Diabetes Self-Care Guide

Your personal guide.....
what you do each day really matters.
How to Use This Guide:
Working with your health care team is important. Use this booklet when you meet with your team. It can help you know what to ask at your visits, and it can also help you learn how to care for your diabetes. This guide is intended to give basic information about diabetes and is most appropriate for people older than 18 years of age. This guide is not intended to be used for medical advice.

What is Diabetes?
Diabetes changes the way the body uses the food you eat. The body turns food into glucose (sugar) and uses this glucose (sugar) for energy. Insulin is a hormone that helps move glucose (sugar) from the blood into the body’s cells. When glucose (sugar) is not at the normal level, it can harm the eyes, heart, kidneys, and feet. Diabetes is a condition that never goes away, but it can be managed.

Type 1 Diabetes
With type 1 diabetes, the body cannot make insulin on its own. A person needs to use insulin. Type 1 diabetes can happen at any age.

Type 2 Diabetes
With type 2 diabetes, the body makes some insulin but not enough. Or, the body may not be able to use insulin as it should. Medicine and insulin may be needed.

What is Diabetes Self-Care?
You are the most important person when it comes to taking care of your diabetes. Self-care helps you learn how to manage your diabetes. This booklet gives you diabetes self-care tips to help you:
✔ Be active
✔ Fill prescriptions and take medicines
✔ Eat healthy
✔ Monitor your blood glucose (sugar) at home
✔ Know the numbers that are right for you
✔ Go to health visits
✔ Wear a medical identification bracelet/necklace
✔ Work with your health care team
✔ Learn to deal with the feelings that go with diabetes

Diabetes information and care can be hard to understand. Your health care team wants you to be successful. Be sure to tell your health care team if you are having problems with any treatment.

**Health Care Team**

There are many people who can help you with your diabetes. Your health care team will talk with you about how to best manage your diabetes with healthy eating, being active, and taking medicine.

**Names and Phone Numbers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case manager</th>
<th>Foot doctor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certified diabetes educator (CDE)</td>
<td>Health educator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic care manager</td>
<td>Mental health professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentist</td>
<td>Pharmacist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered dietitian nutritionist</td>
<td>Primary Care doctor/nurse practitioner/physician assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endocrinologist</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise specialist/physical therapist</td>
<td>Social worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye doctor</td>
<td>Other:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ask Questions

Whenever you ask questions, you and your health care team learn more about each other. Together you can decide on the best ways to care for your diabetes.

Example questions you may want to ask:
1. How can I learn more about diabetes, eating healthy, and being active?
2. How can my family, friends, or others in my community help me with my diabetes?
3. What if I cannot afford my medicine or other diabetes supplies or services? Talk to your health care team or health plan (insurance) about:
   a. Lower cost options
   b. Medicine-assistance programs
4. What does my health plan (insurance) cover?
   a. Call your health plan (insurance) for your benefits.
   b. If you do not know what your health plan (insurance) is, ask someone on your health care team.
   c. If you do not have a health plan (insurance), contact your county Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/consumer/index.htm
5. How can I take steps to quit smoking or using nicotine products?

Be Prepared

Plan ahead and have enough supplies to safely manage your diabetes. Carry your glucose meter and strips and treatment for low blood glucose (sugar). Wear a medical ID that says you have diabetes. In addition:

Low blood sugar

- If your blood glucose (sugar) is below 70 mg/dL but above 50 mg/dL eat 15 grams of carbohydrate such as ½ cup of juice, 1 tablespoon of honey or sugar, 3 or 4 glucose tablets, or ½ cup regular soda (made with sugar).
• If your blood glucose (sugar) is below 50 mg/dL eat 30 grams of carbohydrate such as 1 cup of juice, 2 tablespoons of honey or sugar, 6 to 8 glucose tablets, or 1 cup of regular soda.

Travel
• Carry a list of your medicine and when you take it
• Carry insulin and medication with you so they do not get lost
• Take extra medicine in case trip lasts longer than expected
• Carry food with you as meal time may change
• Carry a list of your doctor/clinic and pharmacy name and phone number
• Plan for change in time zones

Weather
www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/features/disaster-planning-chronic-disease
• Carry a list of medicine with prescription numbers
• Keep enough nonperishable food and water to last for at least three days
• Have cash and prepaid phone card
• Carry a list of important numbers and phone numbers (bank account, credit card, insurance, family members, pharmacy, doctor)
• Have a first aid kit, flashlight, radio, batteries, candles, matches

Sick days
• Check for fever
• Keep clear liquid foods with sugar (7Up, ginger ale, popsicles, Jello, etc.)
• Have medicine for fever and nausea
• Check blood glucose (sugar) more often
## Recommended Care When You Have Diabetes

