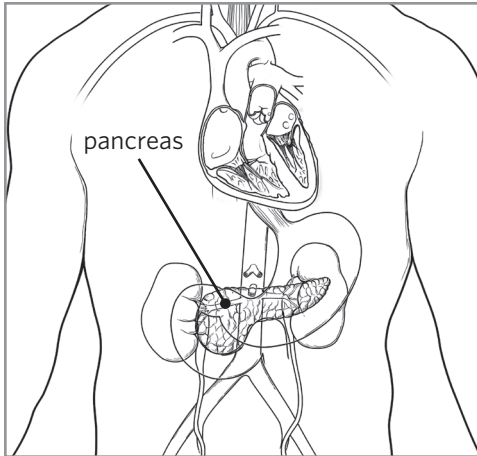


# Managing Diabetes



**When you have diabetes, your blood sugar is too high.** Normally, blood sugar levels are controlled by insulin. Insulin helps your body use sugar, called glucose, for energy. If you have type 1 diabetes, your pancreas can no longer make insulin. If you have type 2 diabetes, either your pancreas can no longer make enough insulin or your body can't properly use the insulin being made. When any of this happens, sugar can't be used for energy, and it builds up in your blood.

## Measuring Your Blood Sugar

**A key part of managing diabetes is keeping your blood sugar under control.** To do this, test it regularly (ask your doctor how often). Blood sugar levels are always changing. It's a good idea to write them down so you can keep track of how and when they change.

**The American Diabetes Association recommends these blood sugar levels:**

**Before a meal: 70–130 mg/dL**

**After a meal: less than 180 mg/dL**

Keep the following in mind to help prevent highs and lows:

- Food raises blood sugar.
- Being sick can raise blood sugar.
- Exercise can raise or lower blood sugar.
- Medicines can raise or lower blood sugar.
- Alcohol can raise or lower blood sugar.
- Stress can raise or lower blood sugar.

In order to monitor your blood sugar levels over time, your doctor will take a blood sample at least every six months to do an A1C test. This test shows your average blood sugar over the last three months.

## Treating Diabetes

**Learn as much as you can about your condition, and work with your doctor to develop a specific treatment plan that works for you.**

Your plan may include medicine and insulin.

It's important to always take your diabetes medicine and insulin exactly as your doctor prescribes. Don't skip doses, and don't stop taking your medicine or insulin without talking to your doctor first.

## Living with Diabetes

**A healthy diet and an exercise plan are key to managing your diabetes, controlling your weight and keeping you healthy.**

There isn't one diabetes diet. What's important is to eat a wide variety of healthy foods and smaller portion sizes. You can still eat the foods you enjoy—but in moderation. Consider these tips:

- Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables and whole grains like brown rice and whole-wheat bread.
- Eat lean meats and fish.
- Drink water and diet sodas.



- Cook with liquid oils, like olive oil.
- Limit high-fat foods like fried foods, and sweets like cakes and cookies.

**Exercise is also an important part of a healthy lifestyle.** It takes sugar out of your blood and uses it for energy. Regular exercise can lower blood sugar levels and reduce your risk of heart disease. You can start being active by doing simple things like walking with your family after dinner or playing tag with your children or grandchildren.

## Prevent Complications

**When you have diabetes, you have to take special care of your overall health so you don't develop other conditions.** Make a plan with your doctor to keep your body healthy and prevent complications. Include the following in your plan:

- **Don't smoke.** Visit [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov) for tools to help you quit.
- **Limit or avoid alcohol.** If you do drink, have no more than one glass a day for women and two glasses a day for men.
- **Manage stress.** Practice deep breathing or do yoga.
- **Check your feet** for sores, blisters, in-grown toenails or changes to skin color.
- **See your primary care doctor and dentist** for regular checkups at least twice a year.
- **See your eye and foot doctors** once a year.
- **Get the flu and pneumonia vaccines** every year.
- **Lower high blood pressure.** Talk to your doctor about medicine and lifestyle changes that can help.
- **Lower "bad" cholesterol (LDL) and raise "good" cholesterol (HDL).** Know your goal numbers, and talk to your doctor about medicine and lifestyle changes that can help.
- **Know your A1C number.** Talk to your doctor about steps you can take to lower it if it's too high.



To learn more, visit  
**HealthyAdvice.com/  
Diabetes101**

You can also visit these websites:

- **American Diabetes Association**  
[www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)
- **National Diabetes Education Program**  
[www.ndep.nih.gov](http://www.ndep.nih.gov)
- **National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse**  
[www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov)

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## Remember:

- Take your medicines and insulin exactly as prescribed.
- Monitor your blood sugar and try to prevent having a lot of highs and lows.
- Stick to your meal and exercise plans.
- Don't forget to take care of your overall health to prevent diabetes complications.