

Diabetes and your HbA1c

Information Prescription

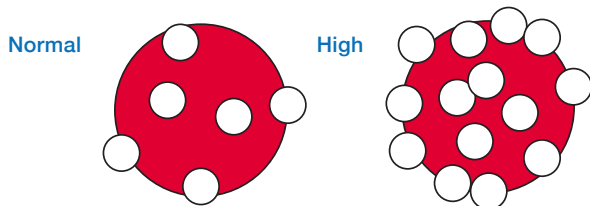
Your last two HbA1c results are: / / / /

Managing your day-to-day glucose levels and your longer-term average levels (Haemoglobin A1c or HbA1c) is important to help reduce your risk of serious complications.

Discuss a realistic personal target for your HbA1c with your diabetes health care team.

What is HbA1c?

HbA1c is a measure of how much glucose is stuck to your red blood cells. Although it is not a direct measure of blood glucose, it is closely related to your blood glucose levels over the last 10-12 weeks. A finger-prick check is a snapshot of your glucose at a moment in time and can help you understand if you are “high” or “low” and what happens if you change your diet, activity or are unwell.



When is high HbA1c a problem?

Over time, high glucose levels can damage the blood vessels. This puts you at a higher risk of developing diabetes-related complications such as going blind, losing a limb, or experiencing kidney failure. It also increases the risk of a heart attack or stroke.

How can I lower my HbA1c?

It is important to understand that your HbA1c will change for many reasons including: how long you have had diabetes, sickness, depression, change in lifestyle or because of other medicine such as steroids. The actions you take to lower your HbA1c will depend on whether you have type 1 diabetes and type 2 diabetes and your overall health. The next column has three main areas for you to consider.

Medication. It may be time to increase your dose or introduce a new medication.

Education. Your health care team are there to provide support, and to help you manage your diabetes. Learn about monitoring your blood glucose levels to help keep them in target more often. Go to the NDSS website: ndss.com.au.

Lifestyle. Discuss what changes can lower your HbA1c.

Eat a healthy balanced diet

- Eat a variety of vegetables and fruit. Aim for five serves of vegetables and two serves of fruit every day.
- Ensure food portion sizes are appropriate for you to keep a healthy weight.
- Reduce salt: eat less fast food, choose low-salt options, and avoid adding salt.
- Aim for at least two to three serves of oily fish a week.
- Eat less fatty food, processed meats, full-fat dairy, creamy sauce, deep fried foods and pastries.
- If you drink, cut down on alcohol.
- Stay hydrated – water is best.

Get more active

- Aim for 30 minutes of activity five times a week to raise your heartbeat. Activities like walking fast and cycling all count.
- Twice a week, add activities like gardening or yoga to strengthen your muscles.

My next steps

Discuss with your diabetes health care team two actions you are going to focus on (think about what, where, when and how):

1 _____

2 _____

Name: _____ Health professional: _____ Review date: _____

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