Managing diabetes
Preventing complications

Nutrition
More than a hill of beans

Exercise & weight
Build your own home fitness kit

Information, tools and resources for a healthier you
ONE OF THE BEST WAYS to keep tabs on your diabetes is to track your habits and care with a daily log. This written record can help you:

• Understand what affects your blood sugar, or glucose
• Keep track of your blood glucose readings, goals and doctor visits
• Know if your treatment plan is working
• Share information with your doctor about your health and treatment plan

Your daily record
It doesn’t matter where you keep your notes — use whatever is close at hand as you go about your day. You can use a smart phone, weekly planner or small notebook, for example. On a daily basis, you might record your:

Blood glucose levels. Your doctor will let you know how often you need to check your blood sugar. It might be once a day or more. Record your reading and the date and time you took it.

Meals and snacks. Stick to the diabetes meal plan you and your doctor or dietitian have created. Write down when and what you eat throughout the day — even if you miss a goal here and there. A full, honest record is essential to helping improve your health.

Physical activity. Your doctor can tell you which activities are safe for you and how much exercise you need each day. List the type of exercise you did and for how long.

Medicine. Note how often you take your medicine and how much — or if you missed a dose. Include any over-the-counter medicines, vitamins and supplements you take, as well.

Foot care. Include a check box to remind yourself to examine your feet each day. Look for cuts, blisters, sores, redness or swelling. Call your doctor if you notice any of these symptoms.

Your goals
Ask your doctor what your goals should be for your blood glucose readings, blood pressure, cholesterol levels and A1C test results. You can include your targets — and track these numbers — in your record, too. Also, note illnesses, stressful events and weight changes. These factors — as well as how you were feeling — can affect blood sugar levels.

For more info
Visit www.niddk.nih.gov to see a sample daily record. Type “daily diabetes record” in the search box.
HAVE YOU BEEN diagnosed recently with diabetes?

While no disease should ever define you, it’s now a part of your life. And, you need to know how to manage it — so you can feel your best and stay as healthy as possible.

And, you very likely can make a difference. Research shows that people who are involved with their health care tend to get better results than people who are less engaged. Managing your condition could help you:

• Feel better
• Reduce your risk of hospitalization and emergency room visits
• Lower your medical costs

Moving forward: 5 for life!

To take care of yourself and feel your best, you’ll want to work closely with your doctor and other providers. Here are five additional long-term strategies to use:

1. Educate yourself. The more you know about your diabetes, the more you can actively take part in your care. Ask your doctor about reliable resources. Unfortunately, not all the information out there is accurate or reliable. So, be wary of treatments or tips that promise a quick fix or miracle cure. Always get your doctor’s OK before trying any remedy.

2. Do your part. Know and follow your care plan. For example, monitor your glucose as directed. And, do your best to make any lifestyle changes your doctor advises — whether it’s getting regular exercise or quitting smoking.

3. Follow through. Have your checkups and medical tests as advised. And, make sure you discuss the results with your doctor. Talk with him or her anytime you have questions or concerns.

4. Be honest. Are you struggling to follow part of your treatment plan? Maybe you’re feeling discouraged about your eating plan. Let your doctor know. Together, you may be able to come up with solutions.

5. Seek support. Turning to friends, family or others for encouragement and comfort can be good medicine. Your doctor may be able to point you toward a local or online support group, as well.

You can also check your benefits plan to see what services might be covered to help you manage your diabetes. Those might include nutrition or behavioral health counseling, for example.

Did you know you have access to a wellness coach?

Call 1-800-478-1057 to get started.

Your coach can help you better manage your diabetes with tips, tools and personal support. Call to learn more.

This service is available at no extra cost to you.
A DIAGNOSIS OF TYPE 2 DIABETES can be overwhelming. But, learning about the disease can help you manage it. And, understanding how to control your diabetes may help you avoid its potential long-term complications, such as cardiovascular disease, nerve damage and kidney disease.

What is type 2 diabetes?
Type 2 diabetes, the most common form of the disease in the United States, can affect people of any race or age — even children. Risk factors include genetics, obesity, inactivity and an unhealthful diet.

