

Blood Glucose Monitoring

Self-checking your blood sugar is one of the best ways to see how well you have maintained your diabetes. It lets you know how your medicine, food and exercise are working to control your blood sugar. With type 2 diabetes, you may want to check your blood sugar 2 times a day. If you are on insulin, you should be checking three to four times a day.

Look for Patterns

It is helpful to check your blood sugar levels at various times of the day. This lets you look for blood sugar patterns. Checking two hours after a meal lets you see if what you ate raised your blood sugar levels too high. You should also check when you make changes in your food, work or exercise schedule. You should download your results and talk to your doctor about them. You and your doctor can make changes as needed to prevent future problems.

Why is it important?

Studies have shown that by keeping your blood glucose in good control you can prevent or delay the long-term problems with diabetes. These long-term problems can include eye, kidney and nerve disease.

By checking your blood glucose level you can find out:

- What your sugar is at any moment
- How food, exercise, medications, stress or illness affect your blood sugar
- If your sugar is too low or too high

When should I test my blood glucose level?

There are many times of the day you can check your blood sugar levels:

- Before meals
- After meals (1-2 hours)
- Before you go to bed
- 2 a.m. or 3 a.m.

There are also other times of the day when you may need to do extra checks, such as:

- If you are sick or under a lot of stress
- If you have warning signs of high or low sugar
- When exercising

- Before you drive
- If you start a new diabetes medicine
- If you have had a change in your treatment plan

What should my blood glucose level be?

If are an adult and you have been told you have diabetes (and you are not pregnant), the American Diabetes Association (ADA) says your blood glucose levels should be:

- Before eating80-130 mg/dL
- 1-2 hours after eatingless than 180 mg/dL

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Talk with your diabetes healthcare team. Find out your target blood glucose range and what times of the day you should check your level.

My blood glucose target goals:

Before Meals _____

After Meals _____

Bedtime _____

In order to control blood sugar you must manage the factors that affect it. These include diet, diabetes medicines or insulin, exercise, stress and infections. Here are some hints to help you reach your blood sugar goals:

Diet

- Meet with a dietitian who can help you with a meal plan that meets your needs. This should take into account your lifestyle and food choices. Check with your insurance company to see if you need a referral to see a dietitian.
- Get to know how various foods affect your blood sugar. Eat less of foods that cause your blood sugar to go too high.
- Become familiar with portion sizes. Eating too much of certain foods will increase your blood sugar.
- Learn to read food labels. Become a smart shopper.
- Establish regular habits:
 - Eat meals and snacks at about the same time each day.
 - Eat about the same size meals and snacks daily.
 - Do not skip meals.

Medications

- Take your pills as prescribed by your doctor.
- Learn how your diabetes medicines work.
- If you take insulin, ask your doctor if you should be adjusting the dose based on your blood sugar levels.
- If you are taking other medicine (not for diabetes), check with your doctor to find out if the pills may increase your blood sugar levels.

Exercise

- Check with your doctor before you begin an exercise program.
- If you have type 2 diabetes, exercise can increase your body's ability to get insulin into the cells. This can help lower blood sugar.

Stress

- Try to determine what is causing stress in your life. Then come up with a plan to decrease stress. Keeping a diary may help pinpoint causes of stress.
- The following may help you deal with stress:
 - Reduce demands on your time. Learn to manage your time and how to prioritize your activities.
 - Take a stress management course or read books on the subject. Try meditation, deep breathing or yoga.
 - Join a support group.
 - Try to exercise.

Infections

Avoid infections by doing the following:

- Wash your hands often.
- Practice good personal hygiene.
- Inspect your feet daily.
- Speak to your doctor about getting flu and pneumonia vaccines.

How can the LivingConnected Diabetes Team help you?

By working with the LivingConnected Team you can learn how to meet your blood sugar goals. Good blood sugar control helps keep you healthy and may decrease problems from diabetes.