

FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Summary

This document provides key information about FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®], and is designed for patients and/or members of the public. It includes answers to the following questions:

1. How do I get FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] sensors on the NHS?
2. Who is entitled to FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] sensors on the NHS?
3. My review is not due for several months - can I request an earlier review by my specialist?
4. How do I request an earlier review if my diabetes needs have significantly changed?
5. Can my GP prescribe these sensors before I have been seen by the specialist?
6. Once I have been seen by the specialist, how soon will I get the FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] system?
7. Is there anything else I need to do?
8. If I have further questions on how to use the sensors, who do I ask?
9. When will my GP take over prescribing FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] for me?
10. How many sensors will be prescribed for me?
11. What happens if my sensor falls off and/or I run out of sensors?
12. How Should the FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] sensor components be disposed of after use?
13. Will GPs continue to prescribe glucose testing strips for me if I meet the criteria for use of sensors?
14. Can drivers use the Flash Glucose Sensors to monitor blood glucose levels prior to driving?
15. What if I am already self-funding FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®]?
16. What if I want to use (or continue using) FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] but do not meet the criteria for funding?
17. Will the recommendations for funding be reviewed?
18. How can I switch from FreeStyle Libre[®] to FreeStyle Libre 2[®]?

The NHS England funding criteria for FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] are also given in Appendix 1.

1. How do I get FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] sensors on the NHS?

In March 2019, NHS England issued guidance relating to national arrangements for funding of Flash Glucose Monitoring for qualifying diabetes patients. As a result NHS East and North Hertfordshire CCG (ENHCCG) has reviewed its [commissioning policy](#). Flash Glucose Monitoring using FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] is recommended for restricted use as an option for:

1. patients who satisfy the NHS England funding criteria. Details are available online at the following address:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/flash-glucose-monitoring-national-arrangements-for-funding-of-relevant-diabetes-patients/>

See Appendix 1 on the last page of this FAQ for the full criteria;

2. existing patients funded under the previously approved Hertfordshire Medicines Management Committee (HMMC) guidelines.

If you are already under the care of the Specialist Diabetes Team, they will discuss your eligibility at your next routine review and if you meet the criteria, you will receive FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] funded by the NHS. If you are not under the care of the diabetes specialist team but you clearly meet the strict criteria, you will need to ask to be referred to the specialist team for assessment and you will be seen at the next available routine appointment.

2. Who is entitled to FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] sensors on the NHS?

The national criteria are set out in Appendix 1. Under the national criteria, approximately 20% of patients with Type 1 diabetes are expected to meet the criteria for NHS funded FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®]. NHS England wanted to prioritise patients who are in greatest need. For example, patients with pre-existing Type 1 diabetes in pregnancy, patients with severe disabilities on insulin and patients on insulin treatment on haemodialysis.

NHS care of patients with Type 1 diabetes is already at a high standard. If you don't meet the FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] criteria, you will not be considered for it, but the healthcare teams will continue to support you in all aspects of your diabetes care.

3. My review is not due for several months - can I request an earlier review by my specialist?

Only patients whose diabetes needs have significantly changed since their last review and clearly meet the strict criteria for NHS funded FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] should ask for an earlier appointment. Our diabetes specialists have limited capacity and must prioritise the patients with highest clinical needs.

If you are unsure whether changes in your diabetes needs require an earlier review, please contact your diabetes specialist for advice.

4. How do I request an earlier review if my diabetes needs have significantly changed?

If you are already under the care of the Specialist Diabetes Team, please contact them directly using the contact details they provided. You do not need your GP or Practice Diabetes Nurse to make a referral. If you are not already under the care of the specialist team, please contact your GP Practice.

5. Can my GP prescribe these sensors before I have been seen by the specialist?

No - GPs are only permitted to prescribe these sensors once you have been assessed by the specialist as someone meeting the strict criteria for NHS funding. One of the reasons for this is that

patients obtain most benefit from using FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] with the focussed educational support of specialist teams. The device relies on educational support on how to interpret and act on the results it generates. The specialist team will also ensure that patients with Type 1 diabetes who meet the funding criteria have already undertaken or will complete, an appropriate diabetes education programme.

