Managing your diabetes

Diabetes self-management is all about setting healthy goals and achieving them. And this workbook is specifically designed to help you reach yours. It provides goals you can set for yourself to help stay healthier. This workbook also offers useful information, daily motivation, and helpful support along the way.

8 goals for diabetes self-management:

1. Control your blood sugar—reach your A1C goal
2. Achieve your goal weight
3. Be active
4. Eat healthy
5. Monitor your blood sugar
6. Take your medicine as prescribed
7. Be prepared to solve problems
8. Adopt healthy behaviors

Let’s get started

To begin, write in your A1C goal (which your health care provider will likely set for you) and your goal weight.

Enter your A1C goal and your 90-day goal weight below. Then gear up for your next 7 goals, starting with a pledge to become more active. Always talk to your health care provider before beginning any exercise program.
Staying active

Being active is an important part of a healthy lifestyle, especially for people with type 2 diabetes. The benefits of physical activity include helping to maintain your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol goal numbers, as well as helping to decrease stress and increase strength and flexibility. If you haven’t been physically active in some time, you can start slow. Be sure to check with your health care provider before beginning any exercise program.

Exercise can take many shapes and forms—it doesn’t have to be hours spent at a gym. Do you like to walk? Think about where you can enjoy a regular walk, whether it’s in your neighborhood or at a nearby mall. It’s safe, easy, and costs little or nothing to get started. Walking is an exercise people tend to stick with more than any other type of exercise. Want to make your walk a social affair? Bring along a friend. And, if group activity is what you enjoy, explore opportunities to dance or join an exercise class or sports team.

Think about these easy ways to stay active throughout the day. Which ones can you add to your daily routine?

☐ Take the stairs instead of the elevator to help build strength and endurance

☐ Clean your home (it’s more physical than you think)

☐ Park a distance from the mall entrance to add extra steps to your shopping trip

☐ Walk in place or stretch while you are talking on the phone or watching television

☐ Every hour, get up from your chair and take a walk around the office

Got other ideas for staying active? Write them down here.
Eating healthy

Eating healthy benefits everyone, especially people with type 2 diabetes. Eating right can help improve blood sugar and achieve weight goals. If you are looking to follow a smart eating plan, here’s a great way to make portion control and food selection quick and easy.

Embrace the power of portion control

Building a well-portioned plate may be easier than you think. The trick is to divide your plate into sections.

Draw an imaginary line down the middle of your plate. Then cut 1 of the halves in half. Fill the largest section with nonstarchy vegetables. Then add lean protein to one of the remaining sections and a starch to the other.

Need a quick refresher course in what’s healthy in each food group? See below.

Nonstarchy vegetables

- Spinach, carrots, lettuce, green cabbage, or bok choy
- Green beans, broccoli, cauliflower, tomatoes, mushrooms, or peppers
- Salsa, onions, cucumbers, beets, or okra

Lean protein

- Chicken or turkey without skin
- Fish, such as tuna, salmon, or cod
- Seafood, such as shrimp, clams, oysters, crab, or mussels
- Lean cuts of beef or pork
- Tofu, eggs, or low-fat cheese

Starches

- Whole-grain breads, such as rye
- Whole-grain, high-fiber cereal
- Cooked cereal, such as oatmeal, grits, or cream of wheat
- Brown rice, whole-grain pasta, tortillas, or dal
- Cooked beans or peas
- Starchy vegetables, such as potatoes, corn, sweet potatoes, or winter squash
- Low-fat crackers or snack chips, pretzels, or fat-free popcorn
Shopping healthy

Here is a sample shopping list provided by the American Diabetes Association. This does not mean you must buy everything on the list. Use it as a rough guide to help you get started.

**Refrigerator**
- Fruit (variety of colors)
- Vegetables (variety of colors)
- Low-fat milk
- Nonfat or low-fat yogurt
- Eggs or egg substitute
- Low-fat cheese
- Reduced-fat cheese
- Lean low-sodium sandwich meats (turkey, ham, roast beef)
- Bacon substitute
- Trans-free margarine or margarine with plant sterols or stanols

**Pantry**
- Canned vegetables
- Canned fruit (canned in juice)
- Canned beans (low-sodium, if available)
- Fat-free refried beans
- Canned tuna or salmon
- Instant oatmeal or quick oats
- Whole-grain cereal (unsweetened)
- Pasta (try whole wheat)
- Brown rice
- Dried fruit
- 100% whole-wheat bread
- 100% whole-wheat pita bread
- Unsalted nuts
- Peanut butter
- Seeds (sunflower, flax)
- Popcorn (light, microwave)
- Potatoes (white, sweet)
- Spaghetti sauce
- Soup (low-sodium versions)
- Whole-wheat crackers
- Whole-wheat flour

**Spice cabinet**
- Balsamic vinegar
- Pepper
- Spices (choose your favorites)
- Salt-free dried herb or spice blends
- Salt substitute
- Cooking sprays
- Canola oil
- Olive oil
Monitoring your blood sugar

Monitoring your blood glucose (blood sugar) is a tool to help manage your diabetes. Keeping your blood sugar under control may help you to reduce the risk of serious health problems.

