



PARTNERING WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER TO CREATE A PERSONALIZED DIABETES MANAGEMENT PLAN

Everyone is different: that is why it is important to have a diabetes management plan in place that considers your unique characteristics. This management plan should be designed to meet *your* treatment goals and will take into account what is important to *you*.

To create this plan, your healthcare provider will partner with you to set treatment goals related to your diabetes. A target goal for A1C, *lifestyle changes* (such as healthy food choices and increased physical activity), and medication are likely to be part of your plan.

This handout reviews key information that you and your healthcare provider will consider and discuss when developing your personalized plan.

Your target A1C goal

Your healthcare provider will partner with you to set a target A1C goal. Your A1C number is a percentage that shows the average amount of *glucose*, or sugar, in your blood over 2 to 3 months. This number will help to determine if your diabetes is well controlled.

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) recommends a general target A1C goal of <7.0% for most people with diabetes. Your A1C goal may be higher or lower than the general ADA target, based on your personal characteristics. When working with you to set your A1C goal, your healthcare provider may consider:

- ◆ Your age
- ◆ How long you have had diabetes
- ◆ Whether you have any other medical conditions that might affect your diabetes treatment (for example, cardiovascular diseases, such as heart disease or stroke)
- ◆ Whether you have a support system in place (such as a spouse, friend, or family member) that can help you to achieve your diabetes management goals

Your medication

Your diabetes management plan may also include medication. Your healthcare provider will consider your personal characteristics and any other medical conditions that you may have when selecting an appropriate medication for you.

Some things that your healthcare provider will discuss with you when considering treatment options:

- ◆ Type of medication: some diabetes medications are taken orally (by mouth), while others are given as an injection; some medications are taken more than once per day, while others are taken once per week.
- ◆ Cost: if cost is a factor that may have an effect on your ability to get your diabetes medications, let your healthcare provider know; he or she will work with you to find a less expensive option

Remember: medications work differently for different people, so the dose or type of medication that you're taking may need to be adjusted to best fit your needs.

The bottom line: You should be involved in any decisions that are related to your diabetes treatment. If you aren't sure that you'll be able to follow your diabetes management plan, or if you have any questions, speak up! Your healthcare provider will work with you to make adjustments that will better fit you and your lifestyle.

Your lifestyle changes

Making lifestyle changes is an important way for you to actively manage your diabetes and achieve your A1C goal. Before making any changes, talk with your healthcare provider: he or she will work with you to decide which lifestyle changes are appropriate for you.

Weight loss. Even a small amount of weight loss can help to improve your blood sugar levels. Making healthier food choices and increasing your level of physical activity are two ways for you to get on the road to weight loss.

Healthy food choices. Your healthcare provider will talk with you about your diet. He or she may ask what your meals and snacks typically consist of. Based on your discussion, your healthcare provider will offer recommendations for making healthier food choices. In general, low fat-dairy products, fruits and vegetables, whole grains, fresh fish, and beans are all healthy options. Foods that are high in saturated fat and calories should be eaten in smaller amounts.

Increasing physical activity. In general, you should aim for at least 2-½ hours (150 minutes) of moderate physical activity per week. This could include aerobic exercise (such as walking or riding a bike) and muscle-strengthening exercise (such as lifting light weights); your healthcare provider will work with you to decide which types of exercise are best for you. You can also talk with your healthcare provider about some easy ways to add more exercise into your day: for example, can you add a few more minutes to the time that you spend walking your dog?

When you discuss potential lifestyle changes with your healthcare provider, be sure to let him or her know what types of changes you would or would not be willing to make, and what types of changes would fit into your current lifestyle.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
TALK TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER
OR VISIT WWW.NDEI.ORG**

REFERENCES

ADA. A1C. Available at: <http://www.diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/treatment-and-care/blood-glucose-control/a1c/>. Accessed November 9, 2012.; ADA. *Diabetes Care*. 2012;35(suppl 1):S11-S63.; Inzucchi SE, et al. *Diabetes Care*. 2012;35(6):1364-1379.



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