



National Diabetes Month 2024



November is National Diabetes Month, a time when communities across the country seek to bring attention to diabetes. This year's focus is on taking action to prevent diabetes health problems.

Diabetes is a disease that occurs when your blood glucose, also called blood sugar, is too high. It affects about 38 million Americans, including adults and youth. Diabetes can damage the eyes, kidneys, nerves, and heart, and it is linked to some types of cancer.

But there's also good news: Taking charge of your health may help you prevent diabetes health problems.

Tips to get started



Know your risk for developing diabetes.

You are [more likely to develop type 2 diabetes](#) if you have overweight or obesity;

are age 35 or older; have a family history of diabetes; are African American, American Indian, Asian American, Hispanic or Latino, or Pacific Islander; are not physically active; or have prediabetes.

Manage your blood glucose, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels.

Preventing diabetes or [managing diabetes](#) as soon as possible after diagnosis may help [prevent diabetes health problems](#). You can start by managing your diabetes ABCs.

- A is for the [A1C test](#) that health care professionals use to measure your average blood glucose levels. Some people with diabetes also use [devices to track their blood glucose](#) throughout the day and night.
- B is for blood pressure.
- C is for cholesterol.

Ask your health care team what your ABCs goals should be.

Take small steps toward healthy habits.

[Lifestyle habits](#) such as planning healthy meals, being physically active, getting enough sleep, and not smoking may help you prevent diabetes or manage your diabetes ABCs. You don't have to do it all at once. Start slow and build healthier habits from there.

Take your medicines on time.

Remember to take your [medicines](#) even if you feel healthy. Talk with your doctor or pharmacist if you have trouble taking your medicines on time or at the correct dose.

Reach or maintain a healthy weight.

If you have overweight or obesity, ask your primary care provider if healthy eating, physical activity, or other weight-loss treatments may help you [manage your weight](#).

You may be able to prevent or delay diabetes by losing 5 to 7 percent of your starting weight. Use the [Diabetes Risk Management Calculator](#) to determine how much weight you can lose to help reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Take care of your mental health.

Managing diabetes can be hard. If you feel down, sad, or overwhelmed, learn about [healthy ways to cope with stress](#). Consider talking to a mental health counselor or joining a support group.

Work with your health care team.

Managing diabetes takes a team. Your health care team may include a primary care provider, diabetes specialist, registered dietitian, or certified diabetes educator. Ask your primary care provider if you should talk with other health care professionals about preventing or managing diabetes.

Diabetes medicines, devices, and office visits can be expensive. A social worker or a member of your health care team may be able to help you find community resources or [financial help for diabetes care](#).

Last Reviewed August 2024

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/community-health-outreach/national-diabetes-month>

healthinfo@niddk.nih.gov