

Control your diabetes. *For Life.*

Tips to Help You Feel Better and Stay Healthy

GOOD NEWS for People with Diabetes

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

In the short run, you can:

- Feel better
- Stay healthy
- Have more energy

In the long run, you can:

- Reduce your risk for heart attack and stroke
- Reduce your risk for eye, kidney, or nerve disease
- Enjoy life more

Follow this three-part action plan that will help you live a long and healthy life.

1

Know your diabetes ABC numbers.



Manage your **A**1C (blood glucose), **B**lood pressure, and **C**holesterol. You will lower your chances of having a heart attack, a stroke, or other diabetes problems. Ask your health care team:

- What are my **A**1C (blood glucose), **B**lood pressure, and **C**holesterol numbers?
- What should my numbers be?



Here are the **ABC** goals for most people with diabetes:

A1C: Less than 7 (A1C shows how your blood glucose has been over the last three months.)

Blood pressure: Less than 130/80

Cholesterol: LDL Less than 100

2

Keep your diabetes under control.

Work with your health care team, friends, and family to reach your **ABC** goals.



- **Follow your diabetes food plan.** If you do not have one, ask your health care team.
- **Eat the right portions of healthy foods:** fruits and vegetables (5 to 9 servings a day), fish, lean meats, dry beans, whole grains, and low-fat milk and cheese.



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



- **Get 30 to 60 minutes of activity** on most days of the week.
- **Stay at a healthy weight** by being active and eating the right amounts of healthy foods.
- **Stop smoking**—seek help to quit. Call 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669) or go to www.makesmokinghistory.org

- **See your dentist** at least twice a year. Tell the dentist you have diabetes. Brush your teeth and floss every day.
- **Take medicines** the way your doctor tells you. Ask if you need a low-dose aspirin to prevent a heart attack or stroke.
- **Check your feet every day** for cuts, blisters, red spots, and swelling. Call your health care team right away about any sores that won't heal.
- **Check your blood glucose** the way your doctor tells you to.
- **Have a dilated eye exam** once a year or as directed by your doctor. Report any pain or pressure in your eyes or changes in your eyesight at once.
- **Get a yearly flu shot.**

3

Create a plan to help you reach your goals.



Use these tips to keep at it.

- Make a list of all your reasons to control your diabetes for life.
- Set goals you can reach and break a big goal into small steps. For example, start with a 5- to 10-minute walk three times a week. Then, walk longer and more often.
- Make changes that you can stick with for the rest of your life. To lose weight and keep it off, eat smaller portions and be more active.
- Try to figure out what tempts you to slip up in reaching your goals. Decide now how you will handle these events next time.
- Reward yourself for staying in control. Spend time doing something you enjoy.
- Seek help if you feel down. You may feel better if you talk with a mental health counselor, clergy, family member, friend, or support group.
- Don't be too hard on yourself. Work towards a healthy future.



MY ACTION PLAN To Manage My Diabetes ABCs

Date _____

Write down your numbers: A1C _____ Blood pressure _____ Cholesterol _____

Write down your goals: A1C _____ Blood pressure _____ Cholesterol _____

Three reasons to manage my diabetes for life:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Three things I will work on over the next 3 months to reach my diabetes ABC goals:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

The people who can help me do these things (e.g., friend, co-worker, health care team):

Your action plan will change over time, so be ready to make a new one about every three months. Then, place your plan where you will see it often. **Do it today!**

Take action to be healthy and control your diabetes for life – now and in the future.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Diabetes Education Program is jointly sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) with the support of more than 200 partner organizations. To learn more, visit www.YourDiabetesInfo.org or call 1-888-693-NDEP.

