Diabetes
Self-Care Booklet

Your personal guide.....
what you do each day really matters.

This document is available online at www.WisconsinDiabetesInfo.org
How to Use This Guide:
This guide is meant to teach you about how diabetes affects you, and what you can do to take care of yourself. There is space in the back for you to keep track of your diabetes care, set goals for yourself, and work toward living well with diabetes.

What is Diabetes?
Diabetes is a common, controllable condition that never goes away once you are diagnosed. Diabetes changes the way your body uses the food you eat. Your body turns food into sugar and uses this sugar for energy. Insulin is an important hormone that helps move the sugar from your blood into your body’s cells. If your body does not make enough insulin or the insulin is not working well, sugar will build up in your blood. High blood sugar levels may cause damage to your kidneys, heart, eyes, and nerves by harming the blood vessels that lead to them.

Terms to know:
Healthcare Team:
In this booklet, “healthcare team” refers to doctors, physician assistants, nurses, diabetic educators, pharmacists, therapists and others who help treat your diabetes.

Type 1 Diabetes:
With type 1 diabetes, the body makes little or no insulin on its own, so insulin shots are needed. People with type 1 diabetes need to take insulin shots each day for the rest of their lives.

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 normally should. Medicine and/or insulin may be needed. It can be normal to use more medicine or insulin the longer you have type 2 diabetes. This does not mean you have failed to take care of yourself.
What is Diabetes Self-Care?
Diabetes self-care means you are in charge of making healthy choices every day to help keep blood sugar levels as close to normal as possible. This booklet gives you diabetes self-care education to help you learn about:

✔ Making healthy food choices and eating a healthy amount of food at each meal
✔ Feeling good about your lifestyle choices
✔ Testing your blood sugar and safely disposing of your lancets and needles
✔ Knowing your blood sugar numbers and what to do if they are too high or too low
✔ Taking your medicine and/or insulin, how it works, and possible side effects
✔ Staying active and why it is good for you
✔ Reducing your risk of problems from diabetes
✔ Knowing what diabetes care to ask for and what to expect
✔ The importance of wearing a medical ID bracelet or necklace

Know your blood sugar numbers; when your blood sugar numbers are not in goal, talk to your healthcare team about options. If you are taking diabetes pills, you may need to change the dose and/or start insulin shots. The way you take care of your diabetes may need to change. The length of time you have diabetes, changes to your lifestyle habits and aging all play a role in diabetes management.

Remember, ask for help and support. Your healthcare team can teach you new, positive ways to care for yourself. Understanding what you can do to stay healthy and reduce blood sugar levels is the first step.
Things to Remember about Diabetes Self-Care

Learning about diabetes self-care takes time and patience

People learn in different ways. Some things you will be able to learn quickly and other things will take you a little longer. Give yourself time to learn new information and to change habits.

Find a local diabetes self-management education program

Many clinics offer individual and/or group sessions to help people learn about diabetes self-care. Check with your healthcare team to find a diabetes self-management education program in your area.

Find local help and support

When it comes to your health, you know yourself the best. Learn as much as you can about diabetes. Local help can include support groups and your library. Other reliable and trusted resources are listed on the back page of this booklet.

Ask questions

Diabetes information and care can be hard to understand. Your healthcare team wants you to be successful. Be sure to tell your healthcare team if you are having problems with any treatment. When you ask questions, your team can learn more about you. Then together, you can decide on the best ways to care for your diabetes.

Prepare for a health emergency

Plan ahead and have enough supplies to safely manage your diabetes. If you take insulin and/or medicine to lower your blood sugar, carry 15 grams of quick-acting sugar (for example, three to four blood sugar tablets) with you. Wear a medical identification bracelet/necklace.
Recommended Care
When You Have Diabetes

RECOMMENDED LAB TESTS AND OTHER TESTS

A1C - **Timing of Test:** once every three to six months

(***Target:** Less than 7 percent individual goal may vary) This is a blood test done to check your overall blood sugar control for the past two to three months. Your A1C level will vary from test to test. Having a lower A1C level will reduce the risk of diabetes problems.

Fasting Lipid Panel - **Timing of Test:** once a year

(***Target:** Total cholesterol less than 200 mg/dL; Triglycerides less than 150 mg/dL)

HDL [good cholesterol] men – 40 mg/dL or higher; women – 50 mg/dL or higher

LDL [bad cholesterol] less than 70 or 100 mg/dL – individualize) This is a blood test to check the amount of fat in your blood. Too much fat can clog your arteries and can cause poor blood flow in your body.

