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www.YourDiabetesInfo.org

NATIONAL DIABETES EDUCATION PROGRAM
Tips to Help You Stay Healthy

There are many good reasons to take action to manage your diabetes.

- Each day you are likely to feel good and have more energy.
- In the future, you are likely to stay healthy and prevent or delay problems that can involve your heart, blood vessels, eyes, kidneys, and nerves.

Follow this four-step action plan. It will help you live a long and healthy life.

Step 1: LEARN ABOUT DIABETES

Diabetes means that your blood glucose is too high. Glucose comes from the food we eat. An organ called the pancreas (PAN-cre-uh) makes insulin (IN-sulin), insulin helps glucose get from your blood into your cells. Cells take the glucose and turn it into energy.

In **type 1 diabetes**, the pancreas does not make any insulin. In **type 2 diabetes**, the body does not make enough insulin or use it very well. As a result, glucose builds up in your blood and cannot get into your cells. If the blood glucose stays too high, it can damage your body. Adults most often get type 2 diabetes. **Gestational** (ges-TAY-shun-ah) diabetes occurs when a woman is pregnant. Having it raises the mother's and her child's risk for getting diabetes, mostly type 2, for the rest of their lives.

Step 2: KNOW YOUR DIABETES ABC'S

- **A1C** measures your average blood glucose level over the past three months.
- High **blood pressure (BP)** makes your heart work too hard.
- **LDL**, or bad **cholesterol**, builds up and clogs your arteries. **HDL**, or good cholesterol, helps remove cholesterol from your blood vessels.

Test	Goal*	Check How Often?
A1C	Below 7	Once a year
BP	130/80	Each doctor's visit
Cholesterol	LDL below 100 HDL above 40	At least once a year

*For most people with diabetes.

Step 3: MANAGE YOUR DIABETES

- Know your ABC's and blood glucose targets. Learn how and when to test your blood glucose, and how to use the results to manage your diabetes.
- Ask for a **diabetes meal plan** to help you choose healthy foods.

Healthy food choices include:

- Fats, vegetables, fish, lean meats and poultry, dry peas or beans, and low fat or skim milk and cheese.
- Whole grain foods — whole wheat bread and crackers, oatmeal, brown rice, and cereals.

Avoid foods that have a lot of sugar, salt, and fat.

Eat smaller portions of meat, fish, and poultry, and larger portions of fruits and vegetables.

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