



## Learn What You Can Do to Protect Your Heart

There's a big link between diabetes and both heart disease and stroke. Surprised? A lot of people with diabetes don't realize that having diabetes means they're more likely to have a heart attack or a stroke. But you can break that link by taking special care of your heart and blood vessels.

### What you can learn from this brochure:

- how you can lower your chances of having a heart attack or a stroke

### What does diabetes have to do with heart disease and stroke?

Having diabetes means that you're likely to have certain conditions, or risk factors, that increase your chances for having heart disease or a stroke. These conditions are:

- being overweight or obese
- having high blood pressure
- having abnormal blood fat (cholesterol) levels
- having protein in the urine
- having a family history of heart disease

You can't change your family history, but taking care of your diabetes and the conditions that come with it can lower your chances of having a heart attack or a stroke.

### Real-Life Stories from People with Diabetes

I used to eat bacon and eggs several times a week. But after I got diabetes, I decided to cut back on high-fat, high-cholesterol foods. I switched to cereal with low-fat milk for breakfast most days. After a while, my A1C, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels all went down.

Richard R., age 44 • type 2 diabetes

### Make a plan to reach your ABC targets

You can help to lower your risk of heart disease and stroke by keeping your ABCs of diabetes on target. Listed below are the ABC targets set by the American Diabetes Association (ADA) for most people with diabetes. The closer your numbers are to the targets, the better your chances of delaying or preventing a heart attack or a stroke. Write down your most recent results and your targets. **If you're unsure of your results or your targets, talk with your health care team.**

#### A is for A1C or estimated average glucose

It's the blood glucose (sugar) check "with a memory." It tells you your average blood glucose for the past 2 to 3 months.

#### B is for blood pressure

Your blood pressure numbers tell you the force of blood inside your vessels. When your blood pressure is high, your heart has to work harder than it should.

#### C is for cholesterol

Your cholesterol numbers tell you the amount of fat in your blood. Some kinds, like HDL cholesterol, help protect your heart. Others, like LDL cholesterol, can clog your blood vessels and lead to heart disease. Triglycerides are another kind of blood fat that raises your risk for a heart attack or a stroke.

### Real-Life Stories from People with Diabetes

I found a way to add exercise to my daily routine. I go for a 10-minute walk after each meal. I keep track by checking it off in my logbook. When I look back, I feel good about myself and how far I've come.

Maria S., age 62 • type 1 diabetes

You'll see that the small steps you take each day will result in big rewards in the long run. These steps will help you take special care of your heart and blood vessels. Talk with your health care team about how to take action.

Review your options to help you reach your ABC targets. Then check the things that you're ready and willing to do now. You can also underline the things you'd like to do in the future.

## How to reach your A1C/eAG target

ADA Target	My Target	My Results
A1C below 7% <i>also reported as</i> eAG below 154 mg/dl		

**Look at the amounts of carbohydrate (carb) foods you're having at each meal.** Carbohydrate foods—bread, tortillas, biscuits, rice, pasta, crackers, cereal, fruit, juice, milk, potatoes, corn, peas, and sweets—can be part of a diabetes meal plan. However, because they raise your blood glucose more than other foods do, try to closely watch the amount of carb foods you eat. For many people, having 3 or 4 servings of a carb choice at each meal and 1 or 2 servings at snacks is about right. See the serving size guide below.

Carb Choice	Serving Size
bread	1 slice
tortilla	1 small
fruit and juice	1 small piece or ½ cup
milk and sugar-free yogurt	1 cup
noodles or rice	½ cup
corn, peas, and potatoes	½ cup

Work with your health care team to design a meal plan that will fit the way you live and include the foods you like. Ask for a complete list of carb choices and serving sizes.

- Be more active.** Physical activity such as walking or yardwork can help lower your blood glucose and help relieve stress.
- Take your diabetes pills or insulin as prescribed to lower your blood glucose.** Be sure to ask your team when to take your medicines.

## One step I'll take to reach my A1C/eAG target is

Example: I'll eat 3 servings of carbs at meals instead of 5.