Kidney Function Tests

**Albumin-to-creatinine ratio** - **Timing of Test:** once a year

(***Target:** Is less than 30 mg/g)

This urine test checks for microalbuminuria, tiny amounts of protein in your urine.

**Serum Creatinine for estimated Glomerular Filtration Rate (eGFR)** - **Timing of Test:** Once a year

(***Target:** estimated GFR greater than 60) This blood test is used to estimate your GFR. The eGFR tells how well your kidneys are filtering waste and if your kidneys are damaged.

**Tuberculosis Test (TB test)** - **Timing of Test:** check with your healthcare team (***Target:** Negative test)

Having diabetes puts you at a greater risk of getting tuberculosis. A TB skin test is the only way to test for TB infection or disease. Ask your healthcare team if you should be tested for TB.
RECOMMENDED EXAMS

Diabetes Visit/Complete Physical Exam
Timing of Test: once every three to six months
This is a good time to talk with your healthcare team about any diabetes concerns you have.
Have a complete physical every year.
This exam provides preventive healthcare to keep you healthy.

Dilated Retinal Eye Exam
Timing of Test: once a year
Your eye doctor will put drops in your eyes to help see the back of your eyes. This is the only way to find out if high blood sugars have caused any damage to your eyes. Diabetes can cause vision loss and blindness.

Dental Exam/Teeth and Gums Check
Timing of Test: once every six months.
Have your mouth, teeth, and gums checked at every dentist visit. See your dentist for routine cleanings and exams. Your healthcare team can check your mouth, teeth, and gums for problems. Mouth infections and gum disease are more common in people with diabetes. The earlier an issue is addressed, the better.

Complete Foot Exam
Timing of Test: once a year for complete exam.
Take your shoes and socks off so your healthcare team can check your feet at each office visit.
Check your own feet each day. You may not always be able to feel a foot problem so look at your feet each day to notice changes or problems. High blood sugars can cause poor blood flow and loss of feeling in your feet. A small cut or blister can quickly turn into a big problem without the right care. Talk to your healthcare team right away about any changes you notice.
RECOMMENDED EXAMS (CONTINUED)

Blood Pressure (BP)

Timing of Test: once every visit
(Target: Less than 140/80 mmHg for most people with diabetes) Blood pressure (BP) measures how well your heart is pumping blood. High BP can be treated and controlled with medicine. You may need more than one kind of medicine to control BP to meet your individual goal.

Emotional/Sexual Health

Tell your healthcare team if you feel depressed or have sexual health concerns. Everyone has down, sad, or stressful days that can cause you to feel depressed. Depression can keep you from doing your best self-care. Sexual concerns can also cause you to feel sad or down. Talk with your healthcare team about options that can help.

Tobacco Use

Stop using tobacco. Tobacco use causes many health problems and can make your diabetes worse. Once you start using tobacco products, it is very hard to stop. There are many ways to quit. Choose a quit plan that will work for you and get support for yourself. Call 1-800-QUITNOW for help.

SHOTS

Flu, Pneumonia and Hepatitis B Shots

Timing of Test: flu shot - once every fall; Pneumonia shot - once, then as needed; Hepatitis B - one series of shots one time only. Talk to your healthcare team to get a flu shot, pneumonia shot and the hepatitis B series. Having diabetes puts you at greater risk of these diseases. These shots can help lower your risk of getting the flu, pneumonia or hepatitis.
Physical Activity Level
Find an activity you enjoy doing and safely increase the amount of time until you reach your goal. (Target: 150 minutes/week spread over several days, such as 30 minutes on five days/week. Start with 10 minutes and work your way up!) Any physical activity (for example, walking) will help lower your blood sugar level and help you feel better.

Healthy Eating/Meal Choices
See a registered dietitian when first diagnosed, for three to four visits over three to six months, then every year or as needed. A registered dietitian can help you learn how to make healthy meal choices and teach you healthy serving sizes. If you are overweight, any weight loss can be helpful. A healthy weight helps your insulin work better.

Diabetes Self-Care Education
See a diabetes educator when first diagnosed with diabetes, then every six to twelve months or as needed. A Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE) can help you learn how to manage your diabetes. Learning about diabetes will take time, but it will help you make healthy choices every day.

