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Health Bulletin

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

#58 in a series of Health Bulletins on issues of pressing interest to all New Yorkers

Living With Diabetes



What you need to know



nyc.gov/health



If you have diabetes, you have a higher chance of:

- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Nerve damage
- Eye problems and blindness
- Kidney disease
- Early death

Getting your blood sugar under control is important — but not enough. It's also important to control blood pressure and cholesterol.

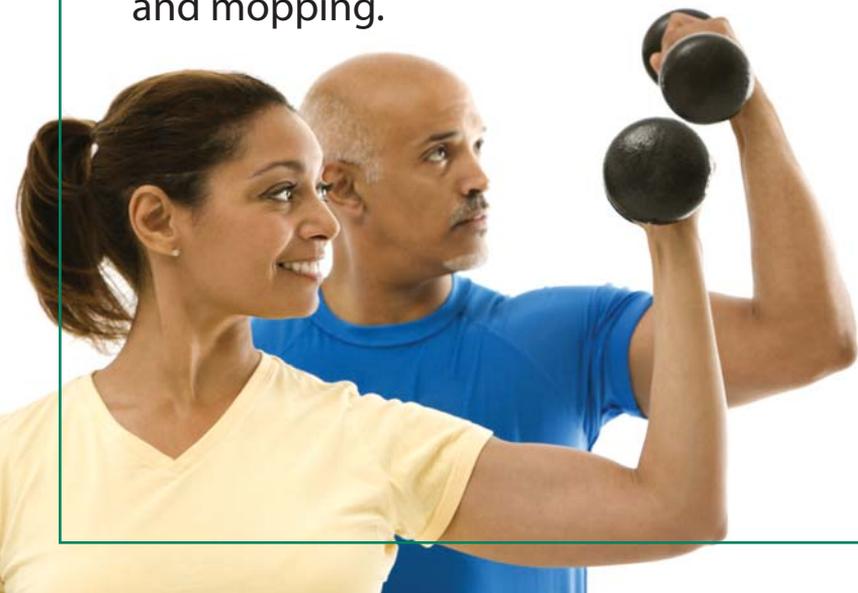
Diabetes is a serious disease — but you can still live a long and healthy life! Here's what you need to know.

Things You Can Do to Stay Healthy

To lower your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol:

Be physically active.

- Get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity (such as a brisk walk) at least 5 days a week.
- Get off the bus or subway a stop early and walk the rest of the way.
- Walk during your lunch break.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.
- Put on some music and dance.
- Do household chores such as vacuuming and mopping.



Eat a healthy diet and maintain a healthy weight.

- Eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Eat less fat, sugar, and salt.
- Drink water or try seltzer or diet drinks instead of sugar-sweetened soda or juice.
- Limit candy, sweets, chips, and fried food.
- Cook more meals at home.

Other things you can do:

- Check your blood sugar at the times your doctor recommends.
- Keep your feet clean and dry. Wear comfortable shoes. Look at your feet every night for sores.
- Brush and floss your teeth every day.
- Quit smoking — call 311 for free help or talk with your doctor.

Taking Your Medicine

Take your medicines as written on your medicine bottle.

- Even if you don't feel sick from your diabetes, high blood pressure, or high cholesterol, it is very important to take your medicine every day.
- Insulin works very well to bring your blood sugar down.
- Insulin needles are very small and easy to use.
- Ask your doctor how much and when to take your medicines.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to make your medicine plan simple.
- Ask your doctor about side effects and tell the doctor if you have any.



How Your Doctor Can Help You Stay Healthy

Your doctor can help you:

Protect your heart and brain by:

- Measuring your blood pressure at each visit. It should be less than 130/80.
- Checking your cholesterol every year. Your “bad” cholesterol (LDL) should be less than 100.
- Checking your 3-month blood sugar level (A1C) at least twice a year. Most people should aim for an A1C less than 7%.

Protect your kidneys by:

- Testing your urine to check for kidney disease.

Protect your eyes by:

- Referring you to the eye doctor once a year.

Protect your teeth and gums by:

- Referring you to the dentist twice a year.

Protect your feet by:

- Checking your feet for feeling and sores. Sores can lead to infection. Infection can lead to amputations.

Talk with your doctors about:

- **Physical activity and healthy weight.** Being even a little more physically active — and losing even a few pounds — helps a lot.
- **If taking aspirin** to protect your heart and brain is right for you.
- **Getting a flu shot every year.** People with diabetes who get flu get sicker than those who don't have diabetes.
- **Getting a one-time pneumonia shot.**
- **Sexual problems.**

Know and Control Your “ABCS”

- **A**1C (3-month blood sugar level): Less than 7%.
- **B**lood pressure: Less than 130/80.
- **C**holesterol: LDL (“bad”) cholesterol less than 100.
- **S**moking: If you smoke, quit now.

More Information and Help

- **NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: nyc.gov/health/diabetes or call 311 and ask for Diabetes**
- **American Diabetes Association: www.diabetes.org**
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/diabetes**
- **National Diabetes Education Program: www.ndep.nih.gov**
- **National Institutes of Health: www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov**

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**Stay healthier
and live longer —
Get your “ABCS”
under control!**



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Health and Mental Hygiene**

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