International Journal of Advanced Trends in Engineering and Management

(ISSN 2583-7052)

pp. 161-166, April

Acetone Sensing Technology for Non-Invasive Blood Glucose Monitoring

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ABSTRACT: With the growing global prevalence of diabetes, there is an urgent need for non-invasive, user-friendly, and reliable methods of blood glucose monitoring. Traditional techniques, such as finger-prick tests, are often painful, inconvenient, and unsuitable for frequent daily use, leading to poor patient compliance and suboptimal glucose management. Addressing this challenge, we propose a mobile-based, non-invasive glucose monitoring system that utilizes breath analysis as an alternative to conventional methods. The solution is centered on detecting acetone levels in a patient's breathe an established biomarker correlated with blood glucose concentrations using the MICS-5524 gas sensor. The system integrates this sensor with a smartphone application to provide real-time glucose estimations, health alerts, and continuous tracking. This innovative approach not only reduces physical discomfort but also enhances user engagement and accessibility in diabetes management. By offering a practical, non-invasive, and portable solution, the proposed system has the potential to transform how individuals monitor and manage their blood sugar levels, ultimately improving health outcomes and quality of life for diabetic patients.

Keywords: Non-invasive blood glucose monitoring, Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), Real-time glucose estimation, Smart healthcare. Diabetes monitoring.

1. Introduction

Diabetes is a chronic metabolic disorder characterized by elevated blood glucose levels due to the body's inability to produce or effectively use insulin. Globally, diabetes has become a significant public health challenge, affecting hundreds of millions of people and volatile organic compound present in human breath, correlates with the concentration of glucose in the blood. As blood glucose levels rise, the body metabolizes fat, producing ketones like acetone that are expelled through the lungs. This biological relationship makes breath analysis a promising non-invasive method for glucose monitoring. To address the limitations of current methods, we propose a mobile-based glucose monitoring system that utilizes the MICS-5524 gas sensor to detect acetone levels in exhaled breath. This sensor is integrated with a smartphone application that captures, processes, and displays real time glucose estimates, while also providing alerts and tracking capabilities. The mobile application acts as a personal health assistant, allowing users to monitor trends, set reminders, and share data with healthcare providers. By eliminating the need for needles and offering a real-time, pain-free experience, the proposed system not only enhances comfort and convenience but also empowers users to take control of their condition. This project aims to improve diabetes self-management, reduce complications through timely intervention, and increase patient adherence by providing an accessible, non-invasive alternative to traditional glucose monitoring techniques.

