

Managing Diabetes

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Diabetes is a disease in which there is too much glucose in the blood. The main goal for a person with diabetes is to keep his or her blood glucose under control. Diabetes management means learning all you can about the disease, maintaining a healthy weight, checking blood glucose three or more times a day, exercising, and/or taking medication as prescribed.

Problems Associated with Not Managing Your Diabetes

Diabetes increases your risk for many serious complications. Complications include:

- Heart disease
- Blindness
- Nerve damage
- Kidney damage
- Gum disease

Learn more about these complications and how to cope with them at the American Diabetes Association website (<http://www.diabetes.org/>).

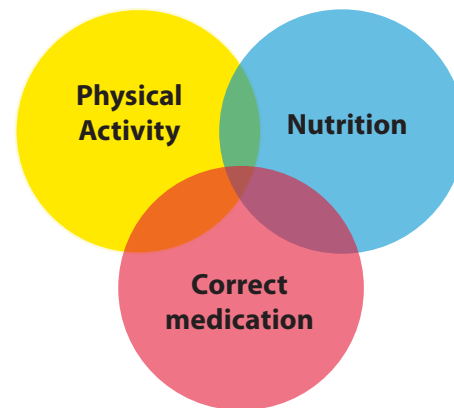
Benefits of Managing Your Diabetes

When your blood glucose is close to normal you are likely to:

- Have higher energy levels
- Feel less tired
- Feel less thirsty
- Urinate less often
- Heal better
- Have fewer infections
- Have fewer problems with eyesight, feet, and gums

Practices That Help You Manage Your Diabetes

Physical activity, nutrition, and the correct medication—if necessary—are three ways to manage diabetes. Set daily goals to help you begin a healthful lifestyle. Consult your physician before making changes.



Three key components for managing diabetes successfully.

Daily Steps to manage diabetes:

- Be physically active.
- Develop a healthful individual eating plan and follow it.
- Check blood glucose the recommended number of times.
- Take your medication as prescribed.

Goals for diabetes management:

- Blood glucose measures within target range.
- Total cholesterol, HDL, LDL and triglycerides within target range.
- Blood pressure within target range.
- Calorie intake at recommended level for weight loss or maintenance.
- Intake of nutrients balanced—carbohydrate, protein, fat, vitamins, minerals.

Test	When to check	Usual Goal
A1C	At least twice a year	Below 7
Blood Pressure	Each visit to your doctor	130/80
Total Cholesterol	Once a year	Below 200
Cholesterol (LDL) (bad)	Once a year	Below 100
Cholesterol (HDL) (good)	Once a year	Above 40
Triglycerides (TG)	Once a year	Below 150

Source: National Diabetes Education Program. 4 Steps to Control Your Diabetes. For Life.

Exercise

When you exercise you use energy, which lowers your blood glucose level. Physical activity can be a powerful tool for managing diabetes. At first, just focus on getting more exercise. Even 10-minute exercise periods improve your health. Increase the level of activity until you are exercising at least 30 minutes five or more times per week.

Nutrition

A big part of controlling diabetes is managing your diet. Being diagnosed with diabetes often means that you need to change your eating habits. Nutrition management requires that you know how many calories and how much protein, carbohydrates, and fats you should eat, as well as when to eat your meals and snacks. A diabetes educator or registered dietitian can assist you in making a personal plan.

Nutrition Plan

- Have meals and snacks at the same time each day.
- Set consistent carbohydrate intake at meals and snacks.

Nutrition Guidelines

- Make healthy nutrition food choices based on the Diabetes Food Guide Pyramid at <http://www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/food/planning-meals/diabetes-food-pyramid.html>.
- Balance carbohydrate with insulin and exercise.
- Follow a meal plan that is low in saturated fats, cholesterol and moderate in total fats.
- Make healthy fat choices such as mono- and polyunsaturated fats. For example, olive, canola, peanut oils, avocados, nuts, and seeds
- Reduce protein to reasonable amounts as determined by a registered dietitian.

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