

DIABETES DISEASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Welcome to Better Health

Humana Military and TRICARE East are pleased to offer a diabetes disease management program just for you.

Nothing is more important than your health. When you have a chronic condition, staying healthy is often more difficult. You may need help understanding your condition and identifying and managing your symptoms. That's what this health improvement program is all about. This booklet provides you with valuable information and guidance to help you take control of your health.

We believe you will benefit greatly as a participant in the diabetes disease management program. This program is offered to you at no cost.

Please visit our website at [HumanaMilitary.com/DM](https://www.humanamilitary.com/DM) or call (800) 881-9227 for more information about diabetes and our disease management initiative.



EAST REGION

[HumanaMilitary.com](https://www.humanamilitary.com)

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Commonly Asked Diabetes Questions and Answers

WHAT IS DIABETES?



Diabetes occurs when your body cannot properly use glucose, due to either not enough insulin production or the inability to use insulin properly in the body. When carbohydrates such as starches, fiber and sugars are eaten, they are broken down into glucose in the stomach. The pancreas then makes a hormone called insulin that allows the body's cells to use the glucose for energy and balance the amount of sugar in your blood. Your blood always has some glucose (sugar) in it because your body needs it for energy to keep you going. However, too much glucose in the blood causes pre-diabetes or diabetes.

- Type 1 diabetes is a chronic condition that occurs when the pancreas produces little or no insulin. It occurs most often in children and young adults. People with type 1 diabetes must take daily insulin injections to stay alive. This type of diabetes is less common (accounting for only 5 to 10% of diabetes cases) It is thought to be caused by genetic, autoimmune and environmental factors.
- Type 2 diabetes is the more common form of the disease accounting for more than 90 percent of cases. Insulin is being produced, but the body doesn't use it to convert the sugar to stored energy. This is called insulin resistance. If it does convert the sugar to energy, the body cannot easily get the energy out of the cells. The pancreas may not produce enough

insulin to meet the body's needs. Even a moderate reduction in insulin production can result in high blood sugar levels when it occurs in combination with insulin resistance. Type 2 diabetes can occur in all age groups, but it is diagnosed most often in adults age 45 or older. Diet and physical activity help to control Type 2 diabetes. Most people also need to take diabetes medication or insulin.

RISK FACTORS FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES

- Being over age 45
- Being overweight or obese
- Family history of diabetes
- Physical inactivity
- Giving birth to a baby over nine pounds or a history of gestational diabetes
- High blood pressure
- African American, Alaska Native, American Indian, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Low HDL cholesterol or high triglycerides
- History of heart disease or stroke
- Polycystic ovary syndrome
- Acanthosis nigricans (dark, velvety skin around neck and armpits)

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF DIABETES?

Typical signs of type 1 diabetes include:

- **Frequent urination:** because the body is trying to get rid of the excess sugar in the blood
- **Intense thirst:** because the body needs to replace the fluid lost through the urine
- **Increased hunger:** because the cells need nutrients
- **Weight loss:** because the body begins to starve without insulin

Type 2 diabetes produces milder symptoms that include:

- **Fatigue**
- **Weakness**
- **Dizziness**
- **Blurred vision**

HOW DO I MANAGE MY DIABETES?

Living a healthy life with diabetes is possible by taking steps to regularly manage your disease.



Because diabetes can affect nearly every part of your body, it is important to make choices to keep blood sugar levels well-controlled and avoid long term complications. This can include taking steps to reduce risks and learning to problem solve for things such as sick days, hypoglycemia, etc.

These steps include:

- Monitoring blood glucose
- Medication
- Managing the ABCs of diabetes care (A1c, blood pressure, cholesterol)
- Healthy eating
- Physical activity
- Coping with stress

MONITORING BLOOD GLUCOSE

Monitoring blood glucose levels is an important tool to understand how well your body is responding to food and medication. Other things that may affect blood sugar levels include stress, lifestyle choices, sleep problems, physical activity and illness. Check with your provider to see when and how often he/she would like you to monitor your blood glucose and what your specific blood glucose targets should be.

- Target before meals and fasting
(At least four hours since eating) = 80 – 130 mg/dL
- Target two hours after meals = less than 180 mg/dL

HIGH BLOOD SUGAR (HYPERGLYCEMIA)

(Example: Over 250 mg/dL or your personal target)

High blood sugar levels may rise slowly over a period of days.

Causes: not getting enough insulin or missing medicine, eating too much food, lack of physical activity, being ill

Symptoms: fatigue, intense thirst, increased urination, blurry vision, extreme hunger

What to do:

- Monitor blood sugar often, especially if you aren't feeling well.
- Call your healthcare provider if your blood sugar is frequently high or above target range.
- Drink extra sugar-free, caffeine-free fluids.
- Have a sick day plan. Work with your doctor to create a written sick day plan in the event you become ill. Keep the plan and extra supplies in a visible place where you and loved ones can easily access them.

