

# GOOD TO KNOW



## Getting the Most Out of Health Care Visits

### Your Health Care Team

You are the most important member of your health care team. You do the day-to-day things to manage diabetes, like choosing healthy foods, being physically active, and taking your medication. You can check your own blood glucose to see if you're reaching your blood glucose targets.

The other members of your health care team—your doctor, diabetes educator, nurse, dietitian, and others—are your advisors and coaches. They can tell you about your treatment options and keep track of your physical exams and lab tests. Together, you and your team can make sure you're getting the very best care for your diabetes.

### What to Do Before Your Visit

- Write your blood glucose check results in your log book every day.
- Keep a list of your questions.
- Make a list of the medicines, vitamins, and supplements you take. Include over-the-counter medicines. List when, why, how much you take, and if you need any refills.

### What to Bring With You

- Your blood glucose meter, log book, and questions
- Your lists of medications, vitamins, and other remedies

### What to Do When You're in the Exam Room

- Show your doctor your questions.
- Have your log book and meter ready. Discuss your blood glucose patterns.
- Get out your lists of medicines and other remedies to show the doctor.
- Take off your shoes and socks to remind your doctor to check your feet.
- Bring up any physical or emotional issues you are having, such as trouble sleeping or feeling anxious.

### DIABETES EDUCATION

If you would like to learn more about your diabetes care, such as how to eat better or get more active, ask where to go to get help. There are a number of ways to learn more about diabetes, such as classes, support groups, websites, books, and videos.

The ADA has a list of high-quality diabetes education programs. These programs meet special standards to help you learn to take care of your diabetes. To find a program near you, call ADA at 1-800-DIABETES or go to [www.diabetes.org/erp](http://www.diabetes.org/erp).

*Continued on next page*

Continued from previous page

## Tracking Your Targets

The ADA suggests these targets for most people with diabetes. You and your health care provider may set different goals for you. You can record your targets and your results in the spaces provided here.

WHAT TO DO	ADA TARGETS	MY TARGETS	MY RESULTS DATE:	MY RESULTS DATE:
<b>AT EVERY OFFICE VISIT</b>				
Review blood glucose numbers				
» Before meals	80 to 130 mg/dL			
» 2 hours after the start of a meal	Below 180 mg/dL			
Check blood pressure	Below 140/90 mmHg			
Review meal plan				
Review activity level				
Check weight				
Discuss questions or concerns				
Check your feet				
<b>AT LEAST EVERY 3 TO 6 MONTHS</b>				
A1C, also reported as eAG	Below 7% or below 154 mg/dL			
<b>AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR</b>				
Physical exam				
Dilated eye exam				
Flu shot				
Thorough foot exam				
<b>ONCE</b>				
Pneumonia vaccine				

Others as needed or recommended by your health care provider.

- Diabetes self-management education and support
- Cholesterol check
- Smoking cessation
- Pregnancy planning

This handout was published in *Clinical Diabetes*, Vol. 35, issue 5, 2017. It was adapted from the American Diabetes Association's Diabetes Advisor handout "Getting the Most Out of Health Care Visits" and Diabetes Toolkit No. 17: Getting the Very Best Care for Your Diabetes. Visit the Association's Patient Education Library at <http://professional.diabetes.org/PatientEd> for hundreds of free, downloadable handouts in English and Spanish. Distribute these to your patients and share them with others on your health care team. Copyright American Diabetes Association, Inc., 2017.

