

Getting the Very Best Care for Your Diabetes

Regular diabetes care can help you prevent heart disease, stroke, and eye, foot, or kidney problems. This guide describes basic care for people with diabetes.

Most of the day-to-day care of diabetes is up to you:

- You choose what, when, and how much to eat.
- You decide whether to be physically active.
- You take your medicines.
- You keep track of your blood glucose (sugar) levels.

Your health care team helps by teaching you about diabetes care and checking your A1C (average blood glucose), blood pressure, cholesterol, and other measures.

What should happen during visits to my health care provider?

Use the following list to make sure your health care team is up-to-date on what you need for good diabetes care.

Check at every office visit

Blood Pressure: If your blood pressure is not on target, meal planning, physical activity, and medicines can help. Work with your health care team to plan your strategy.

Weight: Preventing weight gain or losing weight may be part of your diabetes care plan. If you need to lose weight, a 10- to 15-pound loss can help you reach your blood pressure, blood glucose, and cholesterol goals. Work with your health care team to plan your goals.

Smoking: If you smoke, ask your health care provider about a plan to help you quit.

Check at least every 3 to 6 months

A1C: The A1C is the blood glucose check “with a memory.” It tells you your average blood glucose for the past 2 to 3 months. Your A1C check is reported as a percentage or as estimated Average Glucose (eAG), in numbers similar to your meter results. If your average blood glucose is too high, you may need a change in your diabetes care plan. Talk with your health care team.



Your health care team can teach you about diabetes care.

Check at least once a year

Cholesterol: Your cholesterol numbers tell you the amount of fat in your blood. Some kinds, like HDL, help protect your heart. Others, like LDL, can clog your blood vessels and lead to heart disease. Triglycerides, another kind of blood fat, raise your risk for a heart attack or a stroke. If your cholesterol levels are not on target, meal planning, physical activity, and medicines can help. Work with your health care team to plan your goals.

Microalbumin and glomerular filtration rate (GFR): The microalbumin test is a check for small amounts of protein in the urine. The results tell you how well your kidneys are working. Your health care provider will use information from a blood test to estimate your GFR, a measure of how well your kidneys are working.

Foot and eye exams: Your health care provider can check your feet for signs of nerve damage or other problems. Foot problems can be avoided if detected and treated early. An eye doctor should check the blood vessels in your eyes for early warning signs of damage.

Flu shot and pneumonia vaccine: Ask for a flu shot every year to keep from getting sick. And, get the pneumonia vaccine at least once.

Diabetes education and nutrition counseling: If you need a change in your diabetes management plan, ask your health care provider to refer you for diabetes education and nutrition counseling.

Tracking your targets

The ADA suggests these targets for most people with diabetes. You may have different targets. You can record your targets and your results in the spaces provided here.

What to Do	ADA Targets	My Targets	My Results Date _____	My Results Date _____
At Every Office Visit				
Review blood glucose numbers				
• Fasting	Below 100 mg/dl			
• Before meals	70 to 130 mg/dl			
• 2 hours after the start of a meal	Below 180 mg/dl			
Check blood pressure	Below 130/80 mmHg			
Review meal plan				
Review activity level				
Check weight				
Discuss questions or concerns				
At Least Every 3 to 6 Months				
A1C or eAG	Below 7% or below 154 mg/dl			
At Least Once a Year				
Physical exam				
LDL cholesterol	Below 100 mg/dl			
HDL cholesterol	Men: above 40 mg/dl			
	Women: above 50 mg/dl			
Triglycerides	Below 150 mg/dl			
Dilated eye exam				
Microalbumin	Below 30 µg/mg creatinine			
Blood test to estimate GFR				
Flu shot				
Once				
Pneumonia vaccine				

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PCNA Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association