycaemia alarm. FreeStyle Libre® is licensed for adults and children above the age of 4.

Is this a replacement for fingerpick blood glucose testing?

As Libre® measures interstitial glucose, it is not a complete substitute for blood glucose testing. Blood glucose measurements are required in certain circumstances, including:

- during times of rapidly changing glucose levels e.g. exercise,
- when scanned glucose results do not correspond with the user's symptoms, e.g. patient feels hypoglycaemic but the FreeStyle Libre® reader is showing a higher glucose reading
- where the reader indicates a low glucose reading,
- to meet Driving and Vehicle Licensing Agency requirements,
- to use bolus calculators.

Patients will continue to require prescriptions for blood glucose testing strips on prescription for the situations highlighted above; the expected amount will be detailed on the initiation documentation/clinic letter. Please note that if FreeStyle Libre® has been prescribed for users of high numbers of test strips, it is expected that number will fall over the first few months.

How is the FreeStyle Libre® sensor applied on the body?

The FreeStyle Libre sensor is applied to the back of the upper arm with a disposable applicator. When the sensor is applied, a 5mm sterile filament is inserted just under the skin, and held in place with a small adhesive pad. The sensor lasts for up to 14 days.

How does a patient get a reading?

The patient swipes the reader over the sensor to get a glucose reading. It can provide a near-continuous record. With a scan of the reader over the sensor, patients can see their current glucose reading, their 8-hour glucose history and a trend arrow showing the direction and rate of change of their glucose levels. Patients can scan as often as they want, even through clothing if they want the near continuous record they would need to scan every 8 hours.

What do continuing prescribers need to do?

Initiation and prescribing of the sensors for the first six months should be carried out by the specialist diabetes team in specialist centres. Primary care practitioners will be notified of the initiation of FreeStyle Libre® and expected patient outcomes via a completed 'patient-prescriber agreement' form. At a 3-6 month review by the specialist, if FreeStyle Libre® is to be continued, a transfer of care document will be sent to the GP to continue prescribing after 6 months. Transfer of prescribing will be accompanied by clear monitoring responsibilities and information on ongoing review. Patients will receive enough sensors to last them the first 6 months from the specialist centre. Patients will continue to be reviewed by the specialist diabetes team at appropriate intervals for ongoing review.

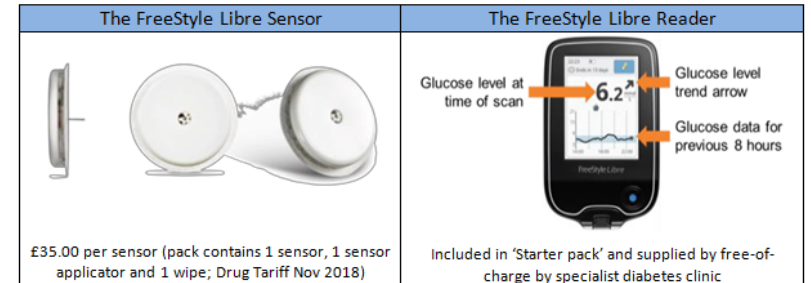
Sensors last 14 days and therefore patients need two per month. Sensors that fall off/malfunction should not be replaced on prescription – Abbott should be contacted directly by the patient and they will send out a replacement (Tel: 0800 170 1177). If the reader develops faults, the patient should report this directly to Abbott. Sensors should be disposed in a sharps bin; applicators with cap on disposed in a biohazard bag and the sensor pack disposed in general waste. If the patient has any issues with the device or requires further guidance, please do refer them back to the initiating team (details will be on the initiation paperwork). Once the patient has started using FreeStyle Libre® then usage and outcome reviews will be conducted by the initiating clinician. If continuation is agreed, a long-term (repeat) prescribing request will be sent to the GP practice.

Transfer of prescribing will be accompanied by clear monitoring responsibilities and information on ongoing review; responsibilities for specialists, patients and GPs are outlined in the [Position Statement](#).

Where can I get more information?

Short video tutorials on how to set up the device and apply the sensor can be found by clicking on the following link <https://www.freestylelibre.co.uk/libre/help/tutorials.html>

More in-depth training materials and the full **North Central London implementation guidance** can be found by clicking on the following link https://www.ncl-mon.nhs.uk/faqs/flash_glucose_monitoring/



Patient swiping over the sensor to take a reading

