



# Diabetes: The ABCs of Diabetes Control

People who have diabetes are 2 to 3 times more likely to have a heart attack or a stroke compared to those without diabetes. People with diabetes are also much more likely to get kidney disease. By keeping the ABCs of diabetes under control – **A1C**, **B**lood pressure, **C**holesterol and **S**moking cessation – you lower your risk of developing these problems.

DIABETES GOALS	WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?	AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION (ADA) RECOMMENDED GOALS	MY PERSONAL CHECK LIST
<p><b>A1C Control</b> ("A-One-See") Also known as a Hemoglobin A1C</p>	<p>The A1C test is a simple blood test that measures your blood sugar levels over the past three months. This helps to determine how well managed your diabetes is over time.</p> <p>An elevated A1C increases the risk of heart attack, kidney issues, blindness and stroke. An A1C test can also be used to diagnose diabetes.</p>	<p>The goal for most adults with diabetes is an A1C that is less than 7%.</p> <p>Your doctor may have a different A1C goal for you.</p>	<p>Discuss your A1C with your doctor:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is my A1C number?</li> <li>2. Am I at my A1C goal?</li> <li>3. Discuss possible lifestyle changes and/or medications.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Blood Pressure Control</b></p>	<p>High blood pressure is twice as likely to strike a person with diabetes versus those without. High blood pressure can seriously hurt organs like your heart, brain, kidneys and eyes.</p> <p>In fact, a person with diabetes and high blood pressure is four times as likely to develop heart disease than someone who does not have either condition.</p> <p>High blood pressure usually has no warning signs or symptoms, and many people do not know they have it.</p>	<p>The goal for most people is a blood pressure of less than 140/90. Those at higher risk may require more intensive blood pressure control to less than 130/80.</p> <p>Your doctor will discuss with you what your blood pressure goal will be.</p>	<p>Discuss your blood pressure with your doctor:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is my blood pressure?</li> <li>2. Am I at my blood pressure goal?</li> <li>3. Discuss possible lifestyle changes and/or medications.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Cholesterol Management</b></p>	<p>Having diabetes increases your risk of having heart disease which can lead to stroke or heart attack. Those with diabetes are at risk of stroke or heart attack even if their cholesterol levels are "normal".</p> <p>Statin medications are "risk-reducing" drugs. They lower your cholesterol numbers AND lower your risk of heart attack and stroke, even if your cholesterol levels are good.</p>	<p>It is recommended that most people who have diabetes, aged 40-75 years old, take a statin medication. Because of the benefits of statins, many people continue to take a statin beyond the age of 75.</p>	<p>Discuss starting a statin medication with your doctor.</p>
<p><b>Smoking Cessation</b></p>	<p>Smoking harms nearly every organ of the body and affects a person's overall health.</p> <p>Smoking causes diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, lung disease and cancer.</p>	<p>It is recommended that all people quit smoking or stop using nicotine products.</p> <p>Remember: It's never too late to stop smoking! Challenge yourself to quit smoking.</p>	<p>Talk with your doctor about medications and programs to help you quit smoking.</p> <p>Call the NYS Smokers' Quitline at 1-866-697-8487.</p>

**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](https://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.

