

Managing your Diabetes

Know your Diabetes ABCs!

A1c:

The A1c test (hemoglobin A1c or HbA1c) is a blood test done by your provider at least twice a year. It measures your average blood sugar over the last 2 to 3 months. Your A1c level target should be either less than 7% or less than 8%. Ask your health care provider.

Blood Pressure

Your blood pressure level should be less than 140/90 mm Hg. For people with diabetes, high blood pressure raises your risk for heart and kidney disease. Get your blood pressure checked at each provider visit, and if you can, at the local drug store. Write down the results and bring them to your next provider visit.

Cholesterol

Your LDL cholesterol (bad cholesterol) level should be less than 100 mg/dL. Having a high LDL cholesterol level can clog your blood vessels and raise your chance for a heart attack or stroke. Your total cholesterol should be under 200.

Reaching and staying at your target numbers is very important. Three simple tools that can help you with your “ABCs” are listed below.

Get Moving!

Being active is very important for people with diabetes. Regular exercise can:

- Lower your blood glucose and your blood pressure
- Lower your LDL (bad cholesterol) and raise your (HDL) good cholesterol
- Improve how your body uses insulin
- Lower your risk for heart disease and stroke
- Keep your heart and bones strong
- Help you lose weight/cut your body fat
- Give you more energy
- Lower your stress level

There are many ways to be active. Just find something you enjoy doing. Here are a few options:

- Walk instead of sitting while you talk on the phone
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Walk briskly
- Get off of the bus or train one stop early and walk
- Ride a bike
- Dance
- Lift small weights during commercials
- Garden or rake leaves

For more information call Customer Service at **(415) 615-4555**.

Or visit **www.healthysanfrancisco.org**

Eating a Healthy Diet

Having a Healthy Diet Helps You to:

- Keep your blood glucose, also called blood sugar, in your goal range
- Feel good every day
- Lose weight if you need to
- Lower your risk for heart disease, stroke, and other problems caused by diabetes

Many people think that a healthy diet for a person with diabetes must be complex, but it is mostly the same as a healthy diet for a person without diabetes.

Eat the Right Foods

Vegetables are low in fat and high in vitamins:

- Spinach, kale
- Broccoli, bok choy
- Sweet potatoes, carrots
- Peas, lima beans
- Squash (many kinds)

High protein foods that are low in fat:

- Seafood
- Lean meats
- Low-fat milk or cheese; beans

Whole Grain Carbohydrates such as:

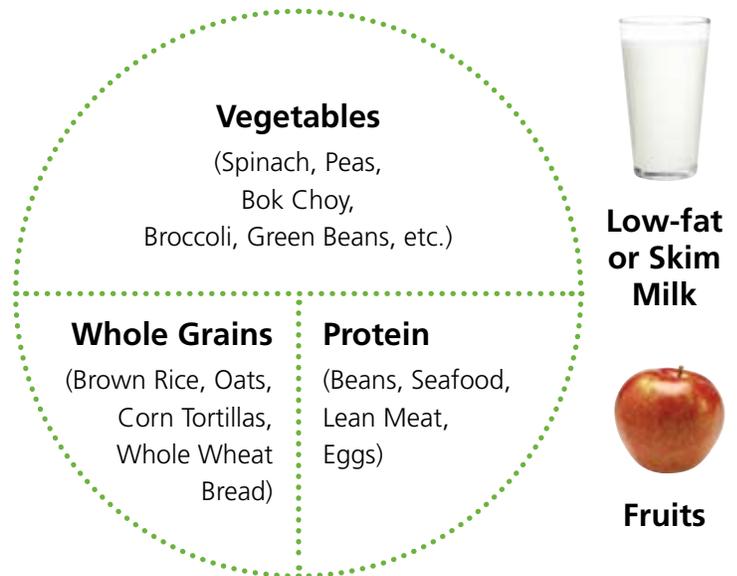
- Brown rice
- Whole wheat bread
- Beans
- Oats and barley

Try Not to Eat Foods That are High in Fat and/or Sugar

- Sweet drinks like sodas, sugary tea, or juice
- Butter, whole milk, and cream
- Fried foods
- Chicken skin and red meat
- Cakes, cookies, and other baked goods

Eat Enough, But Not Too Much

- How much you eat will affect your blood sugar level. Try to eat smaller amounts of food at one time, and eat slowly.
- Divide your plate in this way: ½ vegetables, ¼ protein, ¼ whole grain carbohydrates



Eat at the Right Time of Day

- If you wait too long to eat, your sugar level can be too low. If you eat meals too close together, or snack a lot during the day, your sugar level can be too high.
- Do not skip meals.

Talking to Your Provider

- Many people take medicine to help manage their diabetes. Talk to your provider to make sure you understand when and how to take your medicines.
- Always talk with your provider before you start a new diet or physical activity program.

Sources:

“Understanding Diabetes” Ohio State University Medical Center, Mount Carmel Health System and OhioHealth, via www.healthinfotranslations.org

“What I need to know about Diabetes and Eating” National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, www.niddk.nih.gov

“Healthy Eating and Diabetes” Association of Clinicians for the Underserved, www.clinicians.org

For more information call Customer Service at **(415) 615-4555**.

Or visit www.healthysanfrancisco.org