Insulin plays a key role in diabetes. This hormone, which is made by the pancreas, helps glucose move from the bloodstream into the cells of your body to be used for fuel.

If you have type 2, your body may not make enough insulin or may not use it properly. As a result, blood glucose levels can become abnormally high. Over time, this can damage your organs.

Know your ABCs
Once you’re diagnosed with diabetes, you and your health care team will create a diabetes management plan. It should include strategies for managing your ABC numbers, which will help reduce your risk of health complications:

- **A1C levels** — check at least twice a year. A1C is an overview of how controlled your blood sugar has been over the past three months.

Typical goal: less than 7 percent for most people.

- **Blood pressure** — check every time you see your doctor. High blood pressure can hurt your heart and kidneys.

Typical goal: less than 130/80 mmHg.

Busting common diabetes myths

**Myth 1: Diabetes is contagious.**
**False.** Diabetes isn’t like a cold or the flu — you can’t catch it from someone else.

**Myth 2: Diabetes is caused by too much sugar.**
**False.** But, a diet high in sugary, high-calorie foods may lead to weight gain, which can increase your risk of type 2 diabetes. Maintaining a healthy weight and getting enough exercise may help you delay or prevent diabetes if you’re at risk.

**Myth 3: People with diabetes have to eat special foods, and they can’t eat sweets.**
**False.** People with diabetes can eat regular foods, and sweets can be a part of a healthy meal and exercise plan. The same is true for people without diabetes, too. A healthful diet is low in fat, salt and sugar and includes whole grains, vegetables and fruit.

Source: American Diabetes Association
• **Cholesterol** — most people need a yearly check. High levels of LDL, the bad cholesterol, can clog your arteries. On the other hand, HDL, the good cholesterol, helps remove cholesterol from the blood.

  Typical goal: LDL less than 100 mg/dL and HDL more than 40 mg/dL for men or more than 50 mg/dL for women.

**A healthy lifestyle**
Talk with your doctor about which lifestyle steps can help you manage your blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol. Strategies may include:

- Eating foods that contain less fat.
- Reducing sodium and cholesterol in your diet.
- Stopping smoking or never starting.
- Eating healthful foods, such as whole grains, fruits, veggies, lean meats, and low- or no-fat dairy products.

- Getting at least 2.5 hours weekly of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise and two or more sessions weekly of resistance training. Both of these require your doctor’s approval first.

  Lifestyle changes sometimes aren’t enough to bring blood glucose levels down to your goal or target range. If that’s the case, it may be necessary to take medications.

  In addition to glucose-lowering drugs, there are medications that can help lower your blood pressure or cholesterol. These can help reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke, which are more common among people with diabetes than among people without the disease.

  For in-depth information, visit the American Diabetes Association at www.diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/recently-diagnosed.

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**Is it diabetes?**

Many people have diabetes and don’t know it. Since early diagnosis and treatment can help prevent complications, watch for any of these red flags, which could be signs of the disease:

- Frequent urination
- Extreme hunger
- Increased fatigue
- Excessive thirst
- Unusual weight loss
- Blurry vision

Talk with your doctor if you have any of these symptoms.

Here are common types of diabetes:

**Pre-diabetes.** A person’s blood glucose level is higher than normal but not high enough for a diagnosis of diabetes. Nearly 26 million people in the United States have diabetes, and 79 million people over the age of 20 have pre-diabetes.

**Type 1.** The body fails to make insulin, the hormone that allows glucose to enter and fuel cells in the body. About 5 to 10 percent of Americans diagnosed with diabetes have type 1.

**Type 2.** The body doesn’t use insulin properly. Most Americans diagnosed with diabetes have type 2.

**Gestational diabetes.** This type affects between 2 and 10 percent of all pregnant women. It usually goes away after pregnancy.

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**Get regular care**
The National Diabetes Education Program recommends seeing your health care provider at least twice a year. At those appointments, you should:

- Review your diabetes management plan.
- Have an A1C test, blood pressure check, foot check and weight check. If you’re not meeting targets or if your regimen is changing, your doctor might choose to change the frequency of A1C testing.

