

# What Should I Discuss with My Doctor About My Diabetes?

Living with diabetes has to do with asking the right questions and knowing what your goals are. Diabetes means having too much sugar in your blood that is not able to be used as energy by your body because you do not make enough insulin. Insulin is what helps the sugar be used for energy by your body. Too much sugar in your blood can harm important organs like your eyes, your kidneys, and your heart. It is very important to know how to decrease the amount of sugar in your blood so you can live longer and be healthier!

<p><b>Food and Drinks</b></p> 	<p><b>What foods can raise my blood sugar?</b> Just because it does not taste sweet does not mean it has no effect on your blood sugar.</p> <p><b>Which foods should I eat more of, and which should I eat less of?</b> Fruits are considered a source of vitamins, but be careful, they contain sugar, and so do certain vegetables. Knowing what foods can raise your blood sugar, even if they are “healthy” is very important.</p> <p><b>How can I read food labels correctly to help me decide how an item will affect my blood sugar?</b> Carbohydrates are sugar even though they may not taste sweet. Reading labels and understanding portion sizes are very important to managing your diabetes. A bag of sugar-free candy may have many carbohydrates, so be careful! Diet soda will not raise your blood sugar, but regular soda can.</p> <p><b>Can I drink alcohol?</b> Alcohol can lower your blood sugar levels, so be careful when you drink and how much.</p>
<p><b>Exercise</b></p> 	<p><b>What sort of exercise should I do and how often?</b> Exercise helps the sugar leave your blood and go where it needs to be, and burns calories! The right kind of exercise is important, and every little bit counts. You do not need a gym membership to exercise the right way!</p> <p><b>Do I need to lose weight? If so, how much weight do I need to lose?</b></p>

(over, please.)

<p><b>Blood Sugar Testing</b></p> 	<p><b>What should my blood sugar level be, and what does it mean? How often should I get my blood sugar level checked?</b> Knowing your blood sugar goals helps you understand what managing your diabetes really means.</p> <p><b>How can I tell if my blood sugar is too high or too low if I do not have my blood sugar testing device with me?</b> There are ways your body tells you if your blood sugar is too low or too high. Being aware of those is just as important as testing your blood sugar.</p> <p><b>Why do I need to test my blood sugar?</b> Getting to know your blood sugar level at different times of day, such as when you wake up in the morning, after you exercise, and two hours after a meal, helps you understand how your body is managing to get the sugar out of your blood and into places where it can be used for energy.</p> <p><b>What should I do if I have low blood sugar?</b> Knowing what to do if your blood sugar is too low is very important. Your body needs a certain amount of sugar in the blood, just too much is bad.</p> <p><b>How can I test my blood sugar?</b> There are devices available to test your blood sugar that involve pricking your finger and reading your blood sugar level from a drop of blood.</p> <p><b>Can you give me a logbook so I can write down my blood sugar?</b> This way your doctor can see what your numbers were and when.</p>
<p><b>Medicine</b></p> 	<p><b>Do I need to take medicine for my diabetes? What side effects can I expect?</b> Knowing how a medication will affect your blood sugar is very important. Some medications can cause low blood sugar, which can be harmful so you have to be prepared! If you do not feel well on a medicine, tell your doctor. There are many to choose from, so do not get discouraged.</p> <p><b>How can I tell if my medicine is working? How fast will it start working?</b></p> <p><b>Do I need to use insulin? Do I need to get any vaccines?</b></p> <p><b>What medicines that I can buy over-the-counter should I avoid?</b></p>
<p><b>Appointments</b></p> 	<p><b>What other kind of doctors do I need to see?</b> You may be told you need to see a foot doctor, a dentist, and an eye doctor. Remember how blood sugar can harm parts of your body. Prevention is key!</p> <p><b>What sorts of labs do I need to have checked and how often?</b> Blood sugar is not the only thing you have to check. Diabetes affects many parts of your body including your kidneys.</p>

Take charge of your health care. Do not let diabetes conquer your life. Never get discouraged because you are one of MILLIONS living with this disease and you have plenty of help available to you!