Blood Sugar Testing
Ask your healthcare team how often you should test. (Target: Before meals, less than 130 mg/dL and after meals, less than 180 mg/dL) Checking blood sugar levels helps you know how food, physical activity, medicine, and stress/illness cause your blood sugar levels to change. Know what blood sugar range is best for you. Do not throw lancets or needles in your regular garbage or trash; instead, use an approved container. See the DNR resource on the back page of this booklet for information on sharps containers.
## Personal Diabetes Care Record

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<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>A1C &lt;seven percent - individualized every three to six months</td>
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<td>Fasting Lipid Panel - yearly</td>
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<td>Total Cholesterol &lt;200 mg/dL</td>
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<td>Triglycerides &lt;150 mg/dL or &lt;100 mg/dL (circle)</td>
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<td>LDL &lt;70 or &lt;100 mg/dL (circle)</td>
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<td>HDL ≥40 mg/dL men; ≥50 mg/dL women</td>
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<td>Albumin-to-creatinine ratio &lt;30 mg/g - yearly</td>
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<td>Serum creatinine to estimate kidney function (eGFR) - yearly</td>
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<td>TB test - per healthcare team</td>
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<td>Dilated Eye Exam - yearly</td>
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<td>Dental Exam - every six months</td>
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<td>Teeth and Gums Check - every visit</td>
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<td>Foot Check - visual check every visit</td>
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<td>Complete Foot Exam - yearly</td>
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<td>Diabetes Visit - every three to six months</td>
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<td>Complete Physical Exam - yearly</td>
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<td>Weight - discuss each visit</td>
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<td>Tobacco Use - discuss each visit</td>
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<td>Emotional/Sexual Health - discuss each visit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blood Pressure &lt;140/80 mmHg - check each visit</td>
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<td>Flu shot - each fall</td>
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<td>Pneumonia shot/Hepatitis B series - once</td>
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<td>Physical Activity Level - discuss each visit</td>
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<td>Registered Dietitian - at diagnosis, for three to four visits over three to six months, then annually</td>
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<td>Self-Management Education - at diagnosis, every six to 12 months</td>
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<td>Home Blood Sugar Testing - review each visit</td>
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### LAB/OTHER TESTS

### EXAMS

### SHOTS

### EDUCATION
Choose one or more self-care goal(s) below.

Examples of Action Steps:
- Reduce portion sizes
- Be physically active each day
- Monitor blood sugar each day
- Take medicine each day
- ________________
- ________________
- Join a support group
- Stop smoking
- Get diabetes check-ups
- ________________
- ________________

My Action Steps: (What will I do?)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

My Barriers: (What is in my way?)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

My Barrier Busters: (How will I remove what is in my way?)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Take this page with you to your healthcare team visit.

Signature:_________________________ Date:_________
Talk with Your Healthcare Team

Be an active member of your own healthcare team. Below are a few tips for talking to your healthcare team.

• Prepare a list of questions to ask and list the most important questions first.
• Ask a family member or friend to go with you to take notes about what is told to you.
• Tell your healthcare team about any health concerns you have.
• Share a list of all current medicines, vitamins, and supplements you take.
• Share concerns that could be causing stress even if you’re feeling embarrassed.
• Ask your healthcare team to explain anything that is unclear.
• Find out when you should set up a follow-up visit.

Questions for your healthcare team:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Take this self-care booklet, your blood sugar log booklet, and blood sugar meter with you to each healthcare appointment.

Healthcare Team Member Name: ________________________________
Phone Number: ____________________________________________________________________
Additional Resources:

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
1-800-877-1600
www.eatright.org

American Diabetes Association
1-800-342-2383
www.diabetes.org

American Association of Diabetes Educators
Find a Diabetes Educator in your area: 1-800-338-3633
www.diabeteseducator.org/DiabetesEducation/Find.html

American Heart Association
414-271-9999, 608-221-8866
www.americanheart.org

American Podiatric Medical Association
www.apma.org

National Kidney Foundation of Wisconsin
1-800-543-6393
www.kidneywi.org

National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse (NDIC)
1-800-860-8747
www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov

National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP)
1-888-693-6337
www.ndep.nih.gov

Wisconsin Department of Health Services
Chronic Disease Prevention Unit (CDPU)
www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/health/Chronic-Disease/index.htm

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
1-888-936-7463

Wisconsin Tobacco Quit Line
1-800-784-8669 or 1-800-QUITNOW
www.ctri.wisc.edu/quitline.html