

 Living  
well with  
**DIABETES**

Manual and Lifestyle  
Guidebook





# Acknowledgments

Health advice in this manual is given by the Heart Disease, Stroke, and Diabetes Prevention Program, Washington State Department of Health.

This manual uses a blue circle similar to the logo for World Diabetes Day used by the International Diabetes Federation. The blue circle is the global symbol for diabetes awareness. For more information please visit [worlddiabetesday.org](http://worlddiabetesday.org).

**To order copies:** 360-236-3770

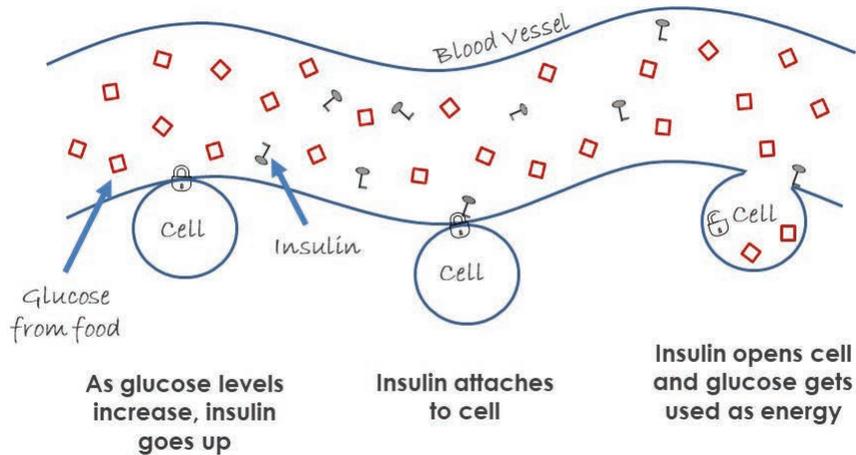
# Table of Contents

What is Diabetes? .....	1
What is Type 1 Diabetes? .....	2
What is Type 2 Diabetes? .....	3
Tips for Health: Nutrition .....	4
Tips for Health: Physical Activity .....	5
Tips for Health: Emotional Support .....	6
Tips for Health: Goal Setting .....	7
Common Tests .....	8
Diabetes Care Chart 1 .....	9
Diabetes Care Chart 2 .....	10
Blood Glucose Tracker (cut-out) .....	11
Community Resources .....	13
Online Resources .....	14

# What is Diabetes?

In the normal digestive process, food is broken down in the body to glucose, also commonly known as sugar (shown as red squares). Glucose gives your body energy to go about your day, but glucose needs insulin (shown as keys) to enter the cells to be used as energy.

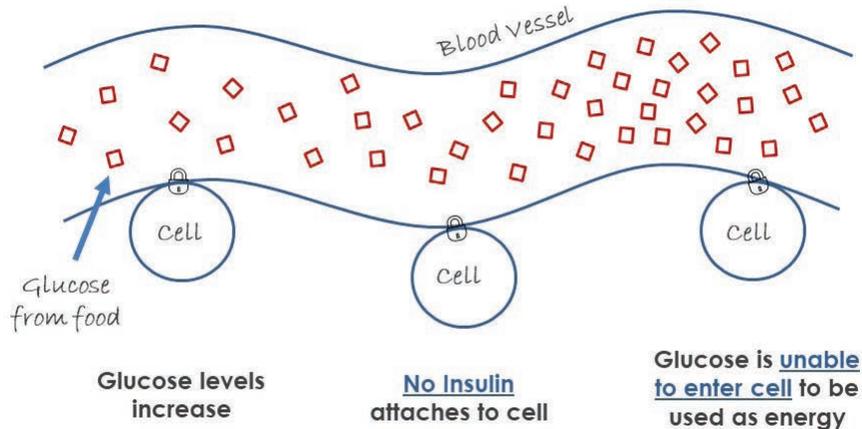
In this diagram, you can see insulin acts as the key that opens the lock on the cell, allowing glucose to enter.



# What is Type 1 Diabetes?

In **type 1 diabetes**, the body cannot make the insulin needed to use glucose for fuel on its own. Without insulin, there is no key to unlock the cells to allow glucose to enter and be turned into energy.

