

Feeling Better,
Living Healthier
With Diabetes

A guide for self management



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What is Diabetes?

Those who have diabetes are often lacking in a hormone called insulin. Insulin acts as a key to unlock your bodies cells to allow the cells to use blood sugar for energy.

With diabetes, insulin is either missing, or not working efficiently. This causes blood sugar levels to become too high.

Diabetes is a chronic (lifelong) and progressive condition, that can be managed.

Diabetes Management

Diabetes never goes away, but can be controlled (or managed), which helps you to feel better and prevent damage to tissues in your body.

Tips for successful management of your diabetes are as follows:

- Monitoring-testing your blood sugar
- Taking medication as prescribed by your doctor
- Eating smart
- Exercising regularly

Blood Sugar Control

Keeping blood sugar on target is the key to managing diabetes. Keeping blood sugar as near normal as possible can:

- Prevent symptoms
- Reduce risk of short-term and long-term complications
- Improve overall health

Monitoring Your Blood Sugar

If your goal is to keep your blood sugar as close to normal as possible, you will need to test your blood sugar several times a day.

Testing helps you know if you need to make changes in your diet, exercise or medications.

Typical goals for blood sugar are:

Before meals 90-130 mg/dl

After meals Less than 180 mg/dl

Medication

People with diabetes are sometimes prescribed medications (pills and/or insulin) to help keep blood sugar in target range.

Tips for safe medication use:

- Take your pills or insulin shots at the same times each day
- Follow your doctors guidelines
- Never miss any pills or insulin shots

Healthy Eating

What should people with diabetes eat? Diabetics do not need special foods. In fact, the same foods that are good for you, are good for everyone.

You can make a difference in your blood sugar control through your food choices. 100% of carbohydrates turn to sugar in the blood.

Controlling carbohydrates in your diet may also help you keep high blood sugars at bay.

A dietitian can help you with your specific nutritional needs.

Why Exercise?

Exercise is important in diabetes care because:

- It can help you control your blood sugar (it helps to lower blood sugar)
- It can help you to lose or maintain weight
- Regular exercise, may be able to help you to take less insulin or diabetes pills
- Exercise may also help you to lower your risk of heart disease and lower blood pressure
- Exercise reduces stress
- Exercise improves your overall sense of well-being.

Hyperglycemia

(or blood sugar levels over 200 mg/dl)

Symptoms

- Thirst
- Fatigue (feeling tired)
- Frequent urination
- Slow healing wounds
- Upset stomach, vomiting

Causes

- Not enough medications
- Too much/wrong kinds of food
- Sickness or infection
- Stress
- Lack of exercise

Actions

- Do not stop taking diabetes medications without first talking to your doctor
- Test blood sugar frequently (every four hours)
- Prevent dehydration by drinking

- plenty of sugar-free fluids
- If nausea and vomiting make you unable to eat, drink fluids with sugar to prevent low blood sugar
 - Call your doctor if blood sugars are above 240 mg/dl, or if ketone tests are positive.

Hypoglycemia

(or blood sugar levels less than 60 mg/dl)

Symptoms

- Shakiness or trembling
- Sweating
- Rapid/pounding heart beat
- Weakness, confusion
- Hunger
- Feeling crabby, irritable
- Fainting, unconsciousness

Causes

- Too much insulin/diabetes pills
- Not enough food or a delay in a meal time
- Too much exercise or unplanned activity

Actions

- Step 1-take a fast-acting sugar source such as:
4 ounces (1/2 cup) fruit juice or regular soda or
3 glucose tablets or
6 or 7 lifesavers
- Step 2-test your blood sugar in 15 minutes.
- Step 3-if your blood sugar is still low, repeat step one.
*If these actions do not bring your blood sugar into a normal range or you continue to have symptoms despite a normal blood sugar, call your doctor or 911.

Outpatient Diabetes Services

CMH Regional Health System
Diabetes Services has been recognized by
the American Diabetes Association for
Quality Self-Management Education.*

Our classes are for all people who have
been diagnosed with pre-diabetes or
diabetes, and are taught by registered
nurses and registered dietitians.

The course content is designed to
provide the participants with information
that will help them understand diabetes,
and the techniques that can help them
learn to manage the disease, so that they
can live healthy, and productive lives!



Cure • Care • Commitment®

*The American Diabetes Association
Recognizes this education service as
meeting the National Standards for
Diabetes Self-Management Education.

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