

Glycosylated Haemoglobin (HbA1c) (1 of 1)

This is a blood test that is used as an indicator of blood glucose control over the preceding 3 months, particularly the 6 weeks before sampling. Your target will be agreed with your doctor. It is important that you know what your HbA1c and agreed target is.

Good control of diabetes definitely reduces the chances of developing complications, in particular problems with the eyes, kidneys and feet. In addition to good control of blood pressure and cholesterol a good HbA1c also reduces the chances of developing heart disease and strokes.

In general a value of 7.5% or less is considered to be good control.

It may be very difficult for some individuals to achieve this level particularly if you have suffered from diabetes for some time. As diabetes progresses then more powerful tablets are needed to achieve good control and some people will need insulin treatment. The more powerful the treatment the greater the risk of low blood sugar (hypoglycaemia). The risk of hypoglycaemia needs to be weighed against the advantages of good sugar control.

A value of over 9% would be considered poor control. If your HbA1c is over 9% then you are likely to feel more tired and thirsty than usual and notice you are passing more urine. It is certainly worth improving your diabetes control at this level since you are likely to feel much better and your risk of developing serious diabetes complications will be much reduced.

Ask your doctor what your HbA1c is and agree a sensible target to aim for.

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If you need this information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0800 374 208 email: palservice@salisbury.nhs.uk

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital

We ask for information about you so that you can receive proper care and treatment. This information remains confidential and is stored securely by the Trust in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

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