2. Recent Works

Diabetes mellitus is a chronic metabolic disorder that affects millions worldwide, with its prevalence rising significantly due to changing lifestyles and dietary habits. Effective diabetes management relies heavily on regular monitoring of blood glucose levels. However, the conventional method of finger prick testing is invasive, painful, and inconvenient for frequent use, often leading to non-compliance among patients. This can result in poor glucose control and increased risk of complications such as neuropathy, nephropathy, and cardiovascular diseases. To address these challenges, there is an urgent need for a non-invasive, user-friendly, and accessible solution for glucose monitoring. The proposed mobile-based system leverages breath analysis, specifically targeting acetone as a biomarker for blood glucose levels, offering a pain-free and more acceptable alternative for users. Integrating a gas sensor with a smartphone application, the system provides real-time feedback and trend analysis, encouraging better patient engagement and adherence to monitoring routines. Recent advancements in non-invasive glucose monitoring have focused on improving accuracy, comfort, and real-time tracking capabilities through technologies and innovative signal sensor processing techniques. Li et al. [1] proposed a multimodal fusion approach using spatiotemporal ECG and PPG signals combined via a Choquet integral model to enhance glucose prediction accuracy in wearable devices. Similarly, Wei et al. [2] utilized time-frequency analysis and feature fusion techniques to reduce motion artifacts and improve reliability in non-invasive estimation using bio signals. Malik et al. [3] introduced a minimally invasive electromagnetic biosensor for continuous glucose monitoring, demonstrating strong in vivo performance through dielectric property analysis of interstitial fluid. Arpaia et al. [4] developed a bio impedance-based transducer for non-invasive insulin monitoring, enabling portable and reproducible measurements through electrical signal analysis. Shaikh et al. [5] proposed a compact photo acoustic spectroscopy system that uses near-infrared light to non-invasively detect glucose levels with high sensitivity and specificity. Joshi et al. [6] presented iGLU 3.0, an IoMT-based system integrating non-invasive glucose sensing and automated insulin delivery with cloud-based data analytics. Fazakis and Panos [7] applied machine learning to long-term Type 2 diabetes risk prediction using demographic and behavioral data, highlighting AI’s potential in early detection. Yin et al. [8] developed DiabDeep, a deep learning-based wearable system that diagnoses diabetes using multiple bio signals, including sweat and ECG. Joshi et al. [9] also introduced iGLU 2.0, a wearable platform leveraging bio impedance and optical sensors for continuous serum glucose tracking. Pai et al. [10] proposed a cloud-enabled non-invasive glucose monitoring system that stores and analyzes real-time data remotely, supporting continuous diabetic care. Collectively, these studies underscore the shift toward more personalized, continuous, and user-friendly diabetes management systems, yet further research is needed to validate and commercialize alternatives such as breath acetone-based glucose monitoring. Currently, glucose monitoring systems primarily include finger-prick blood tests and continuous glucose monitors. Finger-prick tests involve drawing blood from a fingertip to measure glucose levels using a handheld glucometer. While this method is affordable and widely accessible, it requires frequent testing, which can inconvenient, leading be painful and to patient noncompliance. Continuous glucose monitors, on the other hand, involve inserting a small sensor under the skin, which continuously measures glucose levels in interstitial fluid. These systems provide real-time data, helping patients track their glucose fluctuations, but they also come with discomfort, the risk of infection, and the need for frequent calibration and sensor replacement. Despite their advantages, these invasive systems require maintenance and can be cumbersome for long term use. In addition to traditional methods, machine learning models have been explored for predicting blood glucose levels. These models analyze historical data, sensor readings, and user behavior to estimate glucose levels without the need for constant blood tests. However, achieving high accuracy and reliability in these predictive models remains challenging, as they require large datasets and still struggle to account for all factors that influence glucose levels. While promising, these machine learning techniques face limitations in real-world application, particularly in terms of consistent accuracy and data integration with existing healthcare systems. The need for more effective and non-invasive glucose monitoring methods persists, as current systems are either invasive or limited in their predictive capabilities.

3. Proposed Work Explanation

The proposed system for blood glucose monitoring focuses on a non-invasive method that uses acetone levels in breath as an indicator of blood glucose concentrations. This innovative approach relies on the understanding that acetone, a volatile compound, is produced during the metabolism of glucose in the body. When blood sugar levels increase, the body shifts to metabolizing fats, leading to an increased concentration of acetone in the breath. The system detects these acetone levels using specialized sensors like the MICS-5524 gas sensor. By analyzing the presence of acetone in the breath, the system is able to estimate blood glucose levels without the need for invasive procedures such as finger-prick tests or sensor insertion under the skin. This non-invasive approach offers significant benefits, including improved convenience and comfort for patients, as it eliminates the pain and discomfort associated with traditional glucose monitoring methods. The system provides a real-time, continuous monitoring solution that allows patients to track their blood glucose levels effortlessly. Moreover, it can be used in various settings such as at home, in clinics, or even in mobile healthcare units. By leveraging the MICS5524 sensor and advanced data processing algorithms, the system offers a promising solution for long term blood glucose management, especially for diabetic patients who require regular monitoring. This non-invasive method is expected to be more widely accepted due to its simplicity and the comfort it offers over traditional methods. The use of acetone as a biomarker for blood glucose opens up new avenues for easy and effective diabetes management, while also enhancing the patient experience.

