

What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a group of diseases that result in too much sugar in the blood (high blood glucose). National Diabetes Month is observed every November so people, health care professionals, organizations, and communities across the country can bring attention to diabetes and its impact on millions of Americans.

Preventing diabetes complications

Research has shown that managing diabetes as early as possible can help prevent diabetes-related health problems such as kidney disease, vision loss, heart disease, and stroke. You can help prevent these serious health problems by doing these things:

- **Taking care of your heart.** Diabetes can damage blood vessels and lead to heart disease and stroke. Help prevent this damage by managing your blood glucose, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels. If you smoke, make a plan to quit.
- **Looking out for diabetic eye disease.** Diabetes can damage your eyes and lead to poor vision and blindness. The best way to prevent eye disease is to manage your blood glucose, blood pressure, and cholesterol; and to not smoke. You also should have a dilated eye exam at least once a year.
- **Taking care of your feet.** Diabetes can cause nerve damage and poor blood flow, which can lead to serious foot problems. Common foot problems, such as a callus, can lead to pain or an infection that makes it hard to walk. Get a foot checkup at each visit with your health care team.
- **Knowing the warning signs of diabetic kidney disease.** Diabetic kidney disease, also called *diabetic nephropathy*, is kidney disease caused by diabetes. You can help protect your kidneys by managing your diabetes and setting goals for healthy blood pressure – and meeting those goals.

Mobile apps

- [Fooducate](#)
- [Glucose Buddy](#)
- [Health2Sync](#)
- [mySugr](#)

Tips from our docs

This month, our healthy tip is brought to you by **F. Kiko Torres, MD**, our Chief Medical Officer.

It is important to get routine care to stay healthy. Two times a year, you should have an A1C test. You can have this test more often if the result is greater than 7. Below are other recommended routine check-ups to keep you healthy and find and treat any problems early.

See your health care provider at least twice a year. At each visit be sure you have these things checked:

- Blood pressure
- Feet
- Weight
- Your self-care plan

Once a year, be sure you have these tests and services:

- Cholesterol test
- Complete foot exam
- Dental exam
- Dilated eye exam
- Flu shot
- Urine and a blood test

More resources

- [American Diabetes Association](#)
- [National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases](#)