

Diabetes

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Diabetes is a complicated condition that must be watched closely. You will need regular follow-up care with your health care provider.

Symptoms of diabetes (new or poorly controlled) include:

- increased fatigue (tiredness)
- frequent urination
- blurred vision
- increased thirst and hunger
- slow healing of cuts and sores
- dry itchy skin
- numb hands and feet
- weight loss
- sexual problems.

You don't need to let diabetes control your life. You can control diabetes with a healthy lifestyle and the right management plan created by your health care provider.

Regular Clinic Visits

You should schedule visits with your health care provider every 3 to 6 months. You may need to see your health care provider more often if you aren't meeting your blood pressure and glucose goals.

Regular clinic visits will help lessen the risk of complications or help detect them early.

These complications include:

- eye disease
- kidney disease
- nerve damage
- cardiovascular disease
- infections.

Exams and Tests

You will need the following to help you control your diabetes and prevent complications.

■ Physical exams, including:

— weight and blood pressure checks

At every clinic visit, a nurse will check your weight and blood pressure. If your blood pressure is high, you may need to take medicine, eat a low-salt diet and exercise more.

— foot exams

Your health care provider will ask you to remove your shoes at each visit so he or she can examine your feet. This is done to look for nerve damage, infections or circulation problems.

■ Eye exams

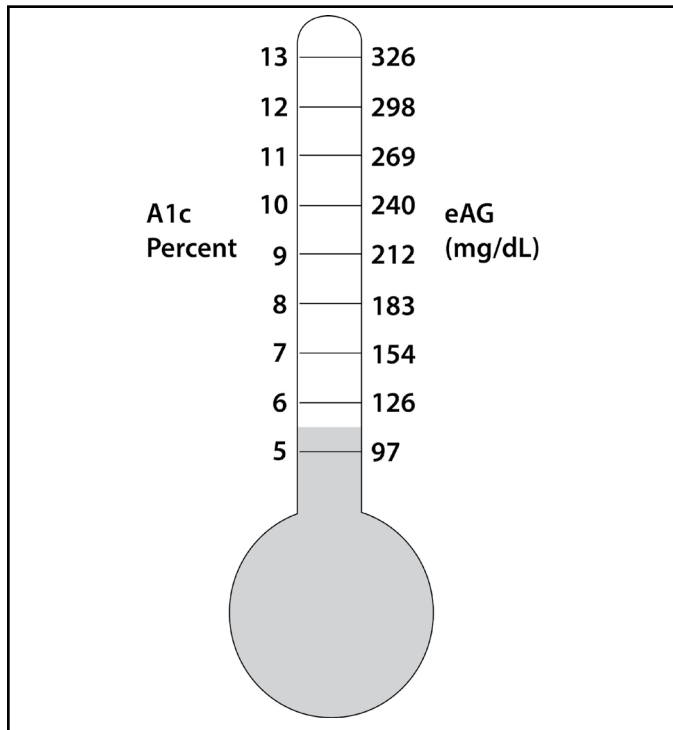
You should have a dilated eye exam once a year. You may go to an ophthalmologist or optometrist. Your eye exams should be a part of your medical record.

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■ Laboratory tests:

— blood glucose

Hemoglobin A1c (or A1c) is a blood test that measures your average blood glucose levels. You should have this test at least twice a year, more often if A1c goals are not met. The goal is a test result under 7 percent.



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This drawing compares A1c results with eAG results, which are reported as mg/dL.

— cholesterol profile

You may have your total cholesterol, triglycerides, HDL (“good” cholesterol) and LDL (“bad” cholesterol) checked once a year.

— urine

You will have a urinalysis with a microalbumin test once a year. A urine microalbumin is a sensitive test that finds early kidney disease.

— creatinine

You will have this blood test once a year to check how well your kidneys work.

What You Can Expect From Your Health Care Team

Your health care team will help you:

- control your blood glucose levels and keep them within a normal range
- control your cholesterol and blood pressure
- avoid or lessen complications from diabetes
- eat well
- follow a physical activity program created just for you
- maintain regular follow-up appointments
- know when you need to see a specialist
- make emotional and social adjustments to having diabetes.

Ask your health care team if you should schedule a visit with a diabetes educator or a dietitian.