

Long term management

There is no such thing as a 'touch of sugar' or 'mild' diabetes. Diabetes can cause some long-term problems. Your doctor and diabetes educator can help you prevent and / or manage these, but it is up to you to keep track of your Diabetes and know your risks.

Steps to take

- > establish a plan with your GP
- > make the appointments at times you will remember
- > find out about local diabetes education services and support groups
- > have emergency phone numbers nearby
- > know your risks.

Planning your long term management

Diabetes changes over time. What works today may not work next year. Regular visits (3 – 6 monthly) to your doctor will allow you to identify any problems early and to discuss the best treatment.

You should be having:

- > 3 – 6 monthly A1c (long term blood glucose check)
- > yearly urine or blood test to check kidney function
- > yearly blood cholesterol
- > blood pressure at every visit
- > yearly flu and 5 yearly pneumonia vaccinations
- > tetanus review.

Regular checks also include:

- > at least yearly dentist visit
- > at least 2-yearly eye specialist (optometrist or ophthalmologist)
- > at least yearly foot checks (GP, nurse or podiatrist)
- > review by a dietician if problems with food / eating
- > review by an endocrinologist (diabetes specialist) if you have type 1 diabetes, are pregnant, or your diabetes is unstable.



Special needs and emergencies

If you have any concerns about your diabetes, contact your doctor, diabetes educator or diabetes specialist and seek their advice. After hours, you may need to attend an emergency department at a hospital.

Have an action plan for hypoglycaemia (low blood glucose), hyperglycaemia (high blood glucose), sick days and foot injuries.

Social and economic issues

If you have any long term stress or unresolvable social issues (family problems, financial) it would be wise to seek professional help. Discuss this with your GP or diabetes health professional.

Action Plans

Heart Attack

- **Symptoms:** squeezing pain or discomfort in the centre of the chest lasting more than 10-15 minutes, pain spreading to the neck or shoulders; feeling sick in the stomach, sweating, or shortness of breath
- **Action:** immediately dial 000 for an ambulance and report a possible heart attack.

Brain attack

- **Symptoms:** a permanent or temporary block in an artery supplying the brain can cause temporary loss of speech, paralysis of one side of the body, loss of vision or loss of consciousness (so called transient ischaemic attack or TIA). Permanent blockage causes a stroke. A temporary blockage causes temporary (minutes) changes – a transient ischaemic attack can lead to a stroke.
- **Action:** immediately dial 000 for an ambulance and report a possible stroke.

Managing diabetes

You can help manage your diabetes by aiming for the following health goals. Examine your lifestyle and set goals that are right for you.

Management goals for lifestyle	
Smoking	If you smoke, talk to your doctor about how to give up.
Nutrition and healthy eating	Aim to have a healthy eating plan every day. Including wholegrain breads and cereals, fruit, vegetables, low fat dairy products and lean meats or alternatives. Spread carbohydrate foods evenly over the day.
Alcohol	No more than 2 standard drinks a day. (Drink less alcohol if trying to lose weight.)
Physical activity	At least 150 minutes per week. How you do this is up to you.
Stress	Identify stress triggers and plan to avoid them.
Reviews	
Weight / waist	BMI under 25. Waist – men less than 102 cm, women less than 88cm
Medication	Take as prescribed – if you have problems, discuss with your doctor or health professional.
Feet	If at risk self check daily/professional check at least yearly
Kidney	Urine albumin <20mg/L (first morning specimen) Urine albumin <20 µ`g/min (overnight collection)
Eyes	At least 2 yearly
Goals of management for ABCS	
A1c	A1c 7% or less (3-6 monthly glucose test).Fasting and before meals 4 - 6mmol/L
Blood pressure	Under 130/80
Cholesterol	Total cholesterol <4mmol/L
Smoking	Zero
Aspirin	Daily

For more information

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