

Frequently Asked Questions - Beneficiary

1. What is the purpose of Blood Glucose Test Strips?

Blood Glucose Test Strips are prescribed to assist with monitoring blood sugar in individuals:

- using insulin, multiple injections or newly initiated on insulin
- having poorly controlled or unstable blood glucose levels,
- where there is an increased risk for hypoglycemia,
- with acute illness,
- with changes in insulin or other medication dose/regimen,
- with significant changes in routine,
- pregnant or planning to become pregnant,
- working in an occupation where hypoglycemia poses safety concerns.

2. Why has the Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP) reduced the number of test strips a beneficiary can obtain under the program?

It is the responsibility of the NLPDP to ensure that we spend our public funds where scientific evidence support significant health outcomes. To achieve this, NLPDP uses evidence based decision making processes to consider coverage of medications and supplies under the program.

The Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) released a report in Fall 2009 on its review of the clinical and economic evidence relating to use of Blood Glucose Test Strips. This study provided guidelines for the use of test strips in monitoring blood sugar. In summary, the results show that most patients with Type 2 diabetes are able to test blood sugar less often without negatively affecting their diabetes control. To ensure our public funds are spent wisely, NLPDP decided to implement changes which will result in lower maximum quantities of test strips per year.

3. How many Blood Glucose Test Strips am I eligible to receive?

Diabetes Treatment	Maximum number of test strips per year
Beneficiaries receiving a short acting insulin (with or without non-insulin diabetes medications)	2500
Beneficiaries receiving long acting insulin (with or without non-insulin diabetes medications and NOT using a short acting insulin).	700
Beneficiaries receiving only non-insulin diabetes medications	100
Beneficiaries newly diagnosed NOT receiving insulin or any other non-insulin diabetes medications	50

Beneficiaries being treated with insulin and/or non-insulin diabetes medications **NOT** funded through the NLPDP can access test strips through the special authorization process.

Beneficiaries with gestational diabetes or pregnant with Type 2 diabetes can access test strips as determined by your physician through the special authorization process.

4. When will the changes for Blood Glucose Test Strips be in effect?

Changes will be effective July 1, 2016.

5. What if I use up the annual Maximum before the end of the year?

If a beneficiary exceeds the annual maximum, a Special Authorization Request Form will need to be submitted by your Family Physician, Diabetes Nurse Educator, or other qualified Health Care Professional requesting additional test strips and reason the additional quantity is required.

The Special Authorization Request Form is located at <http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/forms/index.html#4>.

If approved;

- a beneficiary receiving long acting insulin (with or without non-insulin diabetes medications and NOT using short acting insulin) will be authorized for an additional 100 test strips per year,
- a beneficiary receiving **ONLY** non-insulin diabetes medications will be authorized for an additional 50 test strips per year, and
- a beneficiary receiving no diabetes medications or insulin will be authorized for additional 50 test strips per year.

6. The 50 Blood Glucose Test Strips I am eligible for expired before I was able to use them, what can I do?

Upon receipt of a Special Authorization Request Form from your Family Physician or other Health Care Professional noting that the previous 50 test strips have expired, approval will be given for an additional 50 test strips. Fill dates must be 6 months apart. It is important to check the expiry date of your test strips prior to leaving the pharmacy if possible.

The Special Authorization Request Form is located at <http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/forms/index.html#4>.

7. Why am I limited to 50 test strips because I do not take medication for diabetes?

The study conducted by the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) determined that routine self-monitoring of blood glucose is not required for most adults with Type 2 Diabetes who control their diabetes through diet alone.

Additionally, your doctor can effectively monitor your overall diabetes control with routine blood tests.

8. When is the annual maximum number of Blood Glucose Test Strips renewed? Calendar Year or July 1st each year?

The annual maximum number of test strips can be accessed every 12 month period. The period is based on the 12 months preceding the day you are filling a prescription. Please note that fills for test strips prior to July 1, 2016 are not counted against the new limits.

For example, if you filled your prescription October 1st the 12 month period will be 12 months preceding October 1st.

9. Do I need prior approval to get Blood Glucose Test Strips?

Type 2

For beneficiaries receiving long acting insulin (with or without non-insulin diabetes medications and **NOT** using short acting insulin), no prior approval is required to access the annual maximum of 700 test strips.

For beneficiaries receiving **only** non-insulin diabetes medications, no prior approval is required to access the annual maximum of 100 test strips.

For beneficiaries receiving no diabetes medications or insulin, no prior approval is required to access the annual maximum of 50 test strips.

Prior approval will be required in the following circumstances:

- If a beneficiary exceeds the annual maximums.
- If a beneficiary is being treated with diabetes medications (insulin or oral medication) not funded through the NLPDP.
- If a beneficiary has Gestational Diabetes or has Type 2 Diabetes and is pregnant and required to test more frequently.

Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes using short acting AND long acting insulins:

For beneficiaries with Type 1 Diabetes and beneficiaries with Type 2 diabetes using short acting AND long acting insulin (with or without non-insulin diabetes medications) no prior approval is required to access the annual maximum of 2500 test strips.

Prior approval will be required in the following circumstances:

- If a beneficiary exceeds the annual maximums.
- If a beneficiary is being treated with diabetes medication (insulin or oral medication) **NOT** funded through the NLPDP.

10. I received a letter from NLPDP noting I was approved for test strips for the next five years, why did I receive a new letter noting my authorization will now expire on June 30, 2016 and that I will have to reapply?

NLPDP has introduced a new policy regarding the number of test strips a beneficiary can access under the program based on how his/her diabetes is being managed. This change is based on scientific evidence.

You have received a letter notifying you that a new expiration date has been set for your current authorization and that you have to reapply for test strip coverage to ensure all beneficiaries of the NLPDP access the same benefits with respect to Blood Glucose Test Strips.

11. How will I know how many test strips I have left for the year?

If you are unsure of the number of test strips you can access for the remainder of the year, you can call our office at (709) 729-6507 or toll free at 1-888-222-0533 and press option #1. We will be happy to assist you.

12. What is Medication Review for Diabetes?

Medication Review for Diabetes is for beneficiaries of the NLPDP who have been diagnosed with either Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes. If you have active coverage under the drug program, have diabetes AND is being treated with

insulin and/or diabetes medications you are eligible for one consultation per year with your pharmacist. There is no out of pocket cost for you.

A medication review can be completed at your pharmacy and your pharmacist can review your medication and provide you with information on managing your diabetes.