

# Checking your blood sugar

## How frequent blood sugar checks can help you

Checking your blood sugar yourself is an important part of managing diabetes. Checking often will tell you:

- If your insulin or other diabetes medicine is working
- How physical activity and the foods you eat affect your blood sugar

You'll usually feel better and have more energy when your blood sugar stays at or near normal. Managing your blood sugar can also reduce your risk of developing problems from diabetes.



## How to check your blood sugar

You can check your own blood sugar using a meter. Many different kinds of blood sugar meters are available today. Your diabetes care team can help you choose one and show you how to use it.

## When to check your blood sugar

You and your diabetes care team will decide when and how often you will check your blood sugar. The table shows some times when you might want to check and why.

When to check	Why you should check
When you wake up	To see if your blood sugar is staying under control while you're asleep
Before meals	To know what your blood sugar is before you eat
1 or 2 hours after meals	To see how the food you eat affects your blood sugar
Before and within minutes after physical activity	To see how being active affects your blood sugar

## Keeping a blood sugar diary

It's important to write down your blood sugar levels so that you can keep track of what makes them go up or down.

See the last page for a diary that you can use to track your blood sugar and ketones.



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Time	Goals for many adults with diabetes	Your goals
Before meals	70 to 130 mg/dL	_____
1 to 2 hours after the start of a meal	Less than 180 mg/dL	_____
A1C	Less than 7%	_____

Adapted from the American Diabetes Association. Standards of medical care in diabetes—2013. *Diabetes Care*. 2013;36(suppl 1):S11-S66.

## Setting your blood sugar goals

The table above lists blood sugar goals for many nonpregnant adults with diabetes. You and your diabetes care team will set the goals that are right for you. Write your goals in the last column.



## Knowing your A1C

The A1C test measures your estimated average blood sugar level over the past 2 to 3 months. It's like a "memory" of your blood sugar levels. It shows how well you're controlling your blood sugar levels over time. Your A1C and your blood sugar levels go up and down together. The table to the right shows how they go together.

Lowering your A1C to below 7% reduces your risk of problems from diabetes. Therefore, the A1C goal for most people is less than 7%.

It is recommended that you get an A1C test:

- At least 2 times a year if your blood sugar is under good control
- 4 times a year if you are not meeting your goals or if your treatment has changed

A1C level	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

Adapted from the American Diabetes Association. Standards of medical care in diabetes—2013. *Diabetes Care*. 2013;36(suppl 1):S11-S66.

If you have any questions, be sure to talk with your diabetes care team. They are there to help!

For more information, visit  
[Cornerstones4Care.com](http://Cornerstones4Care.com)

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# Your blood sugar diary

If you'd like to use an online blood sugar diary, you can find one at [Cornerstones4Care.com](http://Cornerstones4Care.com).

Day/ date	Time	Diabetes medicine type and dose	Blood sugar results*						Ketone test results	Carb intake	Activity	
			Breakfast	Lunch	Supper	Bedtime	Night					
Mon	Before		mg/dL	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Notes		
	Time			Time	Time	Time	Time					
	mg/dL											
Tue	Before		mg/dL	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Notes		
	Time			Time	Time	Time	Time					
	mg/dL											
Wed	Before		mg/dL	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Notes		
	Time			Time	Time	Time	Time					
	mg/dL											
Thu	Before		mg/dL	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Notes		
	Time			Time	Time	Time	Time					
	mg/dL											
Fri	Before		mg/dL	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Notes		
	Time			Time	Time	Time	Time					
	mg/dL											
Sat	Before		mg/dL	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Notes		
	Time			Time	Time	Time	Time					
	mg/dL											
Sun	Before		mg/dL	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Notes		
	Time			Time	Time	Time	Time					
	mg/dL											