

# Diabetes and Viral Hepatitis: Important Information on Safe Diabetes Care

Diabetes care involves testing levels of blood sugar (glucose) and may require administering insulin. When devices used to prick the skin (fingerstick devices), syringes, or other types of equipment related to diabetes care are shared or reused, people can be exposed to viruses in the blood such as hepatitis B virus, hepatitis C virus, and HIV.

Outbreaks of hepatitis B virus infection associated with unsafe diabetes care have been identified in Virginia settings where persons with diabetes require assistance with checking their blood sugar levels or administering insulin.

In order to prevent infections, the Virginia Department of Health urges all providers in healthcare and residential settings to follow these simple rules for safe care of persons with diabetes:

## Three Simple Rules for Assisted Blood Glucose Monitoring and Insulin Administration

### 1 FINGERSTICK DEVICES SHOULD NEVER BE USED FOR MORE THAN ONE PERSON

- Restrict use of fingerstick devices to a single person.
- Select single-use lancets that permanently retract upon puncture. This adds an extra layer of safety for the patient and the provider.
- If a person needs assistance checking his/her blood sugar, a single-use device must be used.
- Dispose of used lancets at the point of use in an approved sharps container. Never reuse lancets.

### 2 BLOOD GLUCOSE METERS SHOULD BE ASSIGNED TO ONLY ONE PERSON

- Whenever possible, assign blood glucose meters to a single person.
- If blood glucose meters must be shared, they should be cleaned and disinfected after every use, per manufacturer's instructions, to prevent carry-over of blood and infectious germs.
- If the manufacturer does not specify how the device should be cleaned and disinfected then it must not be shared.

### 3 INJECTION EQUIPMENT SHOULD NEVER BE USED FOR MORE THAN ONE PERSON

- Insulin pens must be assigned to only one person and labeled appropriately.
- Multiple-dose vials of insulin should be dedicated to a single person whenever possible.
- Medication vials should always be entered with a new needle and new syringe. Never reuse needles or syringes.
- For information and materials about safe insulin pen use, visit [www.ONEandONLYcampaign.org](http://www.ONEandONLYcampaign.org).

***Always practice proper hand hygiene and change gloves between each person.***

Label each individual piece of equipment with the resident's name to prevent inappropriate use.

## Hepatitis B Vaccination for Adults with Diabetes Mellitus

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the following for adults with diabetes mellitus:

- 19–59 years old: Hepatitis B vaccination *should* be administered.
- ≥60 years old: Hepatitis B vaccination *may* be administered at the discretion of the treating clinician.