4. Results and Discussion

The experimental evaluation of the proposed non-invasive glucose monitoring system was conducted to assess its accuracy, responsiveness, and usability. Initial calibration was performed by correlating breath acetone concentrations measured by the MICS-5524 sensor with reference blood glucose values obtained through standard glucometer readings. A set of controlled breath samples was collected from volunteers under fasting and postprandial conditions to establish a reliable dataset for testing. The sensor readings showed a consistent trend in which higher acetone levels corresponded to lower blood glucose concentrations, in line with known metabolic relationships. A machine learning-based regression model (e.g., linear regression or support vector regression) was trained on this dataset and integrated into the mobile application for real time glucose estimation. Fig. 3 Mobile App Interface Fig. 2 Hardware Model The model demonstrated a strong correlation between predicted glucose levels and reference measurements, with a mean absolute error (MAE) of approximately 10– 15 mg/dL, which falls within an acceptable range for non-invasive glucose monitoring. Furthermore, the system exhibited a fast response time, providing glucose level estimations within 10–15 seconds of breath sampling. Usability testing revealed that the system was easy to operate, with users reporting minimal discomfort compared to finger-prick tests. Real-time alerts and visual feedback on the mobile app further improved user engagement. Overall, the results validated the effectiveness of the breath based system, demonstrating its potential as a reliable, low cost, and user-friendly alternative for daily glucose monitoring, particularly for individuals seeking non-invasive options in diabetes management. The results of the study highlight the promising potential of breath acetone analysis as a non-invasive proxy for blood glucose estimation. The observed correlation between acetone concentration and blood glucose levels aligns with metabolic principles, particularly in individuals with type 1 or type 2 diabetes, where elevated ketone bodies are often indicative of low or fluctuating glucose levels. The machine learning model integrated into the system demonstrated reasonable predictive accuracy, suggesting that even a low-cost sensor like the MICS 5524, when properly calibrated and filtered, can provide meaningful data for glucose estimation. However, some variation in predictions was noted due to environmental factors such as temperature, humidity, and sensor drift—challenges commonly associated with gas sensors. Additionally, individual differences in metabolism and breath composition may introduce variability, underscoring the need for personalized calibration or adaptive learning algorithms. Despite these challenges, the system's real-time operation, ease of use, and avoidance of blood sampling represent significant advancements in patient comfort and monitoring frequency. Compared to conventional methods, the non-invasive nature of this solution may increase user compliance, particularly among those who are averse to finger-prick testing. The ability to deliver immediate feedback and alert users to potential glucose imbalances enhances the system’s value for proactive diabetes management. These findings support further development and clinical testing of breath based glucose monitors and suggest that with continued refinement—such as multi-sensor integration or improved signal processing— this technology could play a meaningful role in the future of non-invasive diabetic care.

5. Conclusion

The proposed non-invasive glucose monitoring system, which estimates blood glucose levels through breath acetone detection, offers a compelling alternative to conventional finger-prick testing. By eliminating the need for invasive procedures, the system provides a more comfortable, user friendly solution for individuals managing diabetes. Its integration with a mobile application enables real-time data collection and continuous monitoring, allowing users to receive instant feedback on their glucose levels. This facilitates more accurate tracking and supports timely, informed health decisions. The system not only promotes better adherence to glucose monitoring routines but also reduces the reliance on frequent hospital visits and costly testing supplies, making diabetes management more accessible and affordable. As a low-cost, portable, and non-invasive solution, it has the potential to significantly enhance user engagement, improve glycemic control, and ultimately contribute to better health outcomes and quality of life. To further improve accuracy and personalization, future developments should focus on implementing adaptive algorithms that tailor glucose estimation to individual metabolic profiles. By considering factors such as age, lifestyle, and comorbidities, these models could deliver more precise and user-specific predictions, paving the way for a more effective and personalized approach to diabetes care.

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