



Type 2 Diabetes: Best Practices to Avoid Complications

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?	WHAT SHOULD I DO?
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Kidney Check

Your kidneys clean your blood. Having high blood sugar can damage your kidneys. If they are damaged, waste and fluids build up in your blood instead of leaving your body.

In fact, according to experts at the National Kidney Foundation, diabetes is a leading cause of kidney failure in the U.S., with approximately one third of all people developing kidney disease. Kidney failure can lead to the need for dialysis, a treatment to remove toxins and waste from your body.

Some people will take special medications or follow a specific diet to help their kidneys.

1. Discuss your lab results with your doctor.
2. Follow your doctor's advice on any dietary restrictions or medication recommendations.

Dilated Eye Examination

According to the American Diabetes Association, diabetes is a leading cause of blindness. High blood sugar can damage the blood vessels of the eyes.

1. Have your eyes checked at least once per year with a dilated eye exam. Discuss with your doctor whether additional exams are needed.
2. Report any vision changes to your doctor.

Vaccines

People with diabetes are at increased risk for complications when they get an infection. This includes bacterial and viral infections like influenza, pneumonia and COVID-19.

1. Get a yearly flu shot.
2. Make sure your pneumonia vaccinations are up to date.
3. Get any other vaccinations your doctor recommends, such as shingles and tetanus.

Depression or Anxiety Screening

There is an association between diabetes and depression or anxiety. Managing your depression or anxiety can help manage your diabetes.

1. Let your doctor know if you are feeling sad or down most of the time.
2. Stay active and eat a healthy diet. This can help both depression and diabetes!
3. Stay connected with friends and family, or identify a support group.

Home Sugar Self-Monitoring

This is a blood test done with a finger prick or using a continuous glucose monitor, which will tell you your sugar level at a specific moment in time.

This is different than an A1C test, which is an average blood sugar over the last 3 months.

1. Ask your doctor if you should be testing your blood sugar.
2. Ask your doctor when and how often they want you testing.
3. Talk with your doctor about setting your goals for sugar level, A1C, and cholesterol.
 ADA recommends a blood sugar of 80 – 130mg/dl before eating and less than 180mg/dl two hours after eating. The ADA recommends A1C should generally be under 7% and a statin treatment for people with diabetes age 40-75.
4. Discuss with your doctor any blood sugar readings under 70mg/dl, as this may indicate low blood sugar.

YOU are the key to successfully controlling your diabetes. Managing your diabetes can help to lower your risk of complications such as heart attack, stroke and kidney issues. Below are some tips for those with diabetes:

LIVE A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

The best approach to managing diabetes is to watch what you eat and to be active. Seeing a dietitian to help with food choices can be invaluable. Aim for 150 min/week of moderate-intensity exercise. To help members achieve these goals and stay on track, we've partnered with Brook to offer members the Brook Health Companion app. Brook makes it simple to take control of your health, including what you eat, medications you take, activity, sleep and more. Brook's team of registered dietitians can help you set the right goals and discover healthy habits that work for you. To learn more or to download the app, visit brook.health/join.

SEE YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER REGULARLY

Your health care provider is your partner! Meeting with your health care provider on a regular basis allows for the opportunity to assess how well your diabetes is managed. It also gives you the opportunity to ask questions and to share any concerns you have with your provider.

GET ANY BLOOD WORK YOUR DOCTOR RECOMMENDS

Regular blood work helps your health care provider determine how well your diabetes is managed. Your health care provider will routinely monitor your A1C.

You may also be advised to obtain blood work to monitor your cholesterol and kidneys. Do not forget to discuss the results of your blood work at your appointments. It is important not only to "know your numbers" but to understand what they mean to you.

TAKE YOUR MEDICATIONS AS PRESCRIBED

It is important to take any prescribed medications exactly as your doctor advises. Missing doses of medications, or taking medications differently than prescribed, can result in your diabetes not being well controlled. Failing to take your medications as prescribed can also lead to having additional medications prescribed. Let your provider know if there is a reason you are not taking your medication such as a side-effect or cost issue. Do not forget to ask about generic medications.

