

# Getting the Very Best Care for Your Diabetes

## Toolkit No. 2

Following guidelines from the American Diabetes Association (ADA) can help people with diabetes live longer, healthier lives. Called the Standards of Care, these guidelines describe basic care for people with diabetes. Getting up-to-date care for diabetes can help you prevent long-term problems such as heart disease, stroke, and eye, foot, or kidney problems.

Most of the day-to-day care of diabetes is up to you. You can make choices that will have a positive effect on your diabetes. You choose what, when, and how much to eat. You decide whether to be physically active. You take your medications and keep track of your blood glucose (sugar) levels on your own. Your health care team helps by providing information, teaching you about diabetes care, and checking on your A-1-C, blood pressure, cholesterol, and other measures.

## What should happen during visits to my health care provider?

The Standards of Care describe what should happen at your health care provider visits throughout the year. You can use the following sections to make sure your health care team is up-to-date on what you need for good diabetes care.

### Check at Every Office Visit

#### Blood Pressure

Your blood pressure numbers tell you the force of blood flow inside your vessels. When your blood pressure is high, your heart has to work harder. If your blood pressure is not on target, meal planning, physical activity, and medications can help. Work with your health care team to plan your strategy.

#### Weight

Preventing weight gain or losing weight may be part of your diabetes care plan. If you need to lose weight, a 10- to 15-pound loss can help you reach your blood pressure, blood glucose, and cholesterol goals. Work with your health care team to plan your strategy.



Your health care team can teach you about diabetes care.

#### Smoking

If you smoke, ask your health care provider about a plan to help you quit.

### Check at Least Every 3–6 Months

#### A-1-C

The A-1-C is the blood glucose check “with a memory.” It tells you your average blood glucose for the past 2 to 3 months. If your A-1-C is not on target, meal planning, physical activity, and medications can help. Work with your health care team to plan your strategy.

### Check at Least Once a Year

#### Cholesterol

Your cholesterol numbers tell you the amount of fat in your blood. Some kinds, like HDL cholesterol, help protect your heart. Others, like LDL cholesterol, can clog your blood vessels and lead to heart disease. Triglycerides are another kind of blood fat that raises your risk for a heart attack or a stroke. If your cholesterol levels are not on target, meal planning, physical activity, and medications can help. Work with your health care team to plan your strategy.

#### Microalbumin

The microalbumin test is a check for small amounts of protein in the urine. The results will tell you how well your kidneys function.

### Foot Exam

Your health care provider can check your feet for signs of nerve damage or other problems. Foot problems can be avoided if detected and treated early. One of the most important foot tests is to see whether you can feel the vibration of a tuning fork or the light touch of a thin wire called a monofilament.

### Eye Exam

Your health care provider can refer you to an eye doctor to check the blood vessels in your eyes for early warning signs of damage. The eye doctor must put drops in your eyes that dilate your pupils in order to do a thorough exam. Treatment can help slow eye disease if it's found early.

### Flu Shot and Pneumonia Vaccine

Every year, ask for a flu shot to keep from getting sick. You should get the pneumonia vaccine at least once. When you turn 65, you should get another pneumonia vaccine, unless you have had one within the past 5 years.

### Diabetes Education and Nutrition Counseling

If you need a change in your diabetes management plan, your health care provider should refer you for diabetes education and nutrition counseling.

## How can I take charge of my diabetes care?

Review the following list and place a check mark next to the things you'd like to talk about with your health care team. Take this list with you to your next checkup.

- What are the best targets for my A-1-C, blood pressure, and cholesterol?
- What can help me reach my A-1-C target?
- When is my next A-1-C check?
- What can help me reach my blood pressure target?
- What can help me reach my cholesterol targets?
- How can I learn more about taking care of my diabetes?

## Tracking Your Targets

The ADA suggests these targets for most people with diabetes. You may have different targets. You can record your targets and your results in the spaces provided here.

What to Do	ADA Targets	My Targets	My Results	
			Date	Date
<b>At Every Office Visit</b>				
Review blood glucose numbers				
Before meals	90–130 mg/dl			
2 hours after the start of a meal	Below 180 mg/dl			
Check blood pressure	Below 130/80 mmHg			
Review meal plan				
Review activity level				
Check weight				
Discuss questions or concerns				
<b>At Least Every 3–6 Months</b>				
A-1-C	Below 7%			
<b>At Least Once a Year</b>				
Physical exam				
Cholesterol				
LDL cholesterol	Below 100 mg/dl			
HDL cholesterol	Above 40 mg/dl (for men)			
	Above 50 mg/dl (for women)			
Triglycerides	Below 150 mg/dl			
Dilated eye exam				
Microalbumin	Below 30 µg/mg creatinine			
Flu shot				
<b>Once</b>				
Pneumonia vaccine				