There are 2 important tests that can measure your blood sugar. One is called an A1C test. The other is called daily glucose self-monitoring.

A1C testing
An A1C test measures the average level of sugar in your blood over a 2- to 3-month period of time. Write down your current A1C number and then indicate when you need your next test.

Daily self-monitoring
Your daily self-monitoring test measures your day-to-day blood sugar levels.

We’ve developed a tool to help you monitor your blood sugar, physical activity, and healthy eating each day. Fill it out daily and bring it with you the next time you visit your health care provider. Below are some quick tips on how to use your tracker, which is on the next page.

Using your blood sugar tracker is easy:

1. Record your blood sugar before and after each meal.

2. Write down what you ate for that meal and mark whether it helped you stay on track with your blood sugar target.

3. Note your daily exercise at the bottom of the chart. That’s it!

Start tracking your blood sugar
## Blood Sugar Tracker

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### BREAKFAST – Blood Sugar Readings

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### LUNCH – Blood Sugar Readings

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### DINNER – Blood Sugar Readings

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### DAILY EXERCISE

| ACTIVITY | ACTIVITY | ACTIVITY | ACTIVITY | ACTIVITY | ACTIVITY | ACTIVITY |
Taking your medicine as prescribed

Now’s the time to take the steps necessary to help reach your A1C goal. This includes:

- Checking your blood sugar often
- Eating healthier
- Exercising more frequently
- Taking your diabetes medicine as prescribed

Use this tracking tool to write down all the medicine you take in 1 day. Get into the habit of using it regularly. Before long, remembering to take your medicine will become second nature.

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Problem solving

Diabetes is affected by everything from diet and exercise to illness and stress. So you’re constantly in the position of having to problem solve. Three keys to doing that successfully are:

1. Identifying potential problems and solutions ahead of time

2. Being knowledgeable about diabetes management, so when you experience a spike or fall in blood sugar, you can respond with appropriate changes in activity, food, and medicine as prescribed

3. Learning to manage stress

But there’s something important to remember. You don’t need to solve every problem alone. If you need support, reach out to your health care team for help. Your health care provider, a diabetes educator, or even a behavioral specialist can help you with solutions to common problems. They can also help you set realistic, achievable goals.

Your problem-solving practice sheet

Use the space below to identify potential problems you might face in a day. Then brainstorm possible solutions and write the best ones down. When one of these problems presents itself, try out your solution. Afterwards, evaluate whether it worked. If the answer is yes, great. If not, try coming up with another solution.

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Reducing risks

When you have type 2 diabetes, you are at greater risk for heart attack and stroke. High cholesterol and high blood pressure can add to this risk. So it’s important that you reduce both to help reduce risk. But what exactly is high blood pressure and high cholesterol? And what lifestyle changes can you make to help lower them?

High blood pressure

If your blood moves too forcefully through your blood vessels, you have high blood pressure. When this happens, your heart works harder, which puts you at greater risk for heart disease.

So what can you do? Be sure to have your blood pressure measured each time you visit your health care provider and ask for your numbers.

If it turns out that you do have high blood pressure, what can you do? Here are some tips to help you lower your blood pressure:

• Lose excess weight
• Exercise regularly
• Eat a healthy diet
• Quit smoking
• Reduce your stress
• Shake the salt habit
• Limit your alcohol intake
• Work with your health care provider to find a treatment plan that’s right for you

Record your blood pressure below.

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<th>DATE</th>
<th>BLOOD PRESSURE</th>
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High cholesterol

High cholesterol is a risk factor for heart disease. How do you know if your cholesterol is too high? Have yours measured by your health care provider and ask for the numbers.

The American Diabetes Association suggests the following goal numbers for most people with diabetes. Your health care provider will set goals that are right for you.

<table>
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<th>More than 40 mg/dL for men</th>
<th>More than 50 mg/dL for women</th>
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<tr>
<td>HDL (good) cholesterol</td>
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<td>LDL (bad) cholesterol</td>
<td>Less than 100 mg/dL</td>
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<td>Triglycerides</td>
<td>Less than 150 mg/dL</td>
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You can help lower your cholesterol by:

- Losing weight, if needed
- Eating heart-healthy foods
- Quitting smoking
- Drinking in moderation
- Reducing your intake of saturated fat and trans fat
- Exercising regularly

If none of these strategies succeed in lowering your cholesterol, your health care provider may need to prescribe cholesterol-lowering medicine.

Record your cholesterol numbers below.

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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOTAL CHOLESTEROL</th>
<th>HDL (GOOD)</th>
<th>LDL (BAD)</th>
<th>TRIGLYCERIDES</th>
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Diabetes education resources

For additional information, visit the following sites:

**American Diabetes Association**
- diabetes.org
- 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383)

**American Heart Association**
- americanheart.org
- 1-800-AHA-USA1 (1-800-242-8721)

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**
- cdc.gov/diabetes
- 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)

No one said diabetes was easy to manage. But it can be managed.

It’s your journey.