



## Taking charge of your health: How do you manage your diabetes one day at a time?

### What is blood sugar?

- After you eat a meal, your body changes the food into glucose (or sugar) to use as energy.
- Your blood sugar is normally kept in check by a hormone called insulin that's made in the pancreas (an organ in your body).
- Some medicines can lower your blood sugar, making you feel dizzy or shaky. It's important to know how to recognize if your blood sugar is low and how to manage it.
  - Monitoring your blood sugar regularly may help. Use a glucometer, especially if you feel confused, dizzy, shaky, hungry or irritable, or have a headache, pounding heart, racing pulse or look pale.
  - If your sugar level is below 70 mg/dl, take two to four glucose tablets or drink a glass of orange juice (but avoid artificial sweeteners).

### What is Type 2 diabetes?

- Type 2 diabetes mellitus is the most common form of diabetes.
- In Type 2 diabetes, your pancreas doesn't make enough insulin to control your blood sugar level.

### How do I know if my diabetes is under control?

Testing your blood sugar each day is an important part of managing your diabetes. You can test your sugar at home with a glucometer. If you aren't already doing this or if you have questions about how to use your glucometer, talk to your pharmacist or doctor.

## Your lifestyle, your choices, your goals

Each day, you make decisions that affect your health. You can control your diabetes each day by:

- Eating a variety of healthy foods that are high in fiber (such as 100 percent wholewheat bread and steel-cut oats) and low in saturated fat. Most fruits, nonstarchy vegetables, sweet potatoes, beans and legumes are good choices.
- Checking your blood sugar regularly with a glucometer (a device that measures your blood sugar level)
- Taking medication how and when your doctor prescribes it
- Being physically active each day (talk with your doctor first)
- Losing weight, if necessary
- Following the advice of your doctor and pharmacist

The American Diabetes Association recommends the following blood sugar goals for patients with diabetes. **Talk to your doctor at your next visit about your numbers and what goal is right for you.**

	Reading type	Blood sugar goal
Adults 18 to 64 years old	Fasting blood sugar	80 to 130 mg/dl
Adults 18 to 64 years old	After a meal reading (one to two hours after the start of your meal)	Less than 180 mg/dl
Adults 65 years old and older	Fasting blood sugar	90mg/dl to 180 mg/dl, depending on your health and doctor's recommendations
Adults 65 years old and older	After a meal reading (one to two hours after the start of your meal)	Talk to your doctor about your individual goals

Your doctor also checks something called an A1c. This number gives a three-month average of how much sugar is in your blood. Below are the American Diabetes Association goals for A1c in patients with diabetes, but talk with your doctor at your next appointment to ask what your A1c should be.

	A1c goal
Adults 18 to 64 years old	Less than 7 percent
Adults 65 years old and older	Less than 7.5 to 8.5 percent, depending on your health and doctor's recommendations

This information does not replace the ongoing care and advice of your doctor. You shouldn't make any changes to your established medication or exercise routine without talking with your doctor first.

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