
RUBBER BAND TOURNIQUET

This trick helps many people get a large enough drop of blood for an accurate blood glucose check. All that is needed is a fairly large rubber band and a certain amount of manual dexterity. Note that the trick does NOT involve sticking your finger through the rubber band and looping it around. Here's how it's done:

1. Pinch the "hole" of the rubber band shut so you have two parallel lengths of rubber.
2. Wrap the double strip of rubber once around the middle section of your finger.
3. Pull the rubber band so it fits snugly enough to restrict circulation but not so tightly as to cut off circulation completely. Hold the overlapping area together with your thumb, leaving the other hand free to lance your finger.
4. When your finger becomes engorged with blood, lance it, then release the rubber band by lifting your thumb, making sure not to disturb the drop of blood. If you need to, you can milk your finger by squeezing and pulling from the base of the finger (where it attaches to the hand) toward tip. Do not squeeze the very tip of your finger.

PLACING BLOOD ACCURATELY ON THE STRIP

Having obtained an adequate drop of blood, the method you should use to place it accurately on the strip depends on the design of the strip that goes with your meter. However, the following are some general principles that can help you accurately place the blood drop on any strip:

- Try to remember exactly where you lanced your finger, so you know where the blood drop is.
- If you lance the sides of your fingers, use the fingernail as a landmark to help you determine exactly where you are lancing. For example, if you lay the lancing device across the base of your fingernail and move the tip of the device one-quarter of the way around the finger to the side where you will lance, you will know that the drop of blood is at the same level as the base of your fingernail, one-quarter of the way around the finger.
- You can also lance the tip of the finger (the area that is furthest forward when you point) instead. Contrary to popular opinion, for most people this does not hurt any more than lancing the sides of the fingers. (Lancing the pads of the fingers, the area used for reading Braille, can cause some discomfort, however.) The advantage of lancing the tip of the finger is

that it's easy to place the blood drop accurately by simply pointing the finger.

- To apply the blood drop to the right place on the strip, find the spot on the strip where you want to place the blood using the clean, dry fingers of the hand that has not been lanced. You can then use your thumb and forefinger on the unlanced hand to create a "gateway" around the area where you want to apply the blood. Pairing the lanced finger with the unlanced finger next to it, making sure the tip of the unlanced finger is further forward. (This is easiest to do if you have lanced the tip.) Use the unlanced finger to find the "gateway" created with your thumb and forefinger of the other hand. Then move the finger pair over just a bit, so the blood drop is pointing at the area of the strip where you want to apply the blood. Gently move the lanced finger forward and apply the blood to the strip.

