

Diabetes: Just the Basics

High Blood Sugar (Hyperglycemia)

High blood sugar is when there is too much sugar in your blood. Very high blood sugars (higher than 250) can cause immediate problems.

Blood sugars are normally higher after eating. Blood sugars that are over 130 before meals or 180 after meals are usually too high. *Talk with your healthcare provider to set your blood sugar goals and fill in the numbers on the chart below.*

Blood Sugar Goals		
	American Diabetes Association Recommendations	My Goals (write them here)
Before meals	90 – 130	
2 hours after meals	< 180	

Things that make your blood sugar go high

- Eating too much food
- Not taking your diabetes medicines or insulin
- Sickness
- Not exercising
- Eating or drinking sweet things (like regular soda/cola)
- Infections
- Stress
- Certain medicines (like prednisone)

How you may feel / what you may experience

- Thirsty
- Tired
- Very hungry
- Sick to your stomach
- Itchy (or have very dry skin)
- Increased urination (the amount of urine you pass and how often)
- Blurry vision
- Frequent infections

What to do if you have a high blood sugar

- Call your healthcare provider if you have 2 blood sugars over 250 on the same day
- Adjust your medicine dose if your healthcare provider tells you to
- Check your blood sugar at least every 4 hours if you are feeling sick
- Drink a lot of water (at least 1 glass every hour) to prevent dehydration

Consistently high blood sugars over a long period of time mean that your diabetes is out of control. This can cause long-term health problems such as damage to your heart, kidneys, eyes and feet. If your blood sugar is consistently high, talk with your healthcare provider. You may need changes in your diabetes plan.

Steps To Better Health

- Ask your healthcare provider for a plan if you miss a dose of diabetes medicine
- Check your blood sugar more often when it is high
- Eat regular meals, exercise, and take your medicines to keep blood sugars in your target range

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Self-Monitoring of Blood Sugar (glucose)

Keeping your blood sugar in control is an important part of keeping well when you have diabetes. Checking a drop of blood with a meter lets you know how much sugar is in your blood at the time that you check it. It will help you to see how your medicine, food and activity affect your blood sugar. You will be able to know if your blood sugar is too high or too low and treat the problem right away.

Things that make your blood sugar go up

- Too much food
- Not enough diabetes medicine
- Not enough activity
- Illness and stress

Things that make your blood sugar go down

- Not enough food
- Too much diabetes medicine
- More activity than usual

Use caution when drinking alcohol because it may make your blood sugar go up or down.

Times to check your blood sugar

There is no one plan for everyone when it comes to checking blood sugars. People taking insulin will need to monitor their blood sugar once to many times a day to adjust their doses safely and effectively. Other people may not need to check as often. *You should check your blood sugar on different days of the week and at different times of the day. Talk with your healthcare provider to decide when you should check your blood sugar and fill in the chart below.*

Days and Times I will check my blood sugar			
How many days a week should I check my blood sugar? _____			
What times should I check my blood sugar? (circle times below)			
Before breakfast	Before lunch	Before supper	Before bed
2 hours after breakfast	2 hours after lunch	2 hours after supper	2 – 3 am

Target blood sugar ranges

Your blood sugar is changing all through the day. It may be lower when you first get up and before you eat. It may be higher after you eat or when you are stressed. *Talk with your healthcare provider about your target blood sugar ranges and write them in on the chart below.*

Time	Usual target for most people	My target (write yours here)
Before meals	80 - 120	
2 hours after start of meal	Less than 180	
Bed time	110 - 150	

Watch for patterns

Write down your blood sugar readings on a sheet of paper or in a logbook. This will help you to watch for patterns in your blood sugar. Bring your readings to your medical appointments and review them with your provider. This will help you to identify any problems so you can better manage your blood sugar.

Tips for getting a good blood sample

- Wash your hands with warm water
- Hold your hands downward to increase blood flow to your fingers
- “Milk” your finger to increase blood flow to the tip
- Shake your hands quickly

Possible reasons for errors on blood glucose meters

- Too little blood on strip
- Storing strips outside of the original container or storing the container in a steamy place (like a bathroom)
- The meter is too hot or too cold

Insurance coverage

Most meters are covered by the durable medical benefit. Strips and lancets are covered by the pharmacy benefit. Managed care covers different strips on different tiers. The best way to know what coverage you have is to call the 1-800 number on the back of your insurance card.

Make checking your blood sugar a part of your life!

Steps To Better Health

- Keep the test strips in their container and in a dry place
- Use the side of your finger, not the tip (*the side hurts less!*)