There are many good reasons to take action to manage your diabetes.

- Each day you are likely to feel good and have more energy.
- In the future, you are likely to stay healthy and prevent or delay problems that can involve your heart, blood vessels, eyes, kidneys, and nerves.

Follow this four-step action plan. It will help you live a long and healthy life.

Diabetes means that your blood glucose is too high. Glucose comes from the food we eat. An organ called the pancreas (PAN-kree-as) makes insulin (IN-suh-lin). Insulin helps glucose get from your blood into your cells. Cells take the glucose and turn it into energy.

In **type 1 diabetes**, the pancreas does not make any insulin. In **type 2 diabetes**, the body does not make enough insulin or use it very well. As a result, glucose builds up in your blood and cannot get into your cells. If the blood glucose stays too high, it can damage your body. Adults most often get type 2 diabetes. **Gestational** (jes-TAY-shon-al) diabetes occurs when a woman is pregnant. Having it raises the mother’s and her child’s risk for getting diabetes, mostly type 2, for the rest of their lives.

- **A1C** measures your average blood glucose level over the past three months.
- **High Blood pressure** (BP) makes your heart work too hard.
- **LDL**, or bad cholesterol, builds up and clogs your arteries. **HDL**, or good cholesterol, helps remove cholesterol from your blood vessels.

### Test Goal* Check How Often?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Goal*</th>
<th>Check How Often?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1C</td>
<td>below 7</td>
<td>Twice a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>130/80</td>
<td>Each doctor’s visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
<td>LDL below 100</td>
<td>At least once a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HDL above 40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For most people with diabetes

**Healthy food choices include:**

- fruits, vegetables, fish, lean meats and poultry, dry peas or beans, and low-fat or skim milk and cheese.
- whole grain foods — whole wheat bread and crackers, oatmeal, brown rice, and cereals.

**Avoid foods that have a lot of sugar, salt, and fat.**

**Eat smaller portions of meat, fish and poultry, and larger portions of fruits and vegetables.**
STEP 3 CONTINUED...

- Get 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity, such as brisk walking, on most days of the week.
- Seek help if you feel down. You may feel better if you talk with a mental health counselor, friend, or a support group, clergy, or family member.
- Stop smoking — seek help to quit.
- Take your medicines even when you feel good. Ask if you need to take a low-dose aspirin to prevent a heart attack or stroke.
- Check your feet every day. Call your health care team if a cut, sore, blister, or bruise on your feet or toes does not begin to heal after one day.
- Brush your teeth and floss every day to avoid problems with your mouth, teeth, or gums.
- Report any changes in your eyesight to your doctor.

WORK WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE TEAM TO CREATE A PLAN TO HELP YOU REACH YOUR SELF-CARE GOALS.

- Make a list of all your reasons to manage your diabetes for life.
- Set goals you can reach. Break a big goal into small steps.
- Engage the whole family in being more physically active.
- Stay at a healthy weight by using your meal plan and being physically active.
- Learn what causes you to slip up in reaching your goals. Plan how to do better next time.
- Reach out to friends or family for support or when you feel down.
- Give yourself a healthy reward for doing well.

Step 4: GET REGULAR CARE

Avoid problems by seeing your health care team at least twice a year to:
- Get your ABC tests, other exams, and yearly flu shot.
- Have your blood pressure, weight, and feet checked.
- Review your record of blood glucose self tests, your ABC numbers, and your action plan.

If you have Medicare, ask what diabetes services are covered. To learn more go to: www.medicare.gov.

MY ACTION PLAN TO MANAGE MY DIABETES

Date ____________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Target</th>
<th>Test Results</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood pressure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Three reasons to manage my diabetes for life:
1. ____________________ 2. ____________________ 3. ____________________

Three things I will work on over the next three months to reach my self-care goals:
1. ____________________ 2. ____________________ 3. ____________________

The people who can help me do these things (e.g., family member, friend, health care team):

Place your plan where you will see it often. Keep it up to date. Take action to be healthy and control your diabetes for life — now and in the future.