LOW BLOOD SUGAR (HYPOGLYCEMIA) = 70 MG/DL OR LESS

Low blood sugar, or hypoglycemia, is considered a medical emergency, but is often easily treated. Some people may have symptoms of low blood sugar if their blood glucose is over 70 mg/dL because their levels are high and start to go down quickly. If this happens to you, speak to your provider.

Symptoms: shakiness, weakness, sweating, confusion, rapid heartbeat, numbness, loss of consciousness

What to do:

- Monitor blood sugar, if possible.
- For blood sugar less than 70, take 15-20 grams of quick acting sugar such as 4 oz. of fruit juice or 1 tablespoon of sugar or honey.
- Wait 15 minutes. Recheck blood glucose. If it is still less than 70, treat again with another 15 grams of carbohydrates.
- Once blood sugar returns to normal, eat a snack or meal.
- If loss of consciousness occurs, have someone call 911.

HEALTHY EATING



Carbohydrates are one of the main nutrients found in food and is turned into glucose for energy in the body.

Carbohydrates include sugars, starches and fiber. Eating well-balanced meals including high-fiber carbohydrates, lean protein, fruits, vegetables and healthy fats help maintain steady blood glucose levels. A plan of eating that supports weight management, may also improve how well your body uses insulin and decrease the amount of diabetes medication you need. High-fiber foods are also helpful for lowering cholesterol levels and decreasing appetite.

The plate method is one simple way to plan a balanced meal – make half your plate non-starchy vegetables, a quarter protein and a quarter high-fiber carbohydrates.



Healthy habits can start with small changes. Consider these swaps: wheat bread instead of white bread, a whole orange instead of a glass of orange juice, a sugar free drink or water for regular soda and a leafy green salad for corn.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



Moving your body is important for keeping muscles strong, helping the body use insulin more easily and may lead to weight loss. The recommended target of physical activity is 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity spread over at least three days a week. This activity gets your heart rate up enough that you cannot sing an entire song but can say four or five words comfortably. Try starting with a five to 15 minute walk after a meal (with your healthcare provider’s approval). People with diabetes should engage in two to three sessions or resistance exercise a week on non-consecutive days.

MEDICATION



People with type 1 diabetes must take insulin to manage their blood glucose. Some people with type 2 diabetes may manage blood glucose with diet and exercise alone, others may take pills and others may inject medicine. Your provider may also prescribe additional medication to prevent and/or control long-term complications related to diabetes. It is very important that you take it as prescribed and tell your doctor about any side effects. If you have trouble remembering to take your medications, consider a reminder system like a pillbox or an alarm to avoid skipping doses.

ABCS OF DIABETES CARE

Following the ABCs of diabetes care can help prevent and detect long-term complications. Know your numbers and stay up-to-date with suggested lab work and appointments. Below are general recommendations. It is important to ask your diabetes provider how often you should have any recommendations.

Test/Procedure	How Often	Target Range
A1c (two to three month blood sugar average)	At least every six months	Less than 7% (Ask your doctor for specific recommendations in relation to management of your personal A1C goal)
Blood pressure	At every medical visit	Less than 140/90
Cholesterol	At least once a year	Total = 200 or less LDL = Less than 100 (less than 70 if you have heart disease) HDL = Over 40 (for men), Over 50 (for women) Triglycerides = Less than 150
Dental exam	Once every six months	
Eye exam	Dilated eye exam once a year	
Foot exam	Once a year by a medical professional, self-exam daily	
Flu vaccine	Every flu season (Sept. - Feb.)	
Urine microalbumin	Once a year	<30 mg/dL
Pneumonia vaccine	Any person with diabetes > two years old	Again if >65 and more than five years since last shot

WHAT ARE THE COMPLICATIONS OF DIABETES?

Diabetic complications are caused by chronically high blood sugars. The longer your blood sugar levels are elevated, the greater your chances of experiencing one or more of the following complications:

- **Circulation problems:**



Continuous high blood sugar causes the blood vessels to become thicker and less flexible. This causes poor circulation, which impairs healing, especially of the feet and lower legs. High blood sugar also causes higher levels of fat in the blood. The fat clogs the blood vessels and can lead to a heart attack or stroke.

- **Eye problems:**



Diabetes can damage and weaken the small blood vessels in the retina, the part of the eye that is sensitive to light and helps you see. When the blood vessels are weak, they can leak fluid, which causes swelling in the eye. The swelling blurs your vision. The eye may attempt to repair this damage by making new fragile blood vessels. These new blood vessels can break and bleed into the eye. Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness in working-age adults.

- **Gum disease and loss of teeth:**



People with diabetes can get gum disease from having high blood glucose levels for a long time. Many people who don't take care of their diabetes get gum disease.

- **Kidney damage:**



Diabetes can damage the blood vessels in the kidney so it can't filter out the body's waste. The longer blood sugar levels are left uncontrolled, the greater the amount of kidney damage that can occur. High blood pressure is also associated with poor kidney function. It is important to keep both blood sugar and blood pressure under control as much as possible.