  And, at least once a year, have:

  - Urine and blood tests for kidney conditions.
  - A flu vaccination. Ask your doctor if you need a pneumococcal vaccination.
  - Cholesterol and triglyceride tests.
  - A screening test for nerve conditions.
  - Comprehensive eye and dental exams, including a dental cleaning twice a year.
Managing diabetes

5 keys to healthy blood pressure

Control your numbers to help protect your health

With every beat, your heart pumps nourishing blood to your body’s cells. As blood rushes through your arteries, it exerts a force called blood pressure.

But, if blood pressure rises and stays high, it can damage your body. Over time, high blood pressure may harm your heart, blood vessels, kidneys, eyes and more. And, you can have it for years without knowing it.

What the numbers mean

When you have your blood pressure measured, you get a two-number result. For example, your reading may be “120 over 80.”

Systolic pressure. The top number is your systolic blood pressure. It’s the force when your heart beats.

Diastolic pressure. The bottom number is your diastolic pressure. It’s the force between beats, when your heart is at rest.

Blood pressure levels in adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Systolic millimeters of mercury (mmHg)</th>
<th>Diastolic millimeters of mercury (mmHg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Lower than 120</td>
<td>Lower than 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prehypertension</td>
<td>120 to 139</td>
<td>80 to 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypertension stage 1</td>
<td>140 to 159</td>
<td>90 to 99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypertension stage 2</td>
<td>160 or higher</td>
<td>100 or higher</td>
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</tbody>
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A desirable blood pressure (sometimes called a goal or target) for people who have diabetes, high blood pressure or kidney disease

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Lower than 130</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lower than 80</td>
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Goals for a lifetime

Remember these five steps — because they can help you prevent and control high blood pressure:

1. Get it checked. High blood pressure typically occurs without symptoms. That’s why having it measured regularly is so important. Ask your doctor what your blood pressure is — and how often you should have it checked. See “What the numbers mean.”

2. Fight it with food. What you eat can directly affect your blood pressure. Your doctor may recommend the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) eating plan, which has been shown to lower blood pressure. It’s low in sodium and emphasizes fruit, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products. Learn more at www.nhlbi.nih.gov. Enter “DASH” into the search field.

3. Get moving. Regular exercise is good for you — and your blood pressure. For safety’s sake, talk with your doctor about what’s right for you — and do so before significantly increasing your activity level.

   An added bonus: This step, along with healthful eating, can help you control your weight — another factor in blood pressure control.

4. Ditch high-pressure habits. Smoking raises blood pressure — and drinking too much alcohol may, as well.

5. Work with your doctor. Talk with him or her about your blood pressure — especially if you need help with any of these steps. Sometimes, lifestyle changes aren’t enough. Some people need medicine, as well, to stay in a healthful range.

Need advice on your numbers? Call a Wellness Coach at 1-800-478-1057.
Beans: Small, yet mighty!

How a bill of beans actually amounts to quite a lot

BEANS — you could call them humble. They’re inexpensive and easy to prepare. But, when it comes to nutrition, they’ve got no reason to be modest. Let’s see…they’re rich in plant protein — and they’re good sources of iron, zinc, potassium, folate and fiber, too. Beans are also low in fat and have no cholesterol — but are hearty and filling. So, this makes them a great alternative to meat.

Just to clarify, we’re talking about dried beans, not the green, or string, variety. Dried beans — which can be dry-packaged, canned or frozen — include kidney beans, pinto beans, black beans, black-eyed peas and chickpeas (garbanzo beans). Beans belong to a family of plants called legumes — which includes lentils and split peas, as well.

And, as nutritious as beans are, they’re almost equally as versatile. You can serve them hot or cold — as a side dish or a meat-free entrée. They’re also a tasty addition to items such as burritos, tacos, soups and salsas.

A gripe to air

Do you shy away from beans because of their gassy reputation? Using canned beans can help. Here are a few more beat-the-bloat tips:

• Take an anti-gas aid before your meal, such as Beano®.
• When soaking beans, change the water several times.
• Add beans gradually to your diet. Exercising and drinking adequate fluids may also help.

Beano® is a registered trademark of GlaxoSmithKline.