6. Once I have been seen by the specialist, how soon will I get the FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] system?

In order to use the system correctly, all patients must attend a training session, which lasts approximately one hour. At this session, you will be supplied with the scanner and an initial supply of sensors. The training session usually takes place within a month of your assessment, but may take longer owing to the anticipated high demand for training.

The initial 2-months' supply will be provided by the specialist team. If you and your specialist decide to continue treatment after this, your GP will take over your supplies.

7. Is there anything else I need to do?

You will be expected to use the system regularly to improve your diabetes management, upload data for central monitoring, participate in audits to assess outcomes and complete a diabetes structured education programme - if you have not already done so. A copy of the patient agreement forms can be found at this [link](#).

8. If I have further questions on how to use the sensors, who do I ask?

Contact your Specialist Diabetes Team using the details they have provided to you. FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] is a complex device, therefore specialist support is needed.

9. When will my GP take over prescribing FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] for me?

For the first 2 months you will receive all supplies of FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] sensors from your Specialist Diabetes Team who will monitor you closely and will help you use FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] properly. Your specialist team will conduct a review to check that you are benefitting from using the device. At this point, they will decide whether to continue (or stop) FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®]. If your specialist team agrees to continue FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®], they will ask your GP to take over prescribing.

10. How many sensors will be prescribed for me?

You will usually be supplied with a maximum of 2 sensors every 28 days.

If any of the sensors are defective or fall off, you will need to contact the manufacturer to obtain a replacement. Your specialist and GP cannot issue prescriptions to replace defective sensors or those that have fallen off.

You should contact the Abbott Customer Careline, on 0800 170 1177, on the day that the FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] sensor falls off/is defective or, if it is closed, when the office is next open. Details of office opening hours can be found at: <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/contact-us>. You will need to keep the defective FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] sensor and follow the instructions given by the Abbott Customer Careline representative.

Please note that Abbott will only replace a maximum of 3 FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2[®] sensors per individual. More information/education on replacement sensors will be provided by diabetes specialist teams at the initial training session.

11. What happens if my sensor falls off and/or I run out of sensors?

See information under section 10 concerning replacement sensors if they fall off. You should return to monitoring your glucose levels using blood glucose testing strips, increasing the frequency of testing as necessary and as advised by your specialist to compensate for lack of sensor. You may have to request extra blood glucose testing strips from your GP if you have insufficient to last until your next routine prescription for your sensors/strips is due. Alternatively you may be able to purchase a sensor from your community pharmacy (i.e. a pharmacy that can be found on the high street).

12. How Should the FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2® sensor components be disposed of after use?

Used or unused sensor packaging can go in general waste.

Once the FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2® sensor has been placed on the arm, the used applicator (which contains a needle) and the lid can be screwed back together and must be placed in a yellow biohazard bag or sharps box.

The used FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2® sensor must be placed in a clinical waste sharps box.

More information/education on disposing of FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2® sensor components will be provided by diabetes specialist teams at the initial training session.

13. Will GPs continue to prescribe glucose testing strips for me if I meet the criteria for use of sensors?

Yes - however it is anticipated that the use of these strips will be reduced to a lower level. You may be asked to change to a lower cost meter and strip if not already using one.

14. Can drivers use the Flash Glucose Sensors to monitor blood glucose levels prior to driving?

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) has updated the guidance on glucose testing prior to driving which now permits the use of devices such as Flash Glucose Scanning (FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2®) **for group 1 drivers only**. [CLICK HERE FOR FULL INFORMATION](#) as finger prick tests are still required (even for group 1 drivers) under certain circumstances (for example if your glucose level is 4.0 millimoles per litre or below or you have symptoms of hypoglycaemia).

All pre-existing DVLA requirements and responsibilities for safe driving still lie with the patients. The DVLA must be informed by any patient if there is any significant change in their driving status in accordance with these national DVLA guidelines.

