



Understanding diabetes

When you have diabetes, your body is unable to use glucose (sugar) for energy. This is because there is either not enough insulin to move the sugar into the cells of the body, or because your body does not respond well to insulin.

The goals of managing diabetes are to:¹

- Keep your blood sugar levels as near to normal as possible.
- Help slow or possibly prevent the development of diabetes-related health problems.

How to test blood sugar²

Testing your blood glucose is probably easier than you think.

- Wash your hands.
- Place a test strip into your blood glucose meter.
- Use your lancing device to prick your finger for a small blood sample and place it onto the test strip.*
- Wait for your result. Your blood sugar level will appear on the meter display.
- Your doctor, pharmacist or diabetes educator can answer any questions you may have about checking your blood glucose.

* Always check the instructions in the user manual for your specific glucose meter to know how to use it to get accurate blood glucose readings.



Blood sugar target for non-pregnant adults:³

Before meal blood sugar	•	After meal blood sugar
80–130 mg/dL*	•	<180 mg/dL*
	•	
	•	

*Table 6.3, pdf p. 72.ADA-2020

Get active!⁴

Regular activity is one of the best things you can do to live well with diabetes. When you are active, your cells become more sensitive to insulin so it can work more effectively.

The American Diabetes Association recommends 150 minutes per week of moderate to intense aerobic exercise, spread over at least 3 days. Below are some examples of aerobic activities:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Brisk walking | Jogging/Running |
| Bicycling/Stationary cycling | Hiking |
| Dancing | Rowing |
| Low-impact aerobics | Ice-skating or roller-skating |
| Swimming or water aerobics | Cross-country skiing |
| Playing tennis | Moderate-to-heavy gardening |
| Stair climbing | |

Managing your diabetes⁵

You can take steps to manage your diabetes by:

1. Making healthful food choices
2. Being physically active
3. Testing your blood glucose as recommended by your healthcare professional
4. Taking medicines: tablets or injectable medicines like insulin, as prescribed by your doctor
5. Learning information and skills for diabetes self-management



¹ <https://dtc.ucsf.edu/types-of-diabetes/type1/treatment-of-type-1-diabetes/monitoring-diabetes/goals-of-treatment/> Accessed Sept. 8 2020

² <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/managing/managing-blood-sugar/bloodglucosemonitoring.html> Accessed Sept. 8 2020

³ American Diabetes Association. Glycemic targets. Sec. 6. In Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes 2020. Diabetes Care 2020;43(Suppl. 1)

⁴ American Diabetes Association. Sec. 5. Page S54. In Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes 2020. Diabetes Care 2020;43(Suppl.1)

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/managing/index.html> Accessed Sept. 8 2020