Spill the beans...

Here are some legume-loving secrets for your kitchen:

• Choose low-sodium canned beans — rinsing them well can also remove any excess sodium.
• Replace half the ground beef in recipes with kidney or black beans. Or, skip the meat for a meatless meal.
• Top a baked potato with beans and salsa.
• Add beans to green salads and rice dishes.
• Enjoy low-fat hummus as a sandwich spread or dip for cut-up veggies. It’s traditionally made with pureed chickpeas.

Chicken and bean burritos

Use leftover chicken or turkey for this healthier alternative to traditional beef burritos.

Ingredients

| 1 tablespoon canola oil |
| 1 medium onion, sliced |
| 2 cloves minced garlic |
| 2 to 3 teaspoons chili powder |
| 1 15-ounce can diced tomatoes |
| 1 small container green chili peppers (mild or hot) |
| 2 tablespoons lime juice |
| 4 cups shredded chicken or turkey (leftover or rotisserie) |
| 1 15-ounce can pinto beans |
| ¾ cup low-fat grated cheese (Monterey or mozzarella) |
| 2 cups shredded lettuce |
| 6 10-inch whole-wheat tortillas or wraps |

Directions

Heat oil in a large pan. Over medium heat, add onion and garlic. Sauté until soft, about 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in chili powder and green chili peppers. Add tomatoes and lime juice, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer, and cook another 15 to 20 minutes.

Stir in chicken or turkey and beans and heat through, another 3 to 4 minutes. Divide the mixture evenly among tortillas. Top with cheese and lettuce; roll and serve.

Variation: Serve turkey mixture over ½ cup of brown rice instead of in a tortilla. Add the cheese and lettuce to the rice mixture.

Nutrition information: Makes 6 servings. Amount per serving: 395 calories; 12g total fat; 38g carbohydrate; 7g fiber; 39g protein; 650mg sodium.
Stay balanced with exercise

Affordable ways to make your own home fitness kit

MAYBE THERE ARE times you can’t get to the gym for your regular exercise. But, you like using some equipment and tools as part of your workout. Don’t despair. Consider creating your own home fitness kit.

If you have a treadmill or stationary bike, that’s great. But, you don’t have to have heavy, expensive equipment to get fit at home. There are smaller, more affordable options out there.

Gearing up!

Build your fitness kit with a balanced workout in mind — include items for aerobic and strength-building exercise. To the right are some possibilities. Be sure to customize your kit to your preferences, goals and abilities.

Don’t let a tight budget keep you from exercising. For weights, try soup cans — or water bottles filled with sand. Or, forgo the equipment for brisk walking, ab crunches or other great basics.

A plan fit for you

If you haven’t already, be sure to talk with your doctor about your fitness goals. Ask what activities are right for you. And, for safety’s sake, always talk with your doctor before significantly increasing your level of activity.

Kit tips!

**Hand weights.** Give your muscles a workout without a weight machine. You might start with a light set, such as 3 to 5 pounds. Add heavier ones or use adjustable dumbbells as you get stronger.

**Elastic fitness bands.** They may be lightweight, but these stretchy bands can provide heavy-duty strength-boosting exercise.

**Stability ball.** Pump up your abdominal workouts. Crunches on a stability ball may be more effective than those done on the floor.

**Fitness DVDs.** From beginning yoga to heart-pumping dance parties, there’s a wide variety of options. Look for those led by certified fitness instructors. Avoid programs that promise instant results. And, if possible, try before you buy. Rent a few DVDs. Your local library may have titles you can borrow, too. You can even swap DVDs with friends.

**Exercise mat.** Use it to help you strike a yoga pose or to make calisthenics more comfortable.

**Jump rope.** If you have the space and a flat, smooth surface, this playground pastime can provide a lively aerobic workout. Opt for a rope with foam grips that won’t slip from your hands.

**Inspiring tunes.** Let the music move you. Create an upbeat playlist to energize workouts.

**Screen tools.** If you love technology, consider active video games. Or, look for fitness applications for your smart phone or tablet.

GET FIT: Exercise can help you manage your diabetes. Ask your doctor what’s right for you.