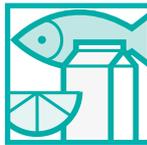

4

Steps to Control Your Diabetes for Life



Control your
diabetes.
For Life.

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4 Steps to Control Your Diabetes for Life

This booklet presents four key steps to help you control your diabetes and live a long and active life.

Step 1 Learn about diabetes.

Step 2 Know your diabetes ABCs.

Step 3 Manage your diabetes.

Step 4 Get routine care.

Diabetes is a serious disease. It affects almost every part of the body. That is why a team of people may help you take care of your diabetes:

- doctors
- diabetes educators
- nurses
- dietitians
- eye and foot doctors
- pharmacists
- dentists
- mental health and social workers
- your friends and family

✓ **Talk to your health care team about your special needs.**

✓ **Work with your team to manage your diabetes.**

The ✓ marks in this booklet show actions you could take.

Diabetes means that your blood glucose (blood sugar) is too high. There are two main types of diabetes.

Type 1 diabetes—the body does not make insulin. Insulin helps the body use glucose from food for energy. People with type 1 need to take insulin every day.

Type 2 diabetes—the body does not make or use insulin well. People with type 2 often need to take pills or insulin. Type 2 is the most common form of diabetes.

All people with diabetes need to eat healthy foods, stay at a healthy weight, and be active every day.

Diabetes is a serious disease.

Terms such as “a touch of diabetes” or “your sugar is a little high” suggest that diabetes is not a serious disease. That is not correct and these terms should not be used.

Taking good care of diabetes will help you feel better and avoid the health problems diabetes can cause such as:

- heart disease and stroke
- eye disease that can lead to vision problems or even going blind
- nerve damage that can cause your hands and feet to feel numb or tingle and that can lead to loss of a foot or a leg
- kidney problems
- gum disease and loss of teeth

When your diabetes is in good control, you are more likely to feel better and:

- be less tired and thirsty

- urinate less often
- heal better and have fewer gum, skin, or bladder infections
- be less likely to have blurry vision or numb hands or feet

Some people are more likely to get diabetes.

Some people may have a higher chance of getting diabetes. They should ask their doctor if they need to be tested for diabetes.

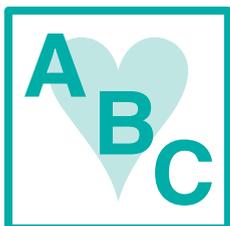
These include people who

- are ages 45 and older
- are overweight
- are African American, Hispanic/Latino American, Asian American or Pacific Islander, or American Indian
- have a parent, brother, or sister with diabetes
- have high blood pressure (above 140/90)
- have low HDL (good cholesterol) and high levels of blood fats
- have had diabetes when pregnant or gave birth to a large baby (over 9 pounds)
- are active less than three times a week

- ✓ **Ask your health care team what type of diabetes you have or if you should be tested for diabetes.**
- ✓ **Know why diabetes is serious.**
- ✓ **Know who is more likely to get diabetes.**

Step 2

Know your diabetes ABCs.



Manage your **A**1C (blood glucose or sugar), **B**lood pressure, and **C**holesterol. This will help lower your chances of having a heart attack, a stroke, or other diabetes problems. These are called the ABCs of diabetes.

A is for the **A1C test**.

It shows how well your blood glucose has been controlled over the last 3 months. It should be checked at least twice a year.



The goal for most people is less than 7.

High blood glucose levels can harm your kidneys, feet, and eyes.

B is for **blood pressure**.

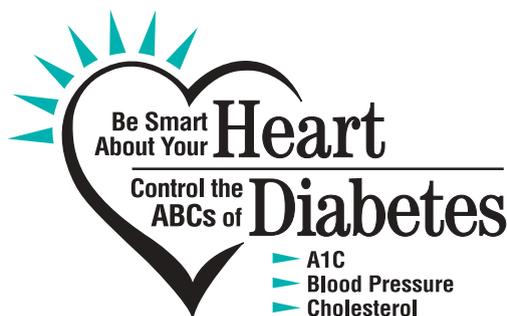
The goal for most people is 130/80.

High blood pressure makes your heart work too hard. It can cause heart attack, stroke, and kidney disease.

C is for **cholesterol**.

The LDL goal for most people is less than 100.

Bad cholesterol, or LDL, can build up and clog your blood vessels. It can cause a heart attack or a stroke.



