

ABCs of Diabetes

WHAT IS DIABETES?

When you eat, your body breaks down carbohydrates into glucose or sugar. In response, your body produces insulin to move glucose from your bloodstream into the cells to use for energy. When you have diabetes, your body doesn't produce enough insulin or the insulin doesn't work properly to open the doors of the cells for glucose to enter. As a result, glucose accumulates in the blood stream causing high blood sugar which can lead to serious health complications over time.



KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

HbA1C measures your average blood sugar over the last 2-3 months. The results are given in a percentage. This tells you how well you are controlling your blood sugar long term. A high Hba1c means you are at an increased risk for diabetes complications. Your HbA1C goal is less than 7%.

BLOOD GLUCOSE tells you how much sugar is in your blood stream in that moment. This helps you know how your medication, diet and exercise are affecting your blood sugar.

When should I check my blood sugar?

- If on insulin, check your blood sugar before putting in your insulin.
- If not on insulin, check your blood sugar at least 3x per week alternating between fasting and 2 hours after eating your largest meal.

Goal

- Fasting (before eating/taking medications):
80-140 mg/dL
- 2 hours after eating: **140-180 mg/dL**



TAKE YOUR MEDICATIONS AS PRESCRIBED

- Take all medications and insulin as prescribed, even when coming to the doctor.
- Call the clinic if your blood sugar remains consistently elevated or if experiencing frequent low blood sugars (<70mg/dL).
- Do not stop taking any medications without talking to your provider first. Call the clinic to discuss any medication issues, side effects or if you need a refill.



GET MOVING

- Aim for 30 minutes a day of physical activity.
- If your blood sugar is <100 before starting, have a snack first.





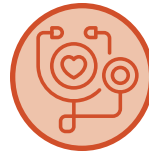
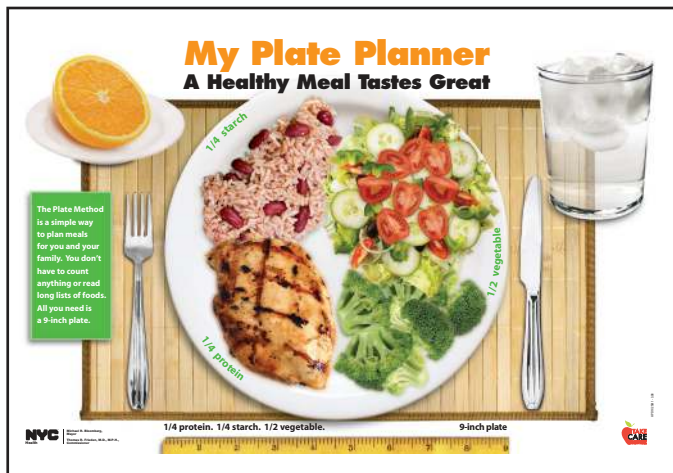
DO NOT SMOKE

- Quitting smoking can help improve diabetes control.



EAT BALANCED MEALS

- Eat small, balanced meals every 4-5 hours. Avoid big meals and skipping meals.
- Make half your plate vegetables, carbohydrates (whole grains & starchy vegetables, fruits or dairy) and lean protein (nuts & seeds, beans, fish, lean meats and poultry).
- Aim for 6-8 glasses of water per day.
- Try to limit refined carbohydrates like white flour and sugary products and sugary beverages that can raise blood sugar quickly.



WORK WITH YOUR MEDICAL TEAM

- Return for regular checkups with your provider to check how well you are managing and make adjustments.
- Have an annual eye exam, dental checkup and other necessary lab work.
- Call if you have any questions or need help.



DIABETES FOOT CARE

- Inspect your feet thoroughly every day looking for swelling, cracking, changes in skin color, slow healing sores, calluses, ingrown toenails or pain in feet or legs.
- Wash and dry your feet every day, especially between your toes.
- Keep skin soft and smooth using lotion, but not between your toes.
- Trim toe nails each week in a straight line, not into the corners. Use nail clippers rather than scissors. Pedicures are neither recommended nor prohibited.
- Wear shoes and socks at all times (even in your home) to prevent injury. Be sure they fit well and are not worn out. Avoid high heels, sandals or shoes with pointed toes, nylon stockings and socks that have been seamed or mended. The goal is to avoid any calluses, corns or injury to the feet.