



*North Carolina*  
**State Health Plan**  
FOR TEACHERS AND STATE EMPLOYEES



## Glucose Test Strip Pharmacy Benefit Coverage

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*A Division of the Department of State Treasurer*

# Current Issues

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1. Current pharmacy quantity limits may be a barrier to members with diabetes from adequately testing their blood glucose.

**Current limits:** NIDDM (Non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus)  
51 strips/30 days (allows for 1-2 tests per day)

IDDM (Insulin dependent diabetes mellitus)  
153 strips/30 days (allows for 5 tests per day)

2. When members exhaust the pharmacy benefit for the testing strips, they are able to submit a medical claim subject to deductible and coinsurance. This is not a member friendly option.
3. With the Plan's "refill too soon" limits which look back in claims for 6 months, members are not able to get refills early if necessary.

# American Diabetes Association recommendations

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## Glucose Monitoring:

- **NIDDM** – no clear recommendation (According to certified diabetes educators testing up to 3 times per day)
- **IDDM** – 6-8 times per day

*Diabetes Care, Volume 36, Supplement 1, January 2013, page S18*

# Pharmacy Utilization – Current and Proposed

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- In 2012, average strips per prescription were approximately 70 per 30 days for NIDDM and 115 per 30 days for IDDM.
- Express Scripts modeling for NIDDM members less than 65 years old, if all members were to obtain 102 strips per 30 days (allows for 3 tests per day) the pharmacy benefit cost would increase by \$2.1M.
- Express Scripts modeling for IDDM members less than 65 years old, if all members were to obtain 204 strips per 30 days (allows for 6 tests per day) the pharmacy benefit would increase by \$3.9M.
- Projection scenarios are based on if every member were to increase the quantities to the maximum. Segal will refine the analysis to incorporate into the financial projections.
- Overall this should result in minimal increased costs to the Plan since the increased quantities would be shifting from the medical benefit to the pharmacy benefit.

# Initial Recommendations

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- Remove accumulator refill too soon edit that looks back in claims history for 6 months. Monthly refill too soon edit would still exist. Express Scripts can code this change with minimal effort and can be effective in 30 days.
- Increase quantity limits for NIDDM to 102 strips/30 days to allow for up to 3 times per day testing. Increase quantity limits for IDDM to 204 strips/30 days to allow for at least 6 tests per day. This would follow the ADA testing recommendations and minimize utilization of the medical benefit.
- Review these changes in 6 months to evaluate if they minimize member complaints.