Talk to a member of your health care team about when to get the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Goal*</th>
<th>How Often?*</th>
<th>Why done?*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1C</td>
<td>Less than 7% for most people</td>
<td>Every 3 to 6 months</td>
<td>Checks blood glucose (sugar) over the last 2 to 3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood pressure</td>
<td>Less than 140/90 for most adults</td>
<td>Every visit; at least 4 times a year</td>
<td>High blood pressure with diabetes greatly increases the risk of heart attack or stroke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol panel</td>
<td>Depends on age and health</td>
<td>Once a year</td>
<td>Measures blood fats such as total, LDL (bad) cholesterol and HDL (good) cholesterol + triglycerides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidney profile</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Over time high blood glucose (sugar) and blood pressure damage the kidneys, beginning long before you have symptoms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urine albumin-creatinine ratio (ACR)</td>
<td>30 mg/g or less</td>
<td>Both tests: Once a year</td>
<td>Checks how your kidneys are working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR)</td>
<td>more than 60</td>
<td></td>
<td>Number tells you how your kidneys are filtering</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Your goal will be determined with your health care provider based on your personal needs.
**Recommended Exams**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>How Often?</th>
<th>What happens [during the visit]?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes visit/exam</td>
<td>Every 3 to 6 months</td>
<td>Discuss plan of care and any questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental exam</td>
<td>Every 6 months</td>
<td>Check mouth and teeth cleaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress exam</td>
<td>Every year</td>
<td>Answer questions on how you feel about your diabetes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye exam</td>
<td>Every year</td>
<td>Check eyes for changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foot exam</td>
<td>Every year</td>
<td>Check feet for changes to skin or loss of feeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical exam</td>
<td>Every year</td>
<td>Looks, feels or listens to different parts of a person’s body</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Immunizations**

Ask someone from your health care team which vaccines are right for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>When?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flu/influenza</td>
<td>Every year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pneumococcal</td>
<td>Once before age 65 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tdap</td>
<td>If not vaccinated as child, any age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis B</td>
<td>If not vaccinated as a child, one set of 3 vaccines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoster/shingles</td>
<td>Once plus a booster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommended Self-Care

Physical Activity Level
- Targets:
  - Very active: 30 minutes on 5 days per week
  - Strength exercises: 2 days per week
  Find activities you enjoy

Healthy Eating/Meal Choices
- Healthy meal choices and serving sizes
- See a registered dietitian nutritionist: 3 to 4 visits over 3 to 6 months

Diabetes Self-Care Education
- See a diabetes educator at diagnosis then 3 to 4 visits over 6 months then yearly.

Home Blood Glucose (Sugar) Checks
- Targets:
  - Before meals: 80 to 130 mg/dL
  - 1 to 2 hours after starting to eat meal: less than 180 mg/dL
  Ask your health care team how often you should check your blood glucose (sugar).

Home Blood Pressure Checks
- Target: Lower than 140/90
- Ask your health care team how often you should check your blood pressure.

Tobacco/Vaping
- Target: Quit tobacco or vaping products
- Ask your health care team how to quit.

Foot Care
- Look at own feet daily for changes in skin or loss of feeling
- Wash feet daily with mild soap and warm water
- Wear shoes and socks that fit
- Remove socks and shoes whenever at a diabetes health appointment

Local Support
- When it comes to your health, you know yourself the best. Learn as much as you can about diabetes. Help from your community can include support groups and your library. Check with your health care team to find a self-management education program in your area. Other trusted resources are listed at the end of this guide.
Personal Diabetes Care Record

A diabetes appointment is different from a visit for a physical exam; both are important.

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<th>Dates</th>
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<td>A1C</td>
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<td>Cholesterol panel</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>EXAMS</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blood pressure and weight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental exam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical exam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dilated eye exam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foot exam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional/sexual health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<table>
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<th>IMMUNIZATIONS</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<td>Hepatitis B</td>
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<td>Pneumococcal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tdap/Td</td>
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<td>Zoster/shingles</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tr>
<td>Self-management education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical activity and exercise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home glucose (sugar) monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Talk with Your Health Care Provider/Team

Take the first step. Be an active member of your health care team! Here are some tips for talking with them:

- Make a list of questions, take the list to your visit, and ask the most important question first.
- Take someone with you to each visit to help you remember what was talked about.
- Bring a list of all the medicines, vitamins, and supplements you take.
- Ask about anything you don’t understand.
- Talk about:
  ✓ any new medicines
  ✓ changes in your health or life
  ✓ tobacco use or vaping
  ✓ having enough food to eat
  ✓ housing
  ✓ family and caretaking
  ✓ transportation
  ✓ employment
  ✓ personal safety
  ✓ alcohol or drug use

This document is available online at: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/P-43081.htm

Additional Resources

LOCAL

Aging and Disability Resource Centers-Wisconsin
www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/index.htm

Community information and referral services
Dial 211 on telephone

Diabetes in Wisconsin: WI Department of Health Services
www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/diabetes/index.htm

Diabetes Local
www.diabeteslocal.org/home

Healthy Living with Diabetes: WI Institute for Healthy Aging,
608-243-5690
www.wihealthyaging.org

Medigap Helpline-Medicare Counseling for WI Residents,
800-242-1060
www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/benefit-specialists/medicare-counseling.htm
National Kidney Foundation of Wisconsin, 800-543-6393  
www.kidneywi.org

Prevent Blindness Wisconsin, 414-765-0505  
www.wisconsin.preventblindness.org/diabetes-related-eye-disease

Wisconsin Public Libraries  
www.publiclibraries.com/state/wisconsin

NATIONAL

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 800-877-1600  
www.eatright.org

American Association of Diabetes Educators, 800-338-3633  
www.diabeteseducator.org

American Diabetes Association, 800-342-2383  
www.diabetes.org

American Heart Association’s Check. Change. Control. Tracker  
www.ccctracker.com

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
www.cdc.gov/diabetes/index.html

Free Diabetes ID Necklaces are Offered at  
www.diabeteswellness.net/free-diabetes-id-necklace

JDRF - juvenile diabetes, 800-533-2873  
www.jdrf.org

Know Diabetes by Heart  
www.knowdiabetebyleart.org

National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse  
www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes

Tobacco Quit Line, 800-784-8669 or 800-QUITNOW  
www.ctri.wisc.edu/quit-line