- **Nerve damage:**



High blood sugar can lead to nerve damage and can cause you to lose feeling in parts of your body or have painful pins-and-needles-like feeling, especially in your feet and legs.

WHEN SHOULD I CALL MY DOCTOR OR CLINIC?



Seek further medical assistance for any of the following conditions listed below. In addition, ask your healthcare team how often you need to see them for checkups and ensure you have developed a Sick Day plan so that you know how to manage your care during times of illness. Talk with your provider in relation to guidelines for management of COVID-19.

- Cold or flu symptoms that are not improving
- Fever of 101° F or greater
- Nausea and vomiting, especially if you've had no food or fluid intake for more than five hours
- Symptoms of shakiness or a nervous feeling, light-headedness, sweating, rapid heart rate or confusion that do not improve after eating carbohydrates
- Any of the following problems on the feet: burns, splinters, stubbed toe, foot trauma, blister, swelling, black and blue discoloration, bleeding or oozing of fluid
- Urine tests that show moderate to large amounts of ketones
- A persistent cough
- Change in vision
- A sore or cut that does not heal
- Tooth pain



WHEN SHOULD I GET IMMEDIATE CARE?

Seek urgent or emergency care if you have any of the following symptoms:

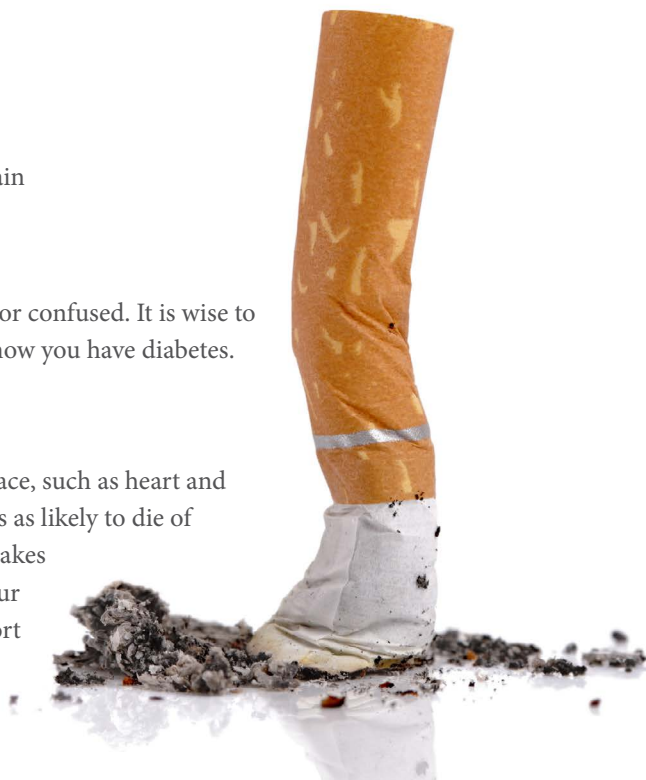
- Chest pain or shortness of breath
- Trouble breathing, swelling of your legs and hands coupled with weight gain
- Numbness or tingling in arms or hands, trouble walking or stumbling
- Confusion or can't think clearly

Instruct your family or friends to call 911 if you should become unconscious or confused. It is wise to wear a medical alert bracelet so that anyone coming to your assistance will know you have diabetes.

DO NOT SMOKE



Smoking can aggravate problems that people with diabetes already face, such as heart and blood vessel disease. People with diabetes who smoke are three times as likely to die of cardiovascular disease as are other people with diabetes. Smoking makes your blood sugar go up. If you currently smoke, it is never too late to quit. Your disease management nurse can help you set a goal to quit smoking and support you during the process.



APPS FOR DIABETES MANAGEMENT

Phones, tablets and other smart devices aide in all aspects of life and of healthcare. Below are some apps that may be helpful in your day-to-day life and diabetes management.

MySugr Diabetes Logbook

- Log blood glucose, carbs and insulin use and gives motivating feedback
- Integrates with Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM) through Apple's Health app and Medtronic's CareLink data management system
- Generates reports for healthcare providers

Free for Apple devices

Sugar Sense

- Tracks and logs blood glucose, carb intake and weight
- Offers community support forum for people with type 2 diabetes and prevention information
- Works with iHealth app
- Syncs data from Fitbit, Jawbone and iHealth

Free for Apple devices

Diabetes and Blood Glucose Tracker (Apple) / Diabetes and Diet Tracker (Android)

- Connects blood glucose meters that work with Apple's Health app
- Log food with comprehensive food database
- Tracks exercise and syncs with fitness trackers (such as Jawbone and Fitbit)
- Online forum of nurses and diabetes educators to field questions

One-time fee, with ability to purchase "maximum" version within the app

Calorie King

- A library of millions of foods with nutrition facts including carbohydrates per serving

Calorie King Food Search is free for Apple devices

Calorie King Create-a-Meal is free for Android devices

GoMeals

- Menus and nutrition facts (including carbs) for restaurants near you based on your current location

Free for Apple and Android devices