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A Quick Guide to Everyday Diabetes Care

Blood glucose monitoring, A1C, healthy eating, and physical activity.



Helpful information for everyday life with diabetes

Use this guide as a quick reference, and talk with your healthcare professional about the recommendations that are right for you.

1 Measuring Your Blood Sugar



Checking the amount of sugar in your blood can be important when you have diabetes to help you stay healthy. Measuring your blood sugar can help you understand how medicine, food, and exercise can change your blood sugar. It also lets you know if your blood sugar is too high or too low.[1]

Ask your healthcare provider how often and what time of day you should check your blood sugar.[1]

You may need to check your blood sugar when:[1]

- Taking diabetes pills or insulin[1]
- Changing normal eating habits[1]
- Pregnant[1]
- On new medicine[1]
- Starting a new type of exercise[1]
- Traveling[1]
- Sick[1]

Refer to your blood glucose meter's Instructions for Use for specific details.

To use your glucose meter:

1. Wash and dry your hands[1]
2. Put a test strip in your meter[1]
3. Prick your fingertip with a needle (lancet)[1]
4. Gently squeeze a small drop of blood out of your finger[1]
5. Put a test strip in your meter[1]
6. Prick your fingertip with a needle (lancet)[1]

2 Healthy Eating



What you eat can change your blood sugar. It is important to make healthy choices and to eat the right amount of food. Your meals should have a variety of healthy foods that contain protein, fats, and carbohydrates (starches).[2]

- Choose complex starches with lots of fiber, like beans, cereals, and brown rice.[2]
- Eat proteins with a small amount of fat, like lean meats, seafood, low-fat dairy products, and beans.[2]
- Be aware of portion sizes, but do not skip meals.[2]

3 Diabetes and Exercise



Exercise is an important part of your treatment. Becoming more active can help lower blood sugar and keep your heart healthy. Exercise can also give you more energy and help to reduce your stress.[2]

Try to pick activities that you like and will do often. A more active lifestyle can be a fun and easy way to stay healthy![2]

Check with your doctor before starting any new activities. Remember to check your blood sugar before and after increased activity.[2]

4 Hypoglycemia and Hyperglycemia

Hypoglycemia (Low Blood Sugar) Possible signs:[1]

- Fast heartbeat
- Hunger
- Sweating
- Sleepiness
- Anxiousness
- Shakiness
- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Headache



Hyperglycemia (High Blood Sugar) Possible signs:[1]

- Thirst
- Dry mouth
- Peeing a lot
- Blurred vision
- Headache
- Fruity-smelling breath



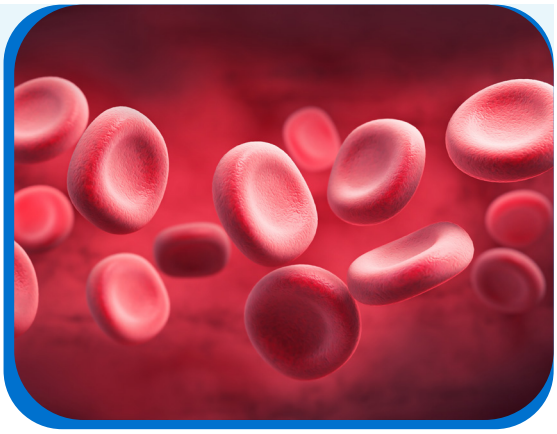
What to do if your blood sugar is low ? [1,2]

- If your blood sugar falls below 70 mg/dL, then eat something with sugar in it, such as juice, hard candy, or fast-acting glucose (sugar), which provides a pre-measured dose of 15 grams of carbohydrate.
- Test your blood sugar again after 15 minutes.
- If it is still below 70 mg/dL, eat another serving and continue these steps until your blood sugar is at least 70 mg/dL.
- Contact your healthcare provider, especially if your blood sugar falls below 54 mg/dL.

What to do if your blood sugar is high ? [1]

- If your blood sugar is higher than normal, think about what you ate, if you took your medicine at the right time and took the right amount, or if there was some change in your exercise.
- If your blood sugar is too high too often, your medicine might need to be changed.
- If your blood sugar is above 240 mg/dL, even after taking your diabetes medicine, you should contact your healthcare provider.

5 Hemoglobin A1c (A1C) Test



The hemoglobin A1c (A1C or HbA1c) test measures how much hemoglobin, a protein in your blood, is coated with sugar. It helps show how well your blood sugar levels have been controlled over the past 3 months.[3]

This can help your doctor decide how your treatment is working and if it needs to be changed. It can also be used to help diagnose a person with diabetes.[3]

How often?[3]

The A1C test does not predict the future. You should have your A1C tested at least twice a year. If your treatment has changed or if your blood sugar is not well controlled, you may need to have your A1C tested more often, perhaps four times a year.[3]

A1C	Average blood sugar
6%	126 mg/dL
7%	154 mg/dL
8%	183 mg/dL
9%	212 mg/dL
10%	240 mg/dL
11%	269 mg/dL
12%	298 mg/dL

- The A1C test is a simple blood test.[3]
- Your healthcare provider will take a sample of blood from your arm or finger. You can eat and drink before the test.[3]
- A1C is reported as a percent (%). Most people with diabetes should keep their A1C below 7%.[3]
- Your healthcare provider will help decide what your A1C goal should be because some people will have a different goal, depending on their health status.[3]

Keep your scheduled medical appointments.[2]

Bring your glucose meter and a record of your results (stored on the glucose meter or written in a notebook/log book) to all your medical appointments.[2]

You've got this!

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Trividia Health, Inc. Patient Education Guides:
1. Blood Sugar Too High or Too Low?, MKT0564r1 2. Measuring Your Blood Sugar, MKT0565r1
3. Hemoglobin A1C (A1C) Test, MKT0557r1 4. Healthy Eating and Exercise, MKT0568r1

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