

Living with Type 1 Diabetes

Diabetes is a lifelong condition. Managing your diabetes means making some changes that may be hard. Your healthcare doctor, nurse, diabetes educator, and others can help you.

Managing type 1 diabetes means balancing your insulin with diet and activity. You will have to check your blood sugar. Sometimes you will have to check your ketones. You will also have to work with your provider to prevent complications.

How does diabetes affect you daily?

Diabetes can affect how you feel each day. If your blood glucose level is too high or too low (hypoglycemia), you may not feel well. Keeping your blood glucose in a target range will help you feel your best.

Eat healthy

A healthy, well-planned diet helps to control the amount of sugar in your blood. It also helps you stay at a healthy weight.

Your healthcare doctor, nurse, a dietitian, or diabetes educator will help you create a plan that works for you. You don't have to give up all the foods you like. To help control your blood sugar, have meals and snacks with:

- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Lean meats or other healthy proteins
- Whole grains
- Low-fat or nonfat dairy products

Be physically active

Being active helps your body use insulin to turn food into energy.

Ask your healthcare doctor to help you create an activity program that's right for you. Your activity program is based on your age, general health, and types of activity that you enjoy. Start slowly. But aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise or activity on most days. The 30 minutes doesn't need to happen all at once. Exercising for 10-minute periods during the day works just fine.

Monitor your blood sugar

Your healthcare doctor will give you instructions about checking your blood sugar at home. Checking it tells you if your blood sugar is in your target range. Having blood sugar levels in your target range means that you are managing your diabetes well.

Your doctor will tell you what is too high and too low for you. Call your doctor if your blood sugar is often out of that range. Know how to recognize and respond quickly to low blood sugar symptoms (such as sweating, trembling, or confusion).

Your doctor may also tell you to check your blood sugar more often when you are sick. For example, when you have a cold or the flu.

If your blood sugar levels are often too high or too low, your doctor may advise changes to your diet or activity level. He or she may also adjust your medicine.

Take care of yourself

When you have diabetes, you may be more likely to develop other health problems. They include foot, eye, heart, nerve, and kidney problems. By controlling your blood sugar, and taking good care of yourself, you can help to prevent these problems. Your healthcare doctor, nurse, diabetes educator, and others can help you.

- **Checkups.** Have regular checkups with your doctor. At these visits, you will have a physical exam. This includes checking your feet. Your doctor will also check your blood pressure and weight.
- **Other exams.** Also have complete eye, foot, and dental exams at least once a year. Always take your shoes off at each visit so your doctor checks your feet.
- **Lab tests.** You will have blood and urine tests.
 - At least 2 times a year, your provider will check your hemoglobin A1C. This blood test shows how well you have been controlling your blood sugar over 2 to 3 months. The results help your provider manage your diabetes.
 - You will also have other lab tests. These may check for kidney problems and abnormal cholesterol levels.
- **Smoking.** If you smoke, you must quit. Smoking increases the chance that you will have complications from diabetes. Ask your doctor about ways to quit. Also don't use e-cigarettes or vaping products.
- **Vaccines.** Get a yearly flu shot. And ask your doctor about vaccines to prevent pneumonia, hepatitis B, and shingles.

Stress and depression

Most people have challenges during their lives. Living with diabetes, or any serious condition, can increase your stress. It can make you feel a lot of different emotions. With diabetes, feeling stressed or depressed can actually affect your blood sugar levels.

If you are having trouble dealing with diabetes, tell your healthcare doctor. He or she can help or refer you to other healthcare doctors or programs.

Treatments used for type 1 diabetes

The two goals of diabetes treatment are to make sure you feel well day to day and to prevent or delay long term health problems. The best way to reach those goals is by:

- Taking insulin
- Planning your meals – choosing what, how much , and when to eat
- Being physically active