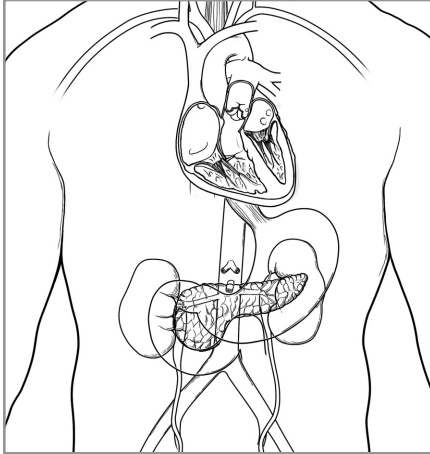


Managing Diabetes



Diabetes is when your blood sugar is too high.

Normally, blood sugar levels are controlled by insulin. Insulin helps your body use sugar, called glucose, for energy. If you have type 1 diabetes, your pancreas can no longer make insulin. If you have type 2 diabetes, either your pancreas can no longer make insulin or your body can't properly use the insulin being made. When this happens, sugar can't be used for energy, and it builds up in your blood.

Measuring Your Blood Sugar

A key part of managing diabetes is keeping your blood sugar under control. To do this, test it regularly (ask your doctor how often). Blood sugar levels are always changing, so it's a good idea to write them down so you can keep track of how and when they change.

The American Diabetes Association recommends these blood sugar levels:

Before a meal: 70–130 mg/dL

After a meal: less than 180 mg/dL

Keep the following in mind to help prevent highs and lows:

- Food raises blood sugar.
- Being sick can raise blood sugar.
- Exercise can raise or lower blood sugar.
- Medications can raise or lower blood sugar.
- Alcohol can raise or lower blood sugar.
- Stress can raise or lower blood sugar.

In order to monitor your blood sugar levels over time, your doctor will take a blood sample at least every six months to do an A1C test. This test shows your average blood sugar over the last three months.

Treating Diabetes

Learn as much as you can about your condition, and work with your doctor to develop a specific treatment plan that works for you. Your plan may include medication and insulin.

It's important to always take your diabetes medicine and insulin exactly as your doctor prescribes. Don't skip doses, and don't stop taking your medicine or insulin without talking to your doctor.

Living with Diabetes

A healthy diet and an exercise plan are key to managing your diabetes, controlling your weight and keeping you healthy. There isn't one "diabetes diet." What's important is to eat a wide variety of foods and smaller portion sizes. You can still eat the foods you enjoy—but in moderation. Consider these tips:

- Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- Eat lean meats and fish.
- Drink water and diet sodas.
- Cook with liquid oils.

(Continued on other side.)

