



Riverside Community Diabetes Collaborative

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-kree-as) makes insulin (IN-suh-lin). 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** (jes-TAY-shon-al) 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	Twice 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.
- **Get 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity**, such as brisk walking, on most days of the week.
- **Seek help if you feel down.** You may feel better if you talk with a mental health counselor, friend, or a support group, clergy, or family member.
- **Stop smoking** — seek help to quit.
- **Take your medicines** even when you feel good. Ask if you need to take a low-dose aspirin to prevent a heart attack or stroke.
- **Check your feet every day.** Call your health care team if a cut, sore, blister, or bruise on your feet or toes does not begin to heal after one day.
- **Brush your teeth and floss every day** to avoid problems with your mouth, teeth, or gums.
- **Report any changes in your eyesight** to your doctor.

HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES INCLUDE:

- fruits, 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.

WORK WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE TEAM TO CREATE A PLAN TO HELP YOU REACH YOUR SELF-CARE GOALS.

- **Make a list** of all your reasons to manage your diabetes for life.
- **Set goals** you can reach. Break a big goal into small steps.
- **Engage the whole family** in being more physically active.
- **Stay at a healthy weight** by using your meal plan and being physically active.
- **Learn** what causes you to slip up in reaching your goals. Plan to do better next time.
- **Reach** out to friends or family for support or when you feel down.
- **Give yourself a healthy reward** for doing well.

Step 4: Get Regular Care

Avoid problems by seeing your health care team at least twice a year to:

- Get your ABC tests, other exams, and yearly flu shot.
- Have your blood pressure, weight, and feet checked.
- Review your record of blood glucose self tests, your ABC numbers, and your action plan. If you have Medicare, ask what diabetes services are covered.

To learn more go to: www.medicare.gov

MY ACTION PLAN TO MANAGE MY DIABETES

Date _____

My Target	Test Results	Date
A1C _____	_____	_____
Blood Pressure _____	_____	_____
Cholesterol _____	_____	_____

Three reasons to manage my diabetes for life:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Three things I will work on over the next three months to reach my self-care goals:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

The people who can help me do these things (e.g., family member, friend, health care team): _____

Place your plan where you will see it often. Keep it up to date. Take action to be healthy and control your diabetes for life – now and in the future.

For more information to help you manage your diabetes, visit the following websites:

National Diabetes Education Program

www.yourdiabetesinfo.org (or call 1-888-693-NDEP)

American Diabetes Association

www.diabetes.org (or call 1-800-342-2383)

Do you live in the City of Riverside or surrounding communities?

RCDC is your resource! Visit www.rchf.org/rcdc to view a schedule of diabetes education sessions, or check out RCDC's free Diabetes Resource Directory.