

# Health Bulletin

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

#58 in a series of Health Bulletins on issues of pressing interest to all New Yorkers

## Living *With* Diabetes

*What you need to know*



• Available in Spanish and Chinese: call 311 or visit [nyc.gov/health](http://nyc.gov/health)  
• Disponible en español: llame al 311 o visite [nyc.gov/health](http://nyc.gov/health)  
• 需要中文服務 - 可電 311 或造訪網址: [nyc.gov/health](http://nyc.gov/health)





## If you have diabetes, you have a higher chance of:

- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Nerve damage
- Eye problems and blindness
- Kidney disease
- Early death

**Getting your blood sugar under control is important – but not enough. It's also important to control blood pressure and cholesterol.**

**Diabetes is a serious disease – but you can still live a long and healthy life! Here's what you need to know.**



## Things You Can Do to Stay Healthy

**To lower your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol:**

### *Be physically active.*

- Get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity (such as a brisk walk) at least 5 days a week.
- Get off the bus or subway a stop early and walk the rest of the way.
- Walk during your lunch break.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.
- Put on some music and dance.
- Do household chores such as vacuuming and mopping.

### *Eat a healthy diet and maintain a healthy weight.*

- Eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Eat less fat, sugar, and salt.
- Drink water or try seltzer or diet drinks instead of sugar-sweetened soda or juice.
- Limit candy, sweets, chips, and fried food.
- Cook more meals at home.

### **Other things you can do:**

- Check your blood sugar at the times your doctor recommends.
- Keep your feet clean and dry. Wear comfortable shoes. Look at your feet every night for sores.
- Brush and floss your teeth every day.
- Quit smoking — call 311 for free help or talk with your doctor.

## Taking Your Medicine

**Take your medicines as written on your medicine bottle.**

- Even if you don't feel sick from your diabetes, high blood pressure, or high cholesterol, it is very important to take your medicine every day.
- Insulin works very well to bring your blood sugar down.
- Insulin needles are very small and easy to use.
- Ask your doctor how much and when to take your medicines.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to make your medicine plan simple.
- Ask your doctor about side effects and tell the doctor if you have any.



## How Your Doctor Can Help You Stay Healthy

### Your doctor can help you:

#### Protect your heart and brain by:

- Measuring your blood pressure *at each visit*. It should be less than 130/80.
- Checking your cholesterol *every year*. Your “bad” cholesterol (LDL) should be less than 100.
- Checking your 3-month blood sugar level (A1C) *at least twice a year*. Most people should aim for an A1C less than 7%.

#### Protect your kidneys by:

Testing your urine to check for kidney disease.

#### Protect your eyes by:

Referring you to the eye doctor *once a year*.

#### Protect your teeth and gums by:

Referring you to the dentist *twice a year*.

#### Protect your feet by:

Checking your feet for feeling and sores. Sores can lead to infection. Infection can lead to amputations.

### Talk with your doctors about:

- **Physical activity and healthy weight.** Being even a little more physically active — and losing even a few pounds — helps a lot.
- **If taking aspirin** to protect your heart and brain is right for you.
- **Getting a flu shot every year.** People with diabetes who get flu get sicker than those who don't have diabetes.
- **Getting a one-time pneumonia shot.**
- **Sexual problems.**



# Know and Control Your 'ABCS'

- **A**1C (3-month blood sugar level): *Less than 7%.*
- **B**lood pressure: *Less than 130/80.*
- **C**holesterol: *LDL ("bad") cholesterol less than 100.*
- **S**moking: *If you smoke, quit now.*



**Stay healthier  
and live longer —  
Get your 'ABCS'  
under control!**

## More Information and Help

- **NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene:** [nyc.gov/health/diabetes](http://nyc.gov/health/diabetes) or call 311 and ask for **Diabetes**
- **Health Bulletins:** [nyc.gov/health](http://nyc.gov/health) or call 311:
  - #42: **Control Your Cholesterol: Keep your heart healthy**
  - #43: **Choose Foods With 0 Grams Trans Fat**
  - #50: **High Blood Pressure: It's in your court!**
  - #51: **How to Lose Weight and Keep It Off**
  - #55: **Taking Your Medicine: How to make it easier**
- **American Diabetes Association:** [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** [www.cdc.gov/diabetes](http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes)
- **National Diabetes Education Program:** [www.ndep.nih.gov](http://www.ndep.nih.gov)
- **National Institutes of Health:** [www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov)



### For copies of any Health Bulletin

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## **Living with Diabetes**

*What you need to know*

**DIAL  
311**

For Non-Emergency New York City Services  
Telephone Interpretation in More Than 170 Languages