

## Managing your type 2 diabetes – your goals

You can control your diabetes by maintaining blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol levels that are as close to normal as possible. Managing your diabetes also includes feet, urine, eye and dental checks. By regularly checking these you can slow or prevent further complications including heart disease, kidney disease, blindness, nerve damage and gum disease.

### Blood glucose levels (BGL)

Regularly testing your own blood glucose levels can let you know about your body's response to things like medications, food, exercise and your general health.



Your doctor, diabetes educator, practice nurse or specialist will help you decide how many tests are needed, when to test your blood and the levels to aim for.

*The target range is usually around 4 to 8 mmol/L.*

### HbA<sub>1c</sub> (Glycosylated haemoglobin)

This test shows the average of your blood glucose level (BGL) over the past 10–12 weeks. It does not show the highs and lows but gives an overall picture of your blood glucose management.

High blood glucose levels contribute to the development of long-term complications of diabetes.

*It is best to have your HbA<sub>1c</sub> level re-tested at least every 6 months.*

*The target level is usually around 7% or lower.*

### Blood pressure (BP)

This is the measurement of the pressure at which your heart pumps blood around the body.

High blood pressure can increase the risk of heart disease, stroke and kidney disease.

*It is best to have your blood pressure checked regularly (at least every three months).*

Your blood pressure can be treated with medicines if necessary.

When blood pressure is taken it is measured in millimetres of mercury (mmHg). The reading is recorded as two numbers.

*For someone with diabetes, the target is usually less than 130/80 (stated as '130 over 80').*

### Cholesterol (blood fats or 'lipids')

This is a type of fat in the blood. Cholesterol problems are common in people with diabetes and too much fat increases the risk of heart disease and stroke.

*The target total cholesterol level is usually less than 4 mmol/L.*

There are two types of cholesterol – low-density lipoproteins (LDLs, or 'bad' cholesterol) and high-density lipoproteins (HDLs, or 'good' cholesterol).

LDL-cholesterol can narrow or block your blood vessels. Keeping your LDL low helps protect your heart.

*The target LDL level is usually less than 2.5 mmol/L.*

HDL-cholesterol helps remove deposits from your blood vessels and stops them getting blocked.

*The target HDL level is usually above 1 mmol/L.*

Triglycerides are another type of fat in your blood.

*The target triglyceride level is usually less than 1.5 mmol/L.*

*It is best to have your cholesterol levels tested at least every 12 months.*

Cholesterol levels can be improved with lifestyle changes which may reduce your need for medication.



# Managing your type 2 diabetes – your goals continued...

You can reduce the risk of eye, foot and kidney damage by keeping your BGL, HbA<sub>1c</sub> and BP at recommended target levels.

## Eyes

Diabetes can cause eye problems including cataracts, glaucoma and retinopathy, and may lead to blindness.

Many people don't notice any problems with their sight until their eyes are already damaged.

If you notice any changes in your vision, tell your doctor or eye specialist as soon as possible.

*It is best to have your eyes checked at least every one to two years.*

## Feet

People with diabetes can develop a number of foot problems such as changes to the skin, calluses, foot ulcers and nerve damage (neuropathy). Foot problems can lead to amputation.

It is important to take good care of your feet and be aware of any changes. Check your feet every day as instructed by your podiatrist or diabetes educator.

*It is best to have a foot examination every 12 months by your doctor or podiatrist.*

## Urine/kidneys

Over time, people with diabetes face increased risk of damage to their kidneys (nephropathy). An early sign of kidney problems can be detected through a urine test for microalbumin.

*It is best to have your urine checked every 12 months for microalbumin.*

## Teeth/gums

High blood glucose levels can make a person more likely to have infections. In the mouth both teeth and gums can be affected. Even a poorly fitted denture can cause an ulcer.

*It is best to have your mouth checked every 12 months by a dentist.*

## Questions to ask your doctor

What are my current numbers for:

blood glucose? \_\_\_\_\_

HbA<sub>1c</sub>? \_\_\_\_\_

blood pressure? \_\_\_\_\_

cholesterol? \_\_\_\_\_

What numbers should I be aiming for:

blood glucose? \_\_\_\_\_

HbA<sub>1c</sub>? \_\_\_\_\_

blood pressure? \_\_\_\_\_

cholesterol? \_\_\_\_\_

What should I do to reach these goals?

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This leaflet may be printed for patient use.

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