

# Best blood glucose meters

**FOR THE 19 MILLION PEOPLE** in this country diagnosed with diabetes, blood glucose meters are an essential part of treatment. When we tested 21 models in our labs, we found nine that did well enough to be recommended.

Most of the meters (two are shown above with their lancing devices) were very good or excellent for accuracy, and all were well within government standards. So extra features such as lots of memory and automatic test-strip coding might be deciding factors for you. **1 Accu-Chek**, **6 Up & Up**, and **9 TrueResult** are small in size, require very little blood, give fast results, and use strips with translucent windows that make it easier to see the blood being drawn into them. The two CR Best Buys, **6 Up & Up** and **7 ReliOn**, were picked based on the lower annual cost of testing strips.

For the first time we also looked at strips to see whether they continue to be accurate as they approach their expiration date. Most of the strips were still very accurate when we opened them almost a year later, except for **18 Nova Max**. Although it's economical to buy strips in bulk, our experts say it's still not a great idea to stockpile them.

**3 Accu-Chek** and **8 OneTouch** require AAA batteries, which are more convenient than the watch and medical batteries used in most units. **3 Accu-Chek** and **5 Bayer** are bulkier than most because they store multiple test strips and dispense them with the touch of a button.

**2 and 4 FreeStyle** are small units, require little blood, require no coding, give fast results, and average the glucose readings. But the strips don't have a translucent window, which makes it tough to see whether enough blood was applied.

## Ratings

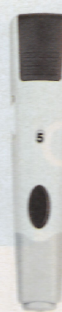
All tested models In performance order.

Recommendation	Rank	Brand & model	Price	Approximate annual strip cost (4 tests per day)	Overall score	Test results			Features		
						Accuracy	Repeatability	Convenience	Auto strip coding	More than 5-second test time	Download to PC
											Stores 360 readings or more
✓	1	Accu-Chek Aviva	\$20	\$1,708	89	●	●	●	●	●	●
✓	2	FreeStyle Freedom Lite	20	1,752	89	●	●	●	●	●	●
✓	3	Accu-Chek Compact Plus	20	1,679	89	●	●	●	●	●	●
✓	4	FreeStyle Lite	25	1,752	88	●	●	●	●	●	●
✓	5	Bayer Breeze 2	25	1,708	85	●	●	●	●	●	●
✓	6	Up & Up (Target)	9	818	82	●	●	●	●	●	②
✓	7	ReliOn Micro (Walmart)	15	569	82	●	●	○	●	●	②
✓	8	OneTouch UltraSmart	84	1,752	82	●	●	○	●	●	●
✓	9	TrueResult Blood Glucose Monitoring System ①	18	1,051	82	●	●	●	●	●	●
	10	ReliOn Ultima (Walmart)	15	569	79	●	●	●	●	●	●
	11	ReliOn Confirm (Walmart)	15	569	78	●	●	●	●	●	●
	12	OneTouch Ultra2	70	1,752	78	●	●	○	●	●	●
	13	OneTouch UltraMini	20	1,752	78	●	●	○	●	●	●
	14	True2go Blood Glucose Monitoring System ①	10	1,051	77	●	●	○	●	●	②
	15	Prodigy AutoCode	30	818	71	●	○	●	●	●	●
	16	OneTouch VerioIQ	70	2,278	68	●	●	●	●	●	●
	17	TrueTrack Blood Glucose Monitoring System ①	15	730	63	●	○	○	●	●	●
	18	Nova Max Plus Advanced Technology	20	1,460	59	○	●	●	●	●	●
	19	Bayer Contour	20	1,708	57	○	●	●	●	●	●
	20	Bayer Contour USB	30	1,708	56	○	●	●	●	●	●
	21	Advocate Redi-Code	40	730	55	○	●	●	●	●	●

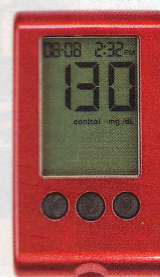
① Also available under pharmacy brand names. ② Did not indicate computer downloading capabilities in packaging. Check with manufacturer to see whether this feature is available now.



1 Accu-Chek



6 Up & Up



● Excellent  
● Very good  
○ Good  
○ Fair  
● Poor

✓ CR Best Buy  
✓ Recommended

## This space heater is a safety risk

At just \$25, the Optimus H-5210 may seem like a cheap way to stay warm. But it was the only electric heater in our tests of 19 models that set our test cloth on fire. We contacted Optimus, and test results it sent us showed a potential safety problem with this model. It claims to have fixed the problem on 2012 models. But we bought our heaters, 2011 models, in early summer, and there is no way to tell the model year from the box. In our tests, we put

terry cloth over a heater to see whether its sensor shuts it off before it overheats. Though manufacturers, including Optimus, warn against placing heaters near flammable materials, we think it could easily happen in a typical home. We've judged the Optimus H-5210 a Don't Buy: Safety Risk as a result and are asking the Consumer Product Safety Commission to recall it. If you own this model, stop using it and ask the retailer for a refund.