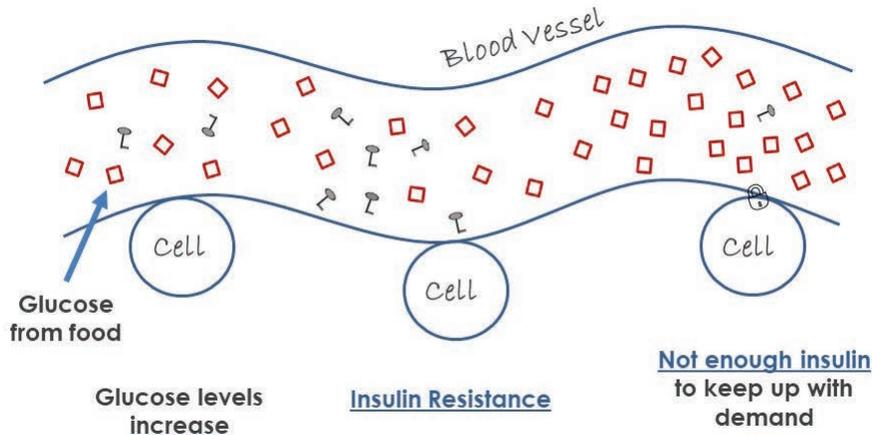
People with type 1 diabetes use insulin injections to manage their diabetes and control their blood sugar levels.



# What is Type 2 Diabetes?

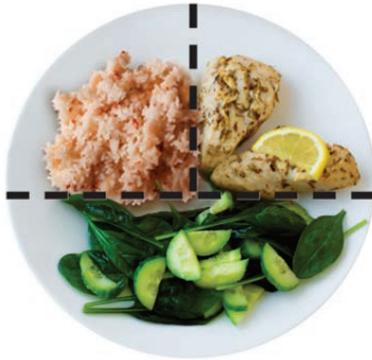
In **type 2 diabetes**, the body does not make enough insulin or cannot use it effectively. Insulin resistance means that the body's cells are unable to recognize and use insulin. The body has insulin, but is missing the lock for insulin to allow glucose into the cells.

Over time, the pancreas cannot make enough insulin to take care of all the glucose in the blood, making blood glucose levels high. At this point, insulin injections are needed to help control blood sugar levels.



# Tips for Health: Nutrition

A healthy plan will help you manage your blood sugar levels. This doesn't mean you have to give up your favorite foods or change your diet all at once though. Start with small changes. Your focus should be on portion sizes and trying a variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and protein.



*Image from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases*

**The American Diabetes Association recommends the Create Your Plate method to help change your portion sizes at meals.**

**Try these steps:**

1. Fill half your plate with non-starchy vegetables, like broccoli or zucchini.
2. Divide the other side of your plate into two halves. Fill one of these smaller sections with grains or starchy foods, like brown rice or acorn squash.
3. Fill the other smaller section with protein, like black beans or chicken.
4. Have a serving of fruit or dairy on the side or as a dessert if your meal plan allows.

**Talk with your doctor or a registered dietitian to create a plan that will work for you. There is not a “one size fits all” meal plan.**

# Tips for Health: Physical Activity

It can be intimidating to start a new fitness routine. Here are some tips to help you get started:



- If you have not been active recently, start with 5 to 10 minutes, then slowly add more time as you feel comfortable.
- Start with activities you enjoy. Try a few different activities to see what you like the most.
- Be active throughout the day. Try taking the stairs, parking farther away, or walking with a friend to catch up instead of sitting.

The CDC recommends getting around 30 minutes of “moderate-intensity” exercise 5 days a week.

Try activities like:

**Brisk walking**  
**Gardening**  
**Tennis**  
**Yoga**

**Dancing**  
**Bicycling**  
**Softball**  
**Frisbee**

**Roller-skating**  
**Playing in marching band**  
**Water aerobics**

# Tips for Health: Emotional Support

Diabetes is a big deal, and it is understandable and normal to feel overwhelmed. Remember that there are many people who want to support and help you. Here are a few ways you can get support or help manage your stress:



- Talk about how you are feeling with your friends, family, or doctor.
- Find a diabetes or general support group. Search the Washington Information Network by visiting [wa211.org](http://wa211.org) or calling 2-1-1 to find a group near you.
- Try a relaxation practice like yoga, tai chi, or deep breathing.
- Get regular exercise (as recommended by provider).
- Take time for yourself. Do something that relaxes you, like a massage, music, or taking a bath.
- Participate in an evidence based program, like the Chronic Disease Self-management Education workshops.

# Tips for Health: Goal Setting

It is easy to get overwhelmed by the number of health recommendations experts make. Start with small steps, one at a time, and focus on goals important to you.

**SPECIFIC:** What is it you want to change?

**MEASURABLE:** How often and how long will you do this?

**ACHIEVABLE:** Is this something you can see yourself being able to do?

**REALISTIC:** How are you going to make this happen? Do you expect any barriers to achieving your goal?

**TIME-BASED:** When will you have accomplished this goal?

**An example could look like:**

For the next week, I will eat one serving of vegetables at every dinner meal.

Try these steps to write your goal:  
What do you want to do?

---

What can you do within a week to work toward #1?

---

What will you specifically do to achieve this? (i.e. replace my usual snack of candy with a piece of fruit)

---

How often will you do this? For how long?