✓ **Ask your health care team:**

● **What are my A1C (blood glucose), Blood pressure, and Cholesterol numbers?**

● **What should my ABC numbers be?**

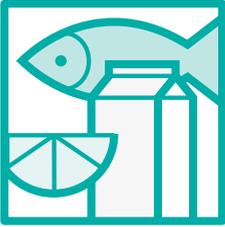
✓ **Write down your numbers on the record card at the back of this booklet.**

Step 3

Manage your diabetes.

Many people avoid the long-term problems of diabetes by taking good care of themselves and the ABCs of diabetes. Work with your health care team, friends, and family to make healthy lifestyle choices and reach your ABC goals.

- ♥ **Follow your diabetes food plan.** If you do not have one, ask your health care team about it.
- ♥ **Eat the right portions of healthy foods** such as fruits and vegetables (5 to 9 servings a day), fish, lean meats, dry beans, whole grains, and low-fat or skim milk and cheese.
- ♥ **Eat foods that have less salt and fat.**
- ♥ **Get 30 to 60 minutes of activity** on most days of the week.
- ♥ **Stay at a healthy weight**—by being active and eating the right amounts of healthy foods.
- ♥ **Stop smoking**—seek help to quit.
- ♥ **Take medicines** the way your doctor tells you. Ask if you need aspirin to prevent heart attack or stroke.



♥ **Check your feet every day** for cuts, blisters, red spots, and swelling. Call your health care team right away about any sores that won't heal.

♥ **Brush your teeth and floss every day** to avoid problems with your mouth, teeth, or gums.

♥ **Check your blood glucose** the way your doctor tells you to.

- ✓ **Work with your health care team to manage your diabetes and stay healthy.**
- ✓ **If you have Medicare Part B, ask your health care team how to get some of the cost paid for**
 - **learning about diabetes self-care.**
 - **special shoes, if you need them.**

Step 4

Get routine care.

See your health care team **at least twice a year** to find and treat problems early. Follow this plan.



At each visit get a:

- B**lood pressure check (if over 130/80, ask what steps to take to reach your goal)
- Weight check
- Foot check

Two times each year get:

- A**1C check (check more often if over 7)
- Dental exams to prevent gum disease and loss of teeth. Tell your dentist you have diabetes.

Once each year get a:

- C**holesterol check (if LDL is over 100, ask what steps to take to reach your goal)
- Dilated eye exam to check for eye problems
- Complete foot exam to check on foot health
- Urine and blood tests to check for kidney problems
- Flu shot



At least once get a:

- Pneumonia shot

- Ask your team about these and other tests you may need.**
- Use the diabetes care record at the back of this booklet to keep a record of your diabetes care.**

My Diabetes Care Record

A1C (Blood Glucose) – At least twice each year
Usual goal: less than 7 **My Goal: _____**

Date						
Result						

BLOOD PRESSURE (BP) – Each visit
Usual goal: less than 130/80 **My Goal: _____**

Date						
Result						

CHOLESTEROL (LDL) – Once each year
Usual goal: less than 100 **My Goal: _____**

Date						
Result						

WEIGHT – Each visit **My Goal: _____**

Date						
Result						

Cut this out and keep your diabetes care record.



My Diabetes Care Record

Diabetes Care	Date	Result
Each visit		
Foot check	_____	_____
Weight check	_____	_____
<hr/>		
Twice each year		
Dental exam	_____	_____
<hr/>		
Once each year		
Dilated eye exam	_____	_____
Complete foot exam	_____	_____
Kidney check	_____	_____
Flu shot	_____	_____
<hr/>		
At least once		
Pneumonia shot	_____	_____

Where to get help:

American Association of Diabetes Educators

1-800-TEAM-UP4 (800-832-6874)

www.diabeteseducator.org

American Diabetes Association

1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383)

www.diabetes.org

American Dietetic Association

1-800-366-1655 (in English and Spanish)

www.eatright.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

1-877-232-3422

www.cdc.gov/diabetes

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

1-800-MEDICARE or (800-633-4227)

www.medicare.gov/health/diabetes.asp

National Diabetes Education Program

1-800-438-5383

www.ndep.nih.gov

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases / National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse

1-800-860-8747 (in English and Spanish)

www.niddk.nih.gov

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The National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) is a joint program of the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

NIH Publication No. 04-5492
December 2003

