

KETONE STRIPS

For people with Type 1 diabetes and pregnant women with diabetes, especially, monitoring ketone levels is an important part of staying healthy and preventing diabetic ketoacidosis, a potentially life-threatening state in which ketones build up in the blood and dehydration sets in. With just a little blood or urine, today's ketone-testing products can let you know whether you're producing ketones.

Checking your blood ketone levels with a Precision Xtra meter or CardioChek analyzer is very similar to checking your blood glucose: You simply place a drop of blood on the correct strip and wait for the meter to return a reading.

Urine reagent strips operate in a slightly different fashion. After a small amount of urine is placed on the

reagent strip—either by holding the strip in the urine stream or by collecting urine in a clean container and dipping the strip into it—a chemical reaction takes place that changes the color of the strip. You then compare the strip color with the color chart that came with the ketone strips within the time limit specified by the strip manufacturer, generally 15 seconds. The color that matches shows the range within which your ketone level falls. The strip will continue to darken as it is exposed to air, so if you don't read the strip within the time limit, you should start over with a new strip.

Some urine reagent strips measure other substances besides ketones, such as glucose. However, testing urine for glucose is considered imprecise at best and is not recommended for diabetes self-care.

STRIP NAME	APPROXIMATE SHELF LIFE	PACKAGING	APPROXIMATE PRICE
BLOOD KETONE STRIPS			
CardioChek ketone test strips Polymer Technology Systems (877) 870-5610 www.ptspanels.com	70 weeks from manufacturing date	25 (loose in vial) 6 (loose in vial)	\$70 \$22
Precision Xtra blood ketone test strips MediSense (800) 527-3339 www.medisense.com	12–18 months from manufacturing date	8 (individually wrapped)	\$30–\$35
URINE REAGENT STRIPS			
Chemstrip K Roche Diagnostics (800) 858-8072 www.roche-diagnostics.com	Two years from manufacturing date or 18 months from date of purchase	100 (loose in vial)	\$12
Ketostix Reagent Strips Bayer Corporation Diagnostics (800) 348-8100 www.bayercaresdiabetes.com	One and a half years from manufacturing date	100 (loose in vial) 50 (loose in vial) 20 (individually wrapped)	\$19 \$11 \$8