---

How confident are you in doing this?  
0 = not at all sure, 10 = totally sure

---

# Common Tests

The following tests are requested by a medical provider.



## BLOOD TESTS

**A1C:** measures average blood sugar the past 2-3 months.

**Cholesterol Levels:** measures fatty proteins in your blood as a measure of heart health.

**Triglyceride Levels:** measures fat in your blood as a measure of heart health.

## URINE TESTS

**Kidney Function Tests:** can measure many different factors. Glomerular filtration rate and urine albumin levels can diagnose chronic kidney disease, a common complication of diabetes.

## CHECK-UPS

**Foot Exam:** A podiatrist will check your feet for sores, sensation, and pulse.

**Eye Exam:** Regular eye exams by an optometrist or ophthalmologist can catch any disorders early and prevent complications.

**Dental Exam:** Excess blood sugar in your mouth can foster bacteria and lead to infection. Regular dentist visits will help keep your mouth healthy.

# Diabetes Care Chart 1

## (Every Visit)

At **EVERY VISIT** to your doctor, you should expect to check or discuss:

- Your weight 

---
- Your blood pressure 

---
- Using your blood sugar tracker 

---
- Your self-management goals 

---
- Foot check 

---
- Your physical activity and what you eat 

---
- If you smoke, ways to quit 

---
- Any medicines you take 

---
- Any questions you have about your care 

---

# Diabetes Care Chart 2 ✓

(Every 3-6 months, Once a Year, Once a Lifetime)

**EVERY 3-6 MONTHS**, you should ask your doctor about getting:

- A-1 C Test

---

**ONCE A YEAR**, you should ask your doctor about getting:

- Foot exam
- Eye exam
- Dental exam
- Test for cholesterol levels (LDL & HDL)
- Triglyceride levels test
- Kidney function tests
- Flu shot

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**ONCE A LIFETIME**, you should ask your doctor about getting:

- Pneumonia vaccine

---

## COMMENTS

Food, Activity, Stress



## WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT CONTROLLING MY DIABETES?

Both high and low blood sugars can lead to serious health problems, such as an increased risk of:

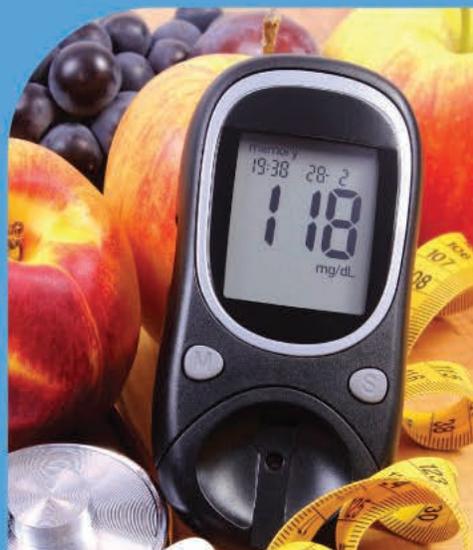
- ⬆ *Increased risk of heart attack*
- ⬆ *Increased risk of stroke*
- ⬆ *Vision problems*
- ⬆ *Kidney problems*

Managing diabetes is challenging, but **DIABETES EDUCATION** helps people live long, healthy lives.

Talk to your doctor or visit [wa211.org](http://wa211.org) to find a class.



## BLOOD Glucose TRACKER



A blood glucose tracker helps you and your doctor see if your care plan is working. Your doctor will set your target levels.



# Community Resources

- Visit your local health department.
- Take exercise or nutrition classes at your local community park or recreation center.
- Shop at your farmers market for in-season fruits and vegetables.
- Look for a diabetes prevention program near you or join community events, such as walking groups or online exercise groups.
- Talk with a dietitian or health educator referred by your medical provider. This could be covered by your insurance.
- Community health workers help improve the quality and cultural sensitivity of health and social services. Contact your insurance provider for more information.
- Call your local 211 for more community resources (dial 211 or 877-211-9274)

# Online Resources

**Diabetes Connection:** [diabetes.doh.wa.gov](http://diabetes.doh.wa.gov)

**American Diabetes Association:** [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)

**Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialist:** [www.diabeteseducator.org](http://www.diabeteseducator.org)

**Washington State Department of Health:** [www.doh.wa.gov](http://www.doh.wa.gov)

**National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases:**  
[niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes](http://niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes)

**Look for Diabetes Prevention Programs or Diabetes Self-Management classes near you on 211 Washington:** [wa211.org](http://wa211.org)

**Center for Disease Control and Prevention:** [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)





DOH 345-366 April 2020

To request this document in another format, call 1-800-525-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 (Washington Relay) or email [civil.rights@doh.wa.gov](mailto:civil.rights@doh.wa.gov).