

Self-management of your diabetes



There is no 'cure', but, with careful management, diabetes can be controlled, the risk of complications reduced, and quality of life improved. The diabetes care team is there to help and advise you, but, ultimately, it is up to you to put their advice into practice.

Diabetes treatments

Self-management of diabetes calls for self-discipline. This means taking your treatments regularly, as prescribed.



Keeping a food and exercise diary

every day will help you work out a pattern or daily routine that fits in with your lifestyle, and make it a habit.



Your diabetes care team will use this information to devise a treatment program that suits you.

Treatment may involve taking tablets — known as oral hypoglycemics — to lower your blood glucose level. Some people think that if they are prescribed these tablets they do not need to worry about diet and exercise. This is not true – oral hypoglycemic agents do not work to full effect unless the diet is modified and regular exercise is taken.



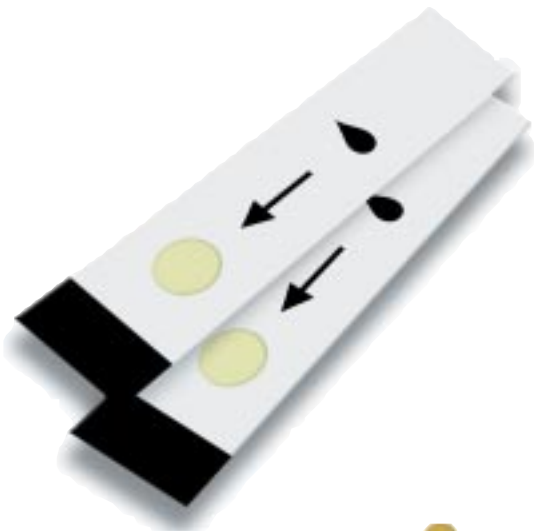
If you are prescribed insulin, your treatment program will be tailored to meet your individual needs. That means your level of activity and your food intake, as well as your lifestyle, will be taken into consideration when your treatment program is planned. It may vary over time and must be reviewed frequently. You should always tell your doctor or nurse if you think your plan is not working.



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Blood glucose monitoring

Most people learn how to balance their eating, physical activity and treatment to keep their blood glucose levels stable. Self-monitoring of blood glucose is vital if you want to take control of your diabetes and adjust your treatment. Blood glucose levels are monitored at home by pricking your finger to produce a spot of blood, which is placed on a test strip. Test strips can be read by the naked eye, or by a glucose meter. Tests can be performed anywhere and at any time.



Once you are comfortable with monitoring your blood glucose, you can experiment by testing your blood to see how your glucose concentration is affected by different foods, and levels of activity. This will vary from person to person and time to time. Familiarizing yourself with it will allow you to make adjustments to achieve constant blood glucose levels and enjoy occasional treats.

