NHS
Suffolk and
North East Essex
Integrated Care Board

FreeStyle 2 Libre Patient FAQs

How long does the sensor last?

The sensor lasts up to 14 days. The app or reader will count down how many days are left. It will also warn you as it comes towards the end.

Can I shower/bath while wearing it?

Yes – The sensor has been rated as being safe to immerse in in up to 1 meter of water for up to half an hour, therefore you may swim, shower, bathe, or engage in any other of your normal daily activities.

How do I take it off?

You simply remove it like a plaster. Wipe it with an antiseptic wipe that you can buy from any chemist or high street shop, and dispose of it with your electrical waste.

How you dispose the Sensor components after use?

Used or unused Sensor packaging can go in general waste.

Once the Sensor has been placed on the arm, the used applicator (which contains a needle) and the lid can be screwed back together and can be placed in a yellow biohazard bag or sharps box.

The used Sensors are not sharps. The used sensor should be removed and wiped down with disinfectant, and then disposed of as electrical waste (the same as a battery).

How should the FreeStyle Libre 2 Sensors be stored?

The FreeStyle Libre 2 Sensors should be stored at room temperature.

Do they ever come off?

They do sometimes get knocked off or fall off. If this happens frequently, ensure that you're considering where you place it. It is only licenced for use on the back of the arm. Avoid the sides of the arms as these often get knocked going through doorways. Also be careful when changing your clothes or if you carry a bag over your shoulder.

There are products produced by third parties that are available for helping to secure the sensors, these include over stickers and elasticated straps. They can be found in many online and some in store retailers, using a web search for "Libre overstickers" is likely to show many results for you to look at.

Can I put it back on if it does come off?

No – the sensors and applicators are single use. No part of the system can be re-used. If it comes off before the 14 day wear time is up, you should keep the sensor (if you still have it) and call the Abbott Customer Care line on: 0800 170 1177. Explaine to them what happened, and give them the serial number (if you have it) and they will replace the sensor

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free of charge, sending the replacement to your home. Once this has been confirmed by Abbott, place a new sensor if you have one, or return to finger sticks until you are able to obtain a new sensor.

You've supplied me with my starter sensor, where do I get more sensors from?

Your GP will add them to your repeat prescriptions. You collect the sensors in the same way that you would collect any other repeat prescription

How many sensors will I be prescribed?

Your GP will prescribe 2 sensors every 28 days, for a total of 26 sensors a year. They cannot provide any more than this, so if you have any issues with any of the sensors, you must speak to Abbott Customer Care Line as described above.

How often should I scan it?

Ideally, you should be scanning at least 8 times a day. This does sound a lot, but if you do it when you first wake up, before each meal, a couple of hours after each meal, and before bed, those should add up to around 8 quite easily.

Can I scan it too often?

You can scan as frequently as you like, however, bear in mind, the system is designed to help support you in monitoring your glucose, you won't need to be scanning constantly to be able to do this. 8-12 times a day should be more than enough to give you the information you need to make good treatment decisions. The reading will never change more frequently than every 60 seconds.

I have heard that the FreeStyle Libre 2 System is now providing real-time glucose readings

If you use the smart phone app the sensor will send your glucose readings every minute to your smartphone, so you can easily see how food, activity and medication impact your sugar levels. You can use the same sensors. It updates the reading every minute and stores up to 8 hours of glucose readings in 15 minute intervals.

My readings are different to my blood glucose readings on my finger stick, why is this?

The Libre does not measure your blood glucose, it measures the glucose that's in the fluid between your cells. While these two glucose readings are related, they are slightly different and there may be a 'lag' between your blood glucose changing and your sensor glucose changing.

Do the FreeStyle Libre systems need to be calibrated?

No, the FreeStyle Libre sensor is calibrated during the manufacturing process so you don't have to. The Sensor is activated by scanning and then, after a 1 hour warm up period, it starts to record glucose readings automatically.

I've heard that it has alarms, how do they work?

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The alarms on the Libre 2 are optional and are set to 'off' by default, you will need to switch them on first (this will be explained when you are shown how to use the sensor).

There are three alarms:

Low glucose

High Glucose

Signal loss

The low and high glucose alarms work by the user setting a point at which they would like to be alerted that they have gone too low or too high. This will then alert the user even if they haven't scanned the sensor, the sensor is constantly taking readings.

Once the alert has been triggered, the user should scan the sensor to get the actual reading and then take the appropriate action (e.g. Take on fast acting glucose for a hypo, correction dose of insulin for a high if appropriate, etc)

The signal loss alarm will alert the user if the sensor is not communication with the receiving device. The signal loss alarm is likely to trigger if you are too far away from the receiver, have closed the app in the background (if using the phone app), or there's a fault with the sensor.

Where can I learn more about the system?

Abbott have multiple resources available:

www.freestylediabetes.co.uk

https://progress.freestylediabetes.co.uk

www.youtube.com/@freestyleukireland

Other information can be found at:

www.Abcd.care/dtn/educational-resources-people-living-diabetes

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