

Key Steps to Controlling Diabetes for Life

The more you know about your disease, the better control you can achieve. Diabetes is a serious disease that can affect all aspects of life. Four key steps to managing and living with diabetes are to:

1. Learn About Diabetes.
2. Know Your Diabetes ABC's.
3. Manage Your Diabetes.
4. Get Routine Care.

Learn About Diabetes

Establishing a health care "team" is the first step in learning to live with diabetes. The team will help you develop a health care plan and provide you with a support system. Taking care of your diabetes will help you lessen or delay the consequences of the damage caused to the body by the illness. Your health care team should include:

- Doctor
- Dentist
- Nurse Practitioner
- Diabetes Educator
- Dietician
- Social Worker
- Eye Doctor
- Foot Doctor
- Pharmacist
- Mental Health Counselor
- Nurse
- Friends and Family

Know Your Diabetes ABC's

Talk to your health care team about **A**-1C, **B**lood Pressure and **C**holesterol.

A1C – Is a test that shows what your blood glucose has been over the last 3 months. The A1C goal for most people is below 7. High blood glucose levels can harm your heart, blood vessels, kidneys, feet and eyes.

Blood Pressure – The goal for most people with diabetes is a blood pressure level below 130/80. High blood pressure makes the heart work too hard, which could result in heart attack, stroke, and kidney disease.

Cholesterol – The HDL ("good cholesterol") goal for most people is above 40. The LDL ("bad cholesterol") goal for most people is below 100. Bad cholesterol can build up and clog blood vessels causing heart attack or stroke. Good cholesterol helps remove bad cholesterol from blood vessels.

Manage Your Diabetes

Take good care of yourself by following the health care plan that your "team" has suggested. This plan should include: eating healthy foods, getting plenty of exercise, staying at a healthy weight, not smoking, coping with stress, taking prescribed medications, checking your feet daily, brushing and flossing teeth daily, checking blood glucose as needed, and reporting any problems to your health care team immediately.

Get Routine Care

Schedule a visit with your health care team at least twice a year to review your health care plan. Have an A-1C test at least twice a year. Once a year, be sure to have a cholesterol test, triglyceride test, a complete foot exam, a dental exam, a dilated eye exam, a flu shot, and urine and blood tests to check for kidney problems.

For more information about diabetes care, visit the following websites:

<http://www.ndep.nih.gov/diabetes>
www.diabetes.org