

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), FreeStyle Libre® measures the glucose level in the interstitial fluid, via a sensor that sits just under the skin. It can provide a near-continuous record, which is produced by the patient scanning the sensor with their reader-device, as and when required. Additional education and training is necessary for any healthcare professionals or patients who wish to use this system. Further information and videos can be found on the Abbott website at: <https://www.freestylelibre.co.uk/libre/help/tutorials.html>

Who is it for?

The device has been available to purchase direct from the company for a few years and a number of people with diabetes currently order the sensors online. They may also come to the pharmacy and order via that route. If sensors are to be supplied on the NHS, it is expected that patients will meet national criteria for use. NHS England has issued updated implementation guidance for flash glucose monitoring on the NHS which has been adopted by South East London. The pathways for initiation and review of flash glucose monitoring in South East London can be found [here](#). In South East London, initiation and prescribing of the sensors for the first 6 weeks will be by specialist diabetes teams, with prescribing transferred to primary care after 6 weeks.

What's on prescription?

The sensors last up to 14 days and can be ordered by prescription on the NHS if the patient is eligible as per local criteria. The PIP code for the FreeStyle Libre® sensor is 405-9028 – the pack contains a sensor, a sensor applicator and a wipe. The reader device is either purchased via online orders or may be provided via Abbott representatives direct to clinics – it is not available on FP10s. These devices are for long-term use and have associated warranties. Patients may also wish to purchase additional items used to aid with sensor adhesion. Advice on sensor adhesion is provided here: <https://www.freestylelibre.co.uk/libre/discover/applying-your-sensor.html>

How to order the sensors

Pharmacies can order the sensors through the following link: <https://www.freestylelibrepharmacyportal.co.uk/>. Upon first visit, independents/dispensing practices/hospital pharmacies will require registration, those in the large pharmacy chains should be pre-registered and should have received login details from their respective head offices. Delivery is next day for orders placed before 5pm.

Disposal

Once used, the sensor needs to be disposed of appropriately in a sharps bin. The applicator and pack should go in a biohazard pack (supplied by diabetes team or local authority) and the sensor pack can go in general waste.

What if there is a problem with the sensor?

Abbott should be contacted directly by the patient and not the pharmacy, specialist centre or GP practice. The patient should contact [Abbott Customer Careline](#) on 0800 170 1177 on the day that a problem with the FreeStyle Libre® system is identified, such as the sensor falling off. The patient should keep the displaced/faulty FreeStyle Libre® sensor and follow the instructions of the Abbott Customer Careline representative. If patients suffer from skin reaction to adhesive, advise patients not to use creams, patches or sprays under the sensor to reduce skin reactions, which may affect device performance ([MHRA 2019](#)). If patient is unable to check glucose levels using FreeStyle Libre®, they should continue to check blood glucose levels using finger prick glucose testing, and be referred back to the initiating team or GP. Please see the patient [frequently asked questions](#) document for further information

How to dispose of system components after use?

Puck/Sensor – Sharps bin



Applicator with cap on – Biohazard bag



Sensor pack – General waste



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 information can be found on the South East London flash glucose [training and competencies document](#)

For local information, please see the [flash glucose section](#) on the South East London Area Prescribing Committee webpage or contact your local medicines optimisation team.

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