15. What if I am already self-funding FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2®?

If you have been buying the FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2® directly from the manufacturer (and wish to continue using the device) you should still purchase your sensors via this route until you are reviewed, if appropriate, by the Specialist Diabetes Team at your next routine clinic appointment. ENHCCG will only fund FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2® for new patients who fulfil the eligibility criteria as stated in Appendix 1.

16. What if I want to use (or continue using) FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2® but do not meet the criteria for funding?

You can buy FreeStyle Libre/Libre 2® directly from the manufacturer - <https://www.FreeStylelibre.co.uk/libre/> or Tel: 0800170 1177.

17. Will the recommendations for funding be reviewed?

Yes, these recommendations will be kept under review. In particular, a further review will be undertaken when national funding of the device and sensors ceases in March 2021.

18. How can I switch from FreeStyle Libre® to FreeStyle Libre 2®?

A switch to FreeStyle Libre 2® will be led by your diabetes specialist. You will be either be contacted by your diabetes specialist to arrange the switch, or this will be discussed at your next routine review. Alternatively, you can contact your diabetes specialist to discuss/arrange the switch. **Please note that your GP will not be able to switch your prescription to FreeStyle Libre 2® until advised to do so by your diabetes specialist.**

Appendix 1 - Criteria for NHS England Flash Glucose Monitoring Reimbursement

Patients must meet at least one of the following criteria to be eligible for NHS funding:

1. People with Type 1 diabetes
 OR with any form of diabetes on haemodialysis and on insulin treatment
who, in either of the above, are clinically indicated as requiring intensive monitoring >8 times daily, as demonstrated on a meter download/review over the past 3 months
 OR with diabetes associated with cystic fibrosis on insulin treatment.
2. Pregnant women with Type 1 Diabetes - 12 months in total inclusive of post-delivery period.
3. People with Type 1 diabetes unable to routinely self-monitor blood glucose due to disability who require carers to support glucose monitoring and insulin management.
4. People with Type 1 diabetes for whom the specialist diabetes multidisciplinary team (MDT) determines have occupational (e.g. working in insufficiently hygienic conditions to safely facilitate finger-prick testing) or psychosocial circumstances that warrant a 6-month trial of Libre with appropriate additional support.
5. Previous self-funders of Flash Glucose Monitors with Type 1 diabetes where those with clinical responsibility for their diabetes care are satisfied that their clinical history suggests that they would have satisfied one or more of the funding criteria prior to them commencing use of Flash Glucose Monitoring, had these criteria been in place prior to April 2019 AND have shown improvement in glycated haemoglobin (HbA1c) since self-funding.
6. For those with Type 1 diabetes and recurrent severe hypoglycemia or impaired awareness of hypoglycemia, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) suggests that Continuous Glucose Monitoring with an alarm is the standard. Other evidence-based alternatives with NICE guidance or NICE technology appraisal (TA) support are pump therapy, psychological support, structured education, islet transplantation and whole pancreas transplantation. However, if the person with diabetes and their clinician consider that a Flash Glucose Monitoring system would be more appropriate for the individual's specific situation, then this can be considered.
7. People with Type 1 diabetes or insulin treated Type 2 diabetes who are living with a learning disability and recorded on their GP Learning Disability register.

Other requirements:

Patients must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible for continued NHS funding:

1. Education on Flash Glucose Monitoring has been provided (online or in person).
2. Agreement to scan glucose levels no less than 8 times per day and use the sensor >70% of the time.
3. Agreement to regular reviews with the local clinical team.
4. Previous attendance, or due consideration given to future attendance, at a Type 1 diabetes structured education programme (DAFNE or equivalent if available locally).

Note:

Continuing prescription for long-term use of Flash Glucose Monitoring, after the initial six months, would depend on evidence of agreement with the above conditions and that on-going use of the Flash Glucose Monitoring is demonstrably improving an individual's diabetes self-management - for example, improvement of HbA1c or Time In Range; improvement in symptoms such as diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA) or hypoglycaemia; or improvement in psycho-social wellbeing.

With thanks to West Essex CCG / Mid and South Essex STP