## How to reach your blood pressure target

ADA Target	My Target	My Results
Below 130/80 mmHg		

- Eat more vegetables and fruits!** Eating more vegetables and fruits, along with low-fat dairy foods, whole grains, fish, poultry, and nuts, helps lower blood pressure.
- Reduce the amount of sodium (salt) you eat.** Check food labels for sodium content. Most people should limit their sodium intake to 2,400 mg each day.
- Lose weight** by eating less and being more active than you are now. Walking briskly for 20 minutes burns about 100 calories.
- Watch your alcohol consumption.** Drinking more than 1 to 2 drinks per day is not helpful and may actually raise your blood pressure. Moderate amounts of alcohol reduce your risk of heart disease, perhaps by raising HDL (good) cholesterol levels. One drink is equal to 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or a shot (1½ ounces) of distilled spirits.
- Quit smoking.**
- Take your blood pressure pills as prescribed.**

## One step I'll take to reach my blood pressure target is

Example: I'll eat at least 2 servings of vegetables every day.

Example: I'll add an extra 10 minutes of walking every day.

## Ask the Diabetes Advisor

**Question:** I'm taking so many pills....There's one for my blood glucose, one for my blood pressure, and another for my cholesterol. Now my doctor thinks I should add another one for my blood glucose. I just don't understand why I need so many different pills.

Edna S., age 76 • type 2 diabetes

**Answer:** Each pill works in a different way to keep blood glucose, blood pressure, and cholesterol on track. Some people take two kinds of pills or a combination pill because the pills work even better together.

To make it easier to take all of your pills, talk to your health care team about devices that can help, such as pill holders for each day.

## How to reach your cholesterol targets

Types of Cholesterol	ADA Targets	My Targets	My Results
LDL cholesterol	Below 100 mg/dl		
HDL cholesterol	Above 40 mg/dl (for men)		
	Above 50 mg/dl (for women)		
Triglycerides	Below 150 mg/dl		

- Eat less saturated fat.** Saturated fat is a type of fat in foods that raises blood cholesterol. Try cutting back on foods high in saturated fat such as meats, butter, whole milk, cream, cheese, lard, shortening, and baked goods made with palm oil and coconut oil. Instead, have lean meat, poultry, fish, olive oil, peanut oil, corn oil, low-fat or non-fat milk and cheese, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. You'll find saturated fat information on food labels.
- Eat foods high in fiber,** such as oatmeal, dried beans and dried peas, and citrus fruits.
- Use special cholesterol-lowering margarine.**
- Keep your blood glucose close to your target range** to help lower your triglycerides.
- Be more active.**
- Aim for a healthy weight** by watching portion sizes.
- Quit smoking** to help boost your levels of HDL (good) cholesterol.
- Watch your alcohol consumption.**
- Take cholesterol-lowering pills as prescribed.**

### One step I'll take to reach my target cholesterol numbers is

Example: I'll switch to a low-fat milk like 1% milk.

These changes can be hard. Get help from your family and friends.

### Real-Life Stories from People with Diabetes

I was really upset when I was diagnosed with diabetes last year. I didn't feel like doing anything. I even stopped taking my dog for walks. But then I decided that I had to do something to get back in the swing of things, so I started walking the dog again. Now I'm much less stressed and that dog is one happy hound!

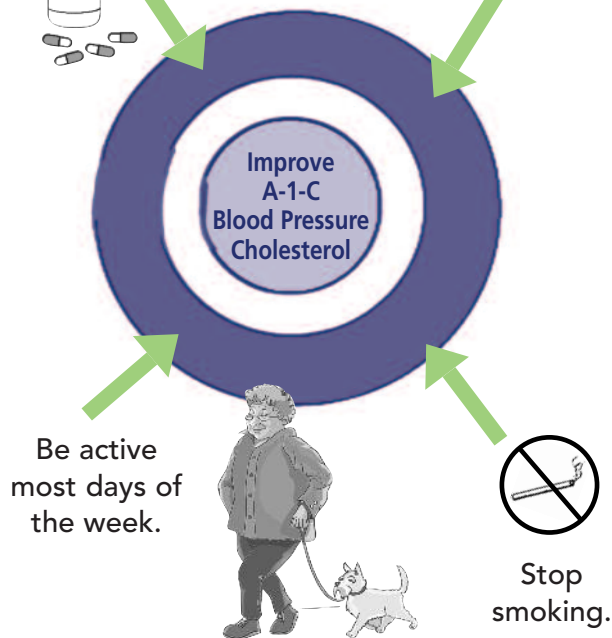
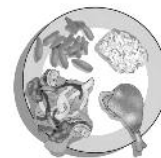
Alfredo L., age 66 • type 2 diabetes

