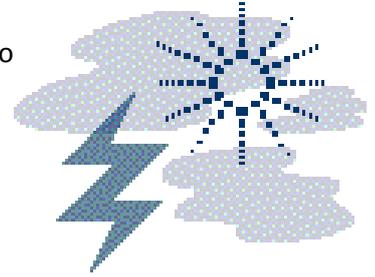




## Storage of Diabetes Blood Glucose Test Strips

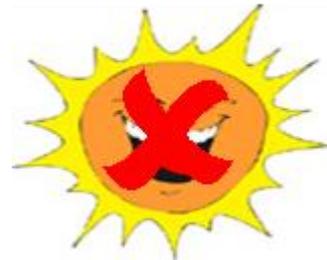
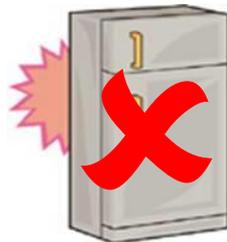
The Territory's climate poses special challenges when it comes to proper storage of blood glucose testing strips.



All strips can be adversely affected by

- extreme heat and cold
- leaving the lid open causes exposure to:
  - humidity for prolonged or frequent periods
  - light for prolonged or frequent periods

These conditions lead to false or inaccurate blood glucose readings. The strips can 'read high' or 'read low' or give stable readings with little variation. These inaccurate results can provide a false sense of security or unnecessary worry to the person with diabetes and their health team



**Strips should NEVER be stored in the FRIDGE**

**Strips should NEVER be exposed to DIRECT HEAT for any period of time e.g. left in a car in the sun.**

Healthy Living NT recommends that any strips that come in bottles (i.e. strips which are not individually wrapped) are discarded no later than three to four months from the date of opening the bottle of strips.

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Healthy Living NT  
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of the Northern Territory  
Incorporated.

Healthy Living NT  
is the registered NT  
licence holder for  
Life. Be in it.



## How to get a Drop of Blood for Testing

It's not uncommon for people performing home blood glucose monitoring to have difficulty obtaining a large enough drop of blood to adequately cover their test strip. It is important to get enough blood to ensure your tests are accurate.

If your hands are cold, the supply of blood to fingers can slow down making it hard to obtain enough blood. In this case, warming the hands gently and slowly can help.

### You can do this in several ways, for example:

- Place them under your arms for a few minutes.
- Holding on to your own fingers will sometimes do the trick.
- Wrap your hands in a warm towel.
- Placing them in a bowl of warm water can work wonders too. If you do this, test the temperature of the water first to make sure it's not too hot.
- Massaging the fingers gently from palm to fingertip will often help.

### Other useful tips include:

- Hold your hand down as far below the level of your heart as possible to help fill your fingers with blood.
- Avoid areas of your fingers where there is hard or calloused skin.
- Use a fresh lancet each time.
- If necessary use an end cap on your lancet (finger pricker) device with an adjustable depth – the higher the number the deeper it will penetrate your skin.
- Don't be timid! Press the finger pricker firmly against your skin!

