

Know Your Diabetes ABCs

Diabetes can harm your blood vessels. It can raise your blood pressure and “bad” cholesterol numbers. If you have diabetes, you may have a greater chance of:

- Heart disease
- Heart attack
- Stroke

There are steps you can take to help lower the chance of heart disease and stroke. The American Diabetes Association (ADA) calls these steps the ABCs (A1C, blood pressure, and cholesterol).^{*} Work with your healthcare provider to set goals for your ABCs. Make sure you get the tests you need, when you need them.



A is for A1C

A1C is a blood test that is often done at your provider's office. A1C does not replace your blood sugar testing at home. An A1C test tells you:

- How well you have managed your blood sugar over the last 2-3 months.
- Your average blood sugar during that time.

WHEN TO GET AN A1C TEST?	ADA A1C GOAL	MY A1C GOAL	MY A1C RESULT	DATE
Every 3 to 6 months	Less than 7% or as your provider recommends	_____ %		

B is for Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is the force at which blood pushes through your blood vessels. Blood pressure is measured with two numbers, such as “140 over 80”.

- The first number (“140”) is the pressure in your blood vessels when your heart is pumping.
- The second number (“80”) is the pressure in your blood vessels when your heart is at rest.

High blood pressure (hypertension) makes your heart work harder than it should. This makes it more likely that you could have a heart attack or stroke.

WHEN TO GET BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKED?	ADA BLOOD PRESSURE GOAL	MY GOAL	MY LAST RESULT	DATE
Every visit	Below 140/80 mmHg [†]	_____ mmHg		

^{*}For more information, visit <http://www.diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/complications/heart-disease/healthy-abcs/healthy-abcs.html>.

[†]Some people with diabetes may have a lower blood pressure goal.

(continued)

C is for Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a type of fat in your blood. It is made by your body, and it also comes from certain foods you eat. There are “good” and “bad” types of cholesterol:

- **LDL cholesterol** — “Bad” cholesterol that can clog your blood vessels and increase the risk for heart attack or stroke.
- **HDL cholesterol** — “Good” cholesterol that helps keep your blood vessels clear.

Triglycerides are another type of “bad” fat that can increase your risk of heart attack or stroke.

WHEN TO GET A CHOLESTEROL TEST?	ADA CHOLESTEROL GOALS	MY GOAL	MY LAST RESULT	DATE
LDL cholesterol Often once per year	Below 100 mg/dL*	_____mg/dL		
HDL cholesterol Often once per year	Greater than 40 mg/dL (men) Greater than 50 mg/dL (women)	_____mg/dL		
Triglycerides Often once per year	Below 150 mg/dL	_____mg/dL		

*May be lower in some people.

Good choices can help you manage your ABCs

Check off the choices you are ready to make to help reach your ABC goals:

- ☐ I will get regular exercise: _____ minutes, _____ days per week.
My provider and I agree that the best activities for me are: _____.
- ☐ I will make healthy food choices.
___ I will use less salt.
___ I will eat fewer fatty foods.
___ I will eat a serving of fruit at each meal and a serving or two of vegetables at lunch and dinner.
___ Other: _____.
- ☐ I will work to reach and stay at my goal weight of: _____.
- ☐ I will ask my provider about how to quit smoking and then take the steps to quit.
- ☐ I will take my medicines as directed by my provider.
- ☐ I will ask my provider if taking aspirin, such as low-dose aspirin, is right for me.
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Other: _____

Talk with your healthcare provider about your diabetes ABCs — A1C, Blood Pressure, and Cholesterol.



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