

# STAYING HEALTHY

Diabetes is a lifelong disease. Start taking good care of yourself now so you can live a long and healthy life. See your diabetes care team regularly. The team will talk about your blood sugar (glucose), hemoglobin A1C, cholesterol, weight, and blood pressure levels. These things show you and your diabetes care team how your diabetes and overall health are doing.

- ▶ Blood sugar shows how your diabetes care is going
- ▶ A1C test measures your average blood sugar for the past 3 months
- ▶ Cholesterol shows how well your body is controlling fat in the blood-stream
- ▶ Weight can show positive changes in your diet and exercise. These changes can help your diabetes control and overall health
- ▶ Blood pressure tells you if your heart, kidneys, and blood vessels are staying healthy

## UNDERSTANDING HEMOGLOBIN A1C

The A1C is a blood test. It measures your average blood sugar level over time. Think of it as a blood sugar test "with a memory."

You should have an A1C test done about every 3 to 4 months. The A1C test should be done in your doctor's office or a lab.

## WHAT A1C NUMBERS SHOULD I AIM FOR?

Most people with type 2 diabetes should aim for an A1C level of 7% or less. Talk to your diabetes care team about the best target for you.

### What does the A1C number mean?

Hemoglobin A1C values are percents. These percents stand for average blood sugar. You can use this chart to see your average blood sugar levels:

Hemoglobin A1c	Average blood sugar
6.0%	126 mg/dl
7.0%	154 mg/dl
8.0%	183 mg/dl
10.0%	240 mg/dl
12.0%	298 mg/dl



Remember that you can be a STAR with your diabetes care:

**STOP** to check your blood sugar level. See your care team at regular times.

**THINK** about making healthy choices for your meals and snacks. Find time to exercise every day.

**ACT** on your plan. Make a healthy choice at meal time each day. Exercise at least 10 minutes a day.

**REFLECT** on your progress. Try to eat more healthy meals. Exercise a little longer each day.

*You will feel good. Your diabetes control will improve!*