

Name:
Name of Doctor/Nurse:

Date:

Diabetes and high HbA1c

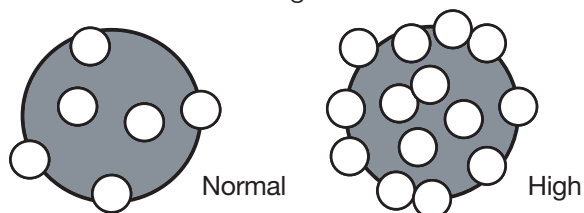
Information prescription

Your last two HbA1c results are / / / /

Good glucose control is important to reduce your risk of devastating complications. Reducing HbA1c has been proven to have health benefits. Discuss and agree with your doctor or nurse a realistic personal target for HbA1c

What is HbA1c?

It tells you your average blood glucose for the last two to three months. We all need glucose for energy, but if you have diabetes your body loses its ability to use glucose. HbA1c measures how much glucose is stuck to your red blood cells. A finger-prick test shows you a snap-shot of your glucose at a moment in time, whereas HbA1c acts like a film recording how your glucose levels have changed.



When is high HbA1c a problem?

High levels of blood glucose over a long period of time can damage the blood vessels. This puts you at higher risk of going blind, losing a limb or experiencing kidney failure.

How can I lower my HbA1c?

It is important to understand that your HbA1c will change for many reasons including: how long you've had diabetes, sickness, depression, change in lifestyle or because of other medicine such as steroids. The actions you take to reduce your HbA1c will depend on whether you have Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes and your overall health. The next column has three main areas for you to consider.

- 1 Medication:** It may be time to increase your dose or introduce new medication – ask for advice.
- 2 Education:** Your healthcare team are there to provide support, but *you* manage *your* diabetes. Education can help you understand what affects your blood glucose. Ask what's on offer in your area.
- 3 Lifestyle:** Discuss what changes can lower HbA1c:

Keep to a healthy weight

- ☐ Reduce the size of your portions and cut down on fatty and sugary foods.

Eat a healthy balanced diet

- ☐ Eat less fatty food, processed meats, full-fat dairy, pastries and cakes.
- ☐ Carbohydrates change your blood glucose – you may need to eat less carbohydrate and choose wholegrains.
- ☐ If you drink, cut down on alcohol.
- ☐ Eat plenty of vegetables and fruit – aim for at least five portions a day.
- ☐ Aim for at least two portions of oily fish a week.

Get more active

- ☐ Aim for 30 minutes five times a week to raise your heartbeat. Activities like walking fast and cycling all count. Twice a week add activities like gardening or yoga to strengthen your muscles.

Stop smoking

- ☐ For help giving up ask for your local stop smoking service.

Agreed action plan

My personal goal is:

To be achieved when:

The two steps that I will take to achieve this are:

(Discuss and agree with your doctor or nurse. Think about what, where, when and how?)

1

2

For information or support, call Diabetes UK Helpline: **0345 123 2399*** Monday to Friday, 9am–6pm, or go to **www.diabetes.org.uk/info-p**