

Managing Your Health: After a Diabetes Diagnosis

Your Guide to Getting Started and Staying on Track

If you've recently been diagnosed with diabetes, it's normal to feel a bit overwhelmed. You may wonder, "What do I do now?" Remember, you're not alone, and managing diabetes is manageable with the right tools, support, and guidance. Many others have successfully learned to live well with diabetes, and you can too.

This guide outlines some key steps to help you start managing your health effectively and confidently.

Understanding Your Diagnosis

With type 2 diabetes, the body doesn't make or use insulin effectively, which means blood glucose (blood sugar) can build up and cause health issues. If you have type 1 diabetes, your body doesn't produce insulin, so regular monitoring and insulin are essential.

Whichever type you're managing, you can take charge of your health with support from your health care team, medication, and lifestyle changes.

Blood Sugar Monitoring: A Key to Managing Diabetes

Blood glucose (sugar) monitoring is helpful for managing diabetes and ensuring your blood sugar levels stay within a healthy range. If blood sugar levels are too low, it can affect your ability to think and function, while consistently high levels can cause long-term complications.

Most people with diabetes monitor their blood glucose by pricking their fingertip and using a meter or continuous glucose monitor (CGM).

Work with your provider to set target ranges tailored to your age, diabetes duration, and other health conditions. Regular monitoring and logging your results help you track patterns and adjust your care plan effectively.

Understanding Your A1C and What It Means

The A1C test provides an average of your blood sugar levels over the past two to three months. This test is crucial to helping your care team assess how well your treatment plan is working.

For most people with diabetes, the target A1C is less than 8% (or eAG: Less than 154 mg/dL), though this may vary based on your age and individual health concerns. Keeping your A1C in your target range helps reduce the risk of complications like nerve damage, eye disease, and heart issues.

Regularly monitoring your A1C alongside daily blood sugar checks ensures your overall blood sugar management stays on track.

Getting Started with Medication

For many, medication is a key part of managing diabetes. Your doctor or diabetes educator will work with you to find the right plan. Here are some helpful questions to discuss with them:

- How much medication should I take, and when?
- Should I take it with food or on an empty stomach?
- What should I do if I miss a dose?
- Are there any possible side effects?
- Could it interact with my other medications?

Asking questions helps ensure you understand your treatment and feel comfortable managing it.

Eating Well with Diabetes

A healthy diet helps manage blood sugar and improve how you feel. Eating well means making balanced choices, not giving up enjoyment. Here are some tips:

- Include a variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and lean proteins.
- Avoid large portions and try not to skip meals.
- Space your meals evenly throughout the day to help maintain steady blood sugar levels.

The [American Diabetes Association Food Hub](#) offers diabetes-friendly recipes, meal planning tips, and portion guidance. Explore healthy options today!

Getting Active and Staying Active

Physical activity helps control blood sugar, boost energy, and improve mood. You don't need to be an athlete—just move more throughout the day. Here are some easy ways to get started:

- Aerobic activity: Walking, swimming, and biking are excellent ways to stay active.
- Everyday movement: Take the stairs, walk around the block, or stand up and stretch regularly.
- Strength training: Use light weights or resistance bands to improve muscle tone and balance.
- Flexibility exercises: Gentle stretching or yoga can keep you feeling flexible and reduce stress.

Be sure to check with your doctor if you're unsure which activities are best for you.

Finding Support

Living with diabetes is easier with support. Reach out to family, friends, or your care team, stay informed, and develop routines to manage your health. Use this guide and your health care team to stay on track, and visit [Diabetes Complications](#) for more resources.

This guide is for reference purposes only. Always consult with your medical provider for personalized advice and recommendations regarding your specific health condition.

Call the Concierge team at 713-442-4878 (TTY: 711). From October 1 through March 31, hours are 8 am to 8 pm, seven days a week. From April 1 through September 30, hours are 8 am to 8 pm, Monday through Friday. Messaging services are used on weekends, after hours, and on federal holidays. KelseyCare Advantage, a product of KS Plan Administrators, LLC, is an HMO and POS Medicare Advantage plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in KelseyCare Advantage depends on contract renewal. © 2025 KelseyCare Advantage. All rights reserved. H0332_FLYDISST-DB25_C