

# Control the ABCs of Diabetes

If you have diabetes, three key steps—the ABCs—can help you better manage it and lower your risk of heart attack and stroke. Learn about the ABCs and keep track of your progress for each one.

## A A1C Test

- The A1C test is short for hemoglobin A1C.
- It measures your average blood sugar (glucose) over the last 3 months.
- It lets you know if your blood sugar level is under control.
- Controlling your blood sugar level will help prevent complications.
- Get this test at least twice a year.
- **Number to aim for: below 7**

Date of my A1C test:				
My number:				

## B Blood pressure

- The higher your blood pressure, the harder your heart has to work.
- Get your blood pressure measured at every visit to your healthcare provider.
- **Work with your provider to set a blood pressure goal that is right for you.**

Date I checked:				
My number:				

## C Cholesterol



Cholesterol levels are measured in milligrams (mg) of cholesterol per deciliter (dL) of blood.

- Maintain a normal cholesterol level (under 200 mg/dL).
- HDL should be 60 mg/dL or higher.
- Triglyceride level should be below 150 mg/dL.
- LDL should be below 100 mg/dL. LDL or “bad” cholesterol builds up and clogs your arteries.
- Get your cholesterol tested once per year.
- **Number to aim for: LDL below 100 mg/dL.**

Date I checked:				
My total cholesterol number:				
My HDL number:				
My triglyceride number:				
My LDL number:				

# Tips to prevent and control diabetes

## Get active!

- Do physical activities with moderate effort for a total of at least 2 hours and 30 minutes each week.
- If ready, do physical activity with vigorous effort for a total of at least 1 hour and 15 minutes each week.
- Do muscle strengthening activities, like yoga or lifting weights, at least 2 days each week.

## Eat less sodium, saturated fat, cholesterol, carbohydrates, and sugar.

- Trim the fat off meat and the skin off chicken.
- Bake, broil, boil, or grill instead of frying.
- Use a small amount of vegetable oil instead of lard or butter.
- Cut down on sausage, bacon, and fried foods.
- Drink water and sugar-free beverages.

## Eat more fiber.

- Choose whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and beans.
- Add fruit to your lunch.
- Add vegetables and beans to soups and casseroles.

## Stay at a healthy weight. Try to lose weight if you're overweight.

- Eat smaller portions—don't go back for a second serving.
- Drink water or other calorie-free drinks.

## If you smoke, stop.

- Ask your healthcare provider, family, or friends to help you quit smoking.
- Find additional help at [smokefree.gov](https://www.smokefree.gov).

## If you already have diabetes, add these steps to control it.

- Check your blood sugar (glucose) levels as your healthcare provider tells you.
- Take medicines as your provider tells you, even when you feel fine.
- Ask your provider about taking aspirin to prevent a heart attack.
- Check your feet every day. Check for cuts, bruises, red areas, or swelling.
- Brush your teeth and use dental floss every day.
- See your eye doctor once a year, or more often if you have eye problems.
- Find support to help you handle stress.

## Be sure to ask your healthcare provider:

- What are my ABC numbers?
- What should my ABC numbers be?
- What do I need to do to reach healthy ABC numbers?
- How can I find a local diabetes program for education and support?