## How to Protect Your Heart and Blood Vessels

Take medications.



Make wise food choices.



## What else can I do to protect my heart and blood vessels?

### Take medications

Aspirin and certain pills for blood pressure and cholesterol may reduce the chances of having a heart attack or stroke. Work with your health care team to determine which pills are best for you.

### Reduce stress

Coping with diabetes and its complications can make you feel angry, stressed, anxious, or depressed. Learning how to manage stress can help you cope better. You know best what will reduce stress in your life. What can you do? Make a list here.

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**Learn to ask for support when you need it.** Tell family and friends how you feel and what they can do to help.

## Lose weight

If you're overweight, losing even 5 or 10 pounds will lower your blood glucose, blood pressure, and cholesterol and reduce your risk for heart disease. Try:

- eating fewer calories, less fat, and more fiber
- eating smaller portions
- being more active

Work with your health care team to make a plan. They can provide support or refer you to a weight-loss program.

## Meal makeover

Make a better choice by choosing a low-fat, low-calorie fast-food lunch. You can usually find lower-calorie, lower-fat choices, no matter where you're eating. Choose grilled rather than fried foods. Request salad dressing and sauces on the side and then use as little as possible. Get the best bargain for your health, not your wallet—order the smallest serving size available.

A high-calorie, high-fat lunch	calories	total fat (grams)	saturated fat (grams)	sodium (mg)
Bacon double cheeseburger	580	35	20	1,240
Large french fries (salted)	500	25	15	880
Large regular cola drink	330	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,410</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2,120</b>

A lower-calorie, lower-fat lunch	calories	total fat (grams)	saturated fat (grams)	sodium (mg)
Hamburger	310	15	5	580
Small french fries (unsalted)*	230	10	5	240
Large diet cola drink	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>820</b>

\*Consider having a side salad and a piece of fruit instead of the fries for an even lower-calorie, lower-fat lunch.

## Keep up with checkups

Regular checkups can help you lower your risk of heart disease and stroke.

- Have your blood pressure checked at every visit.
- Have your A1C/eAG checked at least twice a year.
- Have your blood fats checked at least once a year.
- Have your urine checked for small amounts of protein once a year.

## For More Information

To get more information about diabetes, contact the American Diabetes Association:

- Call 1-800-DIABETES (342-2383). Ask for copies of *Reading Food Labels*, *Are You Ready to Quit Smoking?* and *A Guide to the Standards of Care*.
- Ask for a free copy of Diabetes Advisor, Number 4: *Make the Link! Finding and Treating Heart and Blood Vessel Disease*.
- Ask for a free copy of the "I Have Diabetes" outcomes card, order code 5984-01. It's a wallet-sized card you can use to record your targets and track your progress.
- Go to [www.diabetes.org/MakeTheLink](http://www.diabetes.org/MakeTheLink)

### My Health Care Professional

The "Make the Link! Diabetes, Heart Disease, and Stroke" initiative is made possible by support from the following corporate partners: AstraZeneca LP; Bristol-Myers Squibb Co.; Eli Lilly and Co.; GlaxoSmithKline; Merck & Co., Inc., and Merck/Schering-Plough Pharmaceuticals; Monarch Pharmaceuticals and Wyeth Pharmaceuticals; Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corp.; and Pfizer Inc.

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1-800-DIABETES (342-2383)  
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