OSCE checklist for blood glucose monitoring

An OSCE checklist for blood glucose monitoring covers checking the meter and strips, getting a good sample from a clean finger, reading and acting on the result, and disposing of the lancet safely. Practise your response to a low reading.

OSCE checklist for blood glucose monitoring: steps to practise

1. Check the request and the target range for this patient.
2. Wash or rub your hands. Check the meter is working, calibrated if required, and that the strips are in date.
3. Introduce yourself, confirm identity, explain and gain consent.
4. Ask the patient to wash and dry their hands, and avoid sites with swelling or recent pricks.
5. Put on gloves. Insert the strip and wait for the meter to be ready.
6. Prick the side of a fingertip with a single-use lancet, and discard the lancet in the sharps bin.
7. Wipe away the first drop if your policy says so, and apply the next drop to the strip, without squeezing hard.
8. Apply light pressure to the finger with clean gauze.
9. Read the result and compare it with the patient's target.
10. Act on it: treat a low reading according to your policy, and report a very high reading or an unwell patient.
11. Clean the meter between patients, wash your hands, and record the result with the time.

What candidates commonly forget

- Washing and drying the patient's hands.
- Checking strip expiry and meter.
- Using the side of the finger, not the pad.
- Acting on a low result, and saying it aloud.

- Cleaning the meter between patients.

Local policy comes first

This is our own practice checklist. Your college, hospital or country may do some steps differently. Where local policy and this list disagree, follow local policy. Target ranges, meter type and which result needs an urgent response are set locally and by condition. Follow your own guidance. You can practise with an AI patient, and try one station free with no sign-up. See also the general OSCE nursing checklist.

Common questions

Which part of the finger do I use?

Use the side of the fingertip, and rotate the sites. Follow your course.

What do I do with a low reading?

Treat it according to your local hypoglycaemia policy, then recheck and report.

Do I clean the meter after each use?

Yes, according to your policy and the manufacturer's instructions.

Sources

- NICE NG17: Type 1 diabetes in adults
- NICE NG28: Type 2 diabetes in adults
- NICE NG18: Diabetes in children and young people

Checked 2026-11-13. Fees and rules change, so confirm them with the regulator before you book.