

Keep Your Diabetes Under Control*

Too much glucose in the blood for a long time can cause diabetes problems. This high blood glucose, also called blood sugar, can damage many parts of the body, such as the heart, blood vessels, eyes, and kidneys. Heart and blood vessel disease can lead to heart attacks and strokes. You can do a lot to prevent or slow down diabetes problems. Keeping your blood glucose, blood pressure, and cholesterol under control can prevent diabetes problems.

What should my blood glucose numbers be?

Keeping your blood glucose on target can prevent or delay diabetes problems. The chart below shows target blood glucose levels for most people with diabetes.

Target Blood Glucose Levels for People With Diabetes	
Before meals	80 to 130
2 hours after the start of a meal	less than 180

Talk with your health care provider about what your blood glucose numbers should be. Write them below.

My Target Blood Glucose Levels	
Before meals	_____ to _____
2 hours after the start of a meal	less than _____

Talk with your health care provider about when you need to check your blood glucose using a blood glucose meter. You will do the checks yourself. Your health care provider can teach you how to use your meter.



Keep track of your blood glucose checks using a record page. Make copies yourself or ask your health care provider for a blood glucose record book. Your blood glucose check results will help you and your health care provider make a plan for keeping your blood glucose under control. Always bring your record book to your doctor visits so you can talk about reaching your glucose goals.

Average Blood Glucose

Ask your health care provider for the A1C test. This blood test shows the average amount of glucose in your blood during the past 2 to 3 months. Have this test done at least twice a year. If your A1C result is not on target, your health care provider may do this test more often to see if your result is improving as your treatment changes. Your A1C result plus your blood glucose meter results can show whether your blood glucose is under control.

The A1C target for most people with diabetes is below 7 percent. Ask your health care provider if this target is right for you. Print and write your A1C target here.

My A1C Target is _____ percent

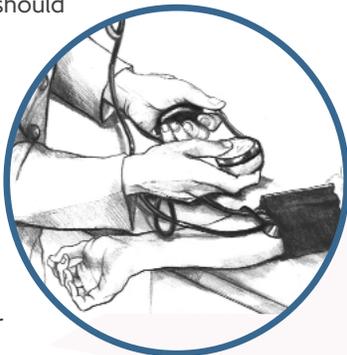
If your A1C test result is on target, then your blood glucose is in a desirable range and your diabetes treatment plan is working. The lower your A1C is, the lower your chance of having health problems. If your result is too high, you may need a change in your diabetes plan. Your health care team can help you decide what part of your plan to change. You may need to change your meal plan, your diabetes medicines, or your physical activity plan.

What Your A1C Result Means:

My A1C Result	My Average Blood Glucose
6%	126
7%	154
8%	183
9%	212
10%	240
11%	269
12%	298

What should my blood pressure be?

Normal blood pressure will help prevent damage to your eyes, kidneys, heart, and blood vessels. Blood pressure is written with two numbers separated by a slash. For example, 120/70 is said as "120 over 70." The first number should be below 130 and the second number should be below 80. Keep your blood pressure as close to these numbers as you can. If you already have kidney disease, ask your doctor what numbers are best for you. Meal planning, medicines, and physical activity can help you reach your blood pressure target.



Target Blood Fat Levels for People With Diabetes:

Total Cholesterol	Below 200
LDL Cholesterol	Below 100
HDL Cholesterol	Above 40 (men) / 50 (women)
Triglycerides	Below 150

What does smoking have to do with diabetes problems?

Smoking and diabetes are a dangerous combination. Smoking raises your risk for diabetes problems. If you quit smoking, you'll lower your risk for heart attack, stroke, nerve disease, and kidney disease. Your cholesterol and your blood pressure levels may improve. Your blood circulation will also improve. If you smoke, ask your health care provider for help in quitting.

Taking care of diabetes is a team effort between you and your health care team — doctor, diabetes nurse educator, diabetes dietitian educator, pharmacist, and others. You are the most important member of the team.

What should my cholesterol be?

Normal cholesterol and blood fat levels will help prevent heart disease and stroke, the biggest health problems for people with diabetes. Keeping cholesterol levels under control can also help with blood flow. Have your blood fat levels checked at least once a year. Meal planning, physical activity, and medicines can help you reach your blood fat targets.

Things to Do Every Day for Good Diabetes Care



Follow the healthy eating plan that you and your doctor or dietitian have worked out.



Take your medicines as directed.



Check your feet every day for cuts, blisters, sores, swelling, redness, or sore toenails.



Control your blood pressure and cholesterol.



Be active a total of 30 minutes most days. Ask your doctor what activities are best for you.



Check your blood glucose every day. Each time you check your blood glucose, write the number in your record book.



Brush and floss your teeth every day.



Don't smoke.

* Adapted from The National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse (NDIC), a service of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK). The NIDDK is part of the National Institutes of Health of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This publication is not copyrighted.