

# Control Diabetes: Know Your Blood Sugar Numbers

You must know your blood sugar numbers to control your diabetes. Testing is the only way to know whether your blood sugar is too high, too low, or just right.

**There are two types of tests to measure your blood sugar.**

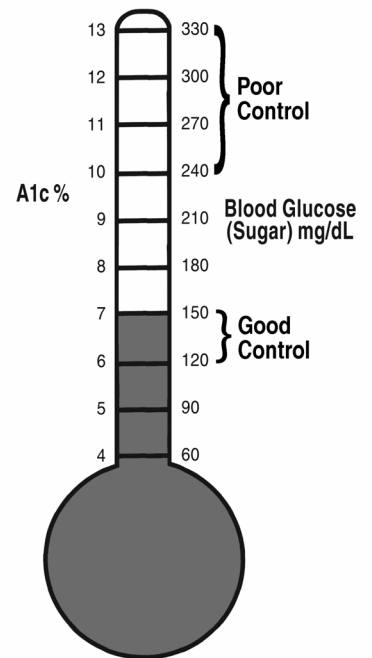
1. The **A1c test** measures your blood sugar control over the **past 3 months**. It is the best way to know if your blood sugar is under good control.
2. A **blood sugar (glucose) test** measures your blood sugar **at the time you test**. You can do this test at home using a simple meter and test strips. This test is also done in your doctor's office.

**You need both tests to get a complete picture of your blood sugar control.**

**The A1c test is a simple lab test.**

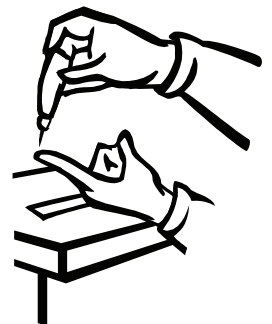
Your doctor takes a small sample of your blood and sends it to the lab. This test tells you and your doctor the amount of sugar in your blood over the past 2 to 3 months. Your A1c number is the best test to see if your blood sugar is close to normal or too high.

- The goal for most people with diabetes is less than 7%. (Look at the meter on the right to see what your A1c number tells you about your blood sugar number over time.)
- If your number is over 8%, your doctor will most likely change your treatment plan. We know that the higher your A1c is over time, the more likely you are to have problems related to diabetes.



**The blood sugar (glucose) test.**

This is a quick and simple test you can do at home. Blood sugar testing at home is a key part of good diabetes care. Ask your pharmacist or diabetes teacher to show you the proper way to test. Ask your doctor about when and how often to test. Common times to test are before meals, at bedtime, and two hours after eating.



## Blood sugar goals for most people with diabetes

These goals are common for home tests.

- **Before Meals** ..... Between 80 and 120 mg/dl
- **At Bedtime** ..... Between 100 and 140 mg/dl
- **Two hours after meals** ..... No more than 30 to 50 “points” above your blood sugar number before you ate
- **Testing two hours after meals** is a good way to see how your food choices affect your blood sugar.
- **Keep a record** of your blood tests and medicines. Most meters come with a log book. Write down any changes made in your meals and how you were feeling. Bring your record with you to your doctor visits. Share it with your doctor.
- **Treat low blood sugar right away.** Use diabetes tablets or glucose gel. You can also use 4 to 5 lifesavers or 4 ounces of juice or soda (not diet). Write it down in your log book. Tell your doctor when this happens. Your medicine may need to be changed.

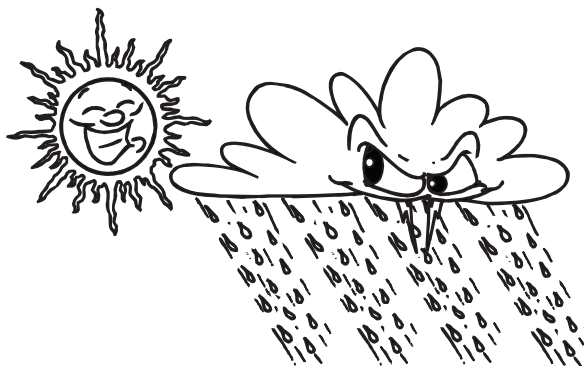


### Do Not Give Up!

**If you slip up, admit it.** Learn what you can from it.

**Do not be too hard on yourself.** A setback is not the end of the world. Try again. Get help. Ask questions.

**Let go and move on.** Take it a day at a time.



### For more information

Contact a **Diabetes Teacher** (nurses, dietitians, pharmacists, and other health professionals)

To find a diabetes teacher near you, call:

**The American Association of Diabetes Educators toll-free at 1-800-TEAMUP4 (1-800-832-6874)**

or visit the website at [www.aadenet.org](http://www.aadenet.org) and click on "Find an Educator."