

Living Healthy with **DIABETES**

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For BlueCare® and
TennCareSMSelect Members



Proper Testing: Key to Controlling Diabetes

Many people with diabetes lead full and active lives. Sometimes, though, diabetes can lead to other health problems. These problems include a heart attack, stroke, and

eye, kidney or nerve disease. To help control your diabetes, it is important to include the following tests in your plan of care. (*details about tests on next page*)

Know Your Value!		
Tests	Target Levels*	Frequency
Urine test to monitor nephropathy	Below 30	At least once a year
A1C test	Below 7%	At least twice a year
LDL cholesterol test	Below 100 mg/dl	At least once a year
Retinal or dilated eye exam	Check with your doctor for your target level	At least once a year

*for most people with diabetes

Check Health Information Library

You can listen to 10 different recorded messages about diabetes. Just call the Health Information Library. The number is 1-800-999-1658. The recorded messages are available 24 hours a day. Press the 1 key on your touch-tone phone, and then follow directions. Codes for diabetes subjects are 4391 through 4400.

Diabetes To Do List

❑ Urine Test to Monitor Nephropathy

Diabetic nephropathy (neh-FROP-uh-thee) is the medical term for kidney problems caused by diabetes. Taking a urine test is one way to monitor, or track, how well your kidneys are working. The test checks for small amounts of protein in the urine. The target for most people with diabetes is below 30. Make sure you have a urine test at least once a year.

❑ A1C Testing

The A1C test is a simple lab test that measures your average blood sugar, or blood glucose, over the last 3 months. This test is the best way for you and your health care team to know your overall blood sugar control during this period of time. The A1C test is also the best way to know how well your treatment plan is working over time. The A1C target for most people with diabetes is below 7%. Have an A1C test at least every six months.

❑ LDL Cholesterol Testing

Over time, diabetes can lead to heart and blood vessel disease. This can raise the risk of a heart attack or stroke. Keeping your LDL cholesterol low protects your heart. The LDL cholesterol test shows your risk of developing heart disease. The LDL cholesterol goal for most people with diabetes is below 100 mg/dl. Have your LDL cholesterol checked at least once a year.

❑ Retinal or Dilated Eye Exam

Diabetes can cause eye problems. The main one is retinopathy (reh-TI-nop-ah-thee). This eye problem can lead to blindness. The best way to prevent eye disease is to have an eye exam. In this exam, the eye doctor puts drops in your eyes to make your pupils get bigger. This is called a dilated (DY-lay-tid) eye exam. When the pupils get big, the doctor can see into the back of the eye. Make sure you see an eye doctor for a thorough eye exam every year.

Taking Care of Your Feet

April is Foot Health Awareness Month

Foot care is very important for people with diabetes. And with warmer weather just around the corner, it is critical that you take extra steps to protect your feet. The reason is that nerve damage from high blood sugar can cause foot problems. In fact, nerve damage is the main cause of amputations in people with diabetes.

To protect your feet, follow these tips:

Do

- Check your feet daily. Look for blisters, cuts and scratches. Always check between your toes.
- Check the insides of your shoes. Look for foreign objects and rough areas.
- Wash your feet in warm – not hot – water daily. Dry carefully.
- For dry feet, use lotion. Apply this after bathing and drying your feet.
- Wear shoes that fit well and let your toes move.
- Have your feet checked by your doctor at every visit.

Don't

- Soak your feet in hot water.
- Walk on hot surfaces, such as sandy beaches or cement around swimming pools.
- Walk barefooted.
- Wear sandals with thongs between the toes.
- Ignore foot problems.



What to Do for Colds or the Flu

When you have a cold, the flu or any other illness, your blood sugar levels can become harder to control. The body releases more sugar into the blood stream to help provide enough energy to fight illness. For this reason, you should never skip your diabetic medicine when you are ill, even if you are too sick to eat. If illness prevents you from taking your medicine, you should call your doctor as soon as possible.

Here are some other things you can do to help keep your diabetes under control when you are sick.

- Check your blood sugar at least four times a day. The results

may show that you need to take extra insulin. Talk to your physician or diabetes educator if you're not sure how to adjust your dosage.



- Follow your usual meal plan as closely as you can. Food and fluids are very important when you're sick. If you can't eat solid food, try 4 to 6 ounces of

regular soda, juice, or a gelatin dessert with sugar every other hour.

- Drink at least one 8-ounce cup of calorie-free fluids every hour that you're awake. Try water, decaffeinated tea, decaffeinated diet soda, or broth.
- Get plenty of rest and stay warm.

Above all, call your doctor if you...

- Get a blood sugar reading higher than 250 twice in a row.
- Get a positive result for ketones in your urine.
- Are vomiting.
- Are having pain.
- Have any questions about what to do.

Exercise is a Healthy Prescription for Diabetes

You probably already know that exercise can help you keep your weight down and give you energy. But staying in shape can also play an important role in regulating your blood sugar.

Before you begin exercising, check with your doctor. Begin slowly, starting with a 15-minute workout three times a week. Build to 30 to 45 minutes a day, taking extra time

to warm up, cool down and stretch. Exercise could include jogging, swimming, biking, lifting weights, and yoga.

If working out doesn't work for you, try small lifestyle changes. Studies have shown that "lifestyle activities" are as effective as structured exercise programs in reducing blood pressure, body fat,

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Exercise is a Healthy Prescription for Diabetes

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and risk for heart disease. These lifestyle changes could include brisk walking, climbing stairs or raking leaves.

Be sure to wear proper shoes, socks and clothing while exercising. This

can help you avoid chafing and blisters. Routine exercise will help you feel fit and healthy. Call your doctor if you are on insulin and have problems regulating it while exercising.

Para información acerca de TennCareSM en español llame al 1-866-311-4290. For information about interpretation and translation services, which are free to the enrollee, BlueCare members call 1-800-468-9698. TennCareSM Select members call 1-800-263-5479.

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