

AADE7 Self-Care Behaviors[®] MONITORING

Monitoring means checking your glucose (sugar) levels, activity and food intake, and gathering data from multiple sources and devices to make decisions about your diabetes prevention efforts or diabetes care and self-management.

Monitoring also involves your overall health, such as blood pressure, weight, cholesterol levels, heart health, sleep, mood, medications, and eye, kidney and foot health.

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

For people with prediabetes or diabetes there are optimal target ranges to aim for in many areas of management. There are national guidelines to help put everything in perspective. Your provider and diabetes care and education specialist know that the best results occur when your care is geared to you and your individual needs. Ask them how your numbers compare to what is recommended for your optimal health.

CHOOSE A MONITORING DEVICE

Monitoring devices provide “in the moment” data that helps you determine how well your diabetes management plan is working. Ask your diabetes care and education specialist to help you choose a monitoring device. They will personalize and advise you based on your values and preferences, helping you to compare and contrast the pros and cons of each. Here are some of the ways they can help you:

- Determine which diabetes management device you can afford and works best for you.
- Learn how and when to use the device to track your data.
- Figure out how to find patterns you can act on.
- Come up with an ongoing plan for monitoring as your health goals are met.



Question: Can you tell what your glucose level is by the way you feel?

Answer: You may have symptoms of high or low glucose, but your symptoms may disappear or change over time, so it's always best to check.



FIND THE PATTERNS THAT TELL THE STORY

Taking multiple measurements and putting them together to identify patterns is much more meaningful than looking at numbers one at a time. Once you and your diabetes care and education specialist work together to highlight the patterns, you can begin to identify the cause and effect of the patterns and take needed action.

Examples of patterns you might see:

- Your glucose is higher after dinner on most days
- Whenever you eat at bedtime, your glucose tends to be high the next morning
- If you take a walk for at least 20 minutes, your glucose goes down to a better level.
- Your blood pressure is higher in the morning than the evening.

Tracking and organizing data such as food intake, activity, blood pressure, stress levels and glucose can help you see the story the data is telling. There are many easy ways to track data, including paper logs, an app on your smartphone or software program that comes with your device. Focusing on the patterns rather than every single reading also helps to keep your emotions more level.

Reach out to your diabetes care and education specialist to understand how to read the reports for the devices you are using and what patterns to look for. Many of these reports are designed to present useful patterns to the user.



Blood Glucose Meter: A small device that is used to check glucose levels in the blood. It uses test strips and a fingerstick device.

Continuous Glucose Monitor (CGM): A system with multiple parts that is worn continuously and senses glucose levels every few minutes in the fluid around the body cell, sending the readings to a reader, receiver or app on a phone. The readings are shown in graph form with trend arrows showing if the glucose levels are staying the same, dropping or going up.

A1C: A test that reflects your average blood glucose level during the past 3 months.

Time in Range (TIR) : When using a CGM, TIR is the percentage (%) of time your glucose is between 70mg/dl and 180 mg/dl. These numbers represent the highest and lowest your glucose levels can be before they become a concern.

TIPS FOR MONITORING GLUCOSE:

If you're using a fingerstick meter, wash your hands with soap and water, and dry them thoroughly before checking. Substances on your skin (like dirt, food or lotion) can cause inaccurate results. If you are wearing a continuous glucose monitor, follow the manufacturer's information on the best ways to keep it working well for you.

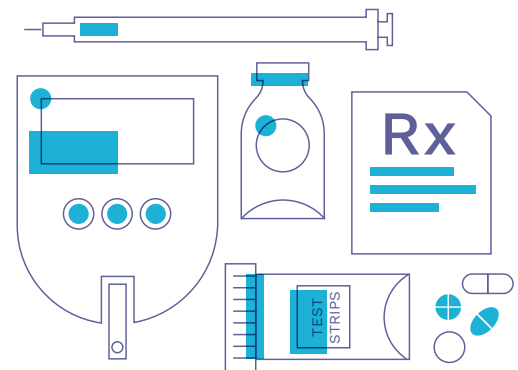
- The best time to check the effect of your meal on your glucose level is 2 hours after eating.
- Contact your diabetes care team if you are having glucose readings below 70mg/dl. You may need your medication dose adjusted or need help with problem solving to find the reason.
- Check your glucose levels more often if you think you're getting sick and during any illness.
- Bring your glucose record or download report to every appointment with your care team.
- When traveling, keep your supplies in the package with the original prescription in your carry-on luggage. If needed, advise security personnel that you are carrying diabetes supplies.



INCLUDE MONITORING IN YOUR SELF-CARE

Monitoring helps you know if you are meeting recommended treatment goals to keep you healthy. When you self-monitor, you get the information you need to make food and activity adjustments and manage your medications so that your body can perform at its best. The numbers you get when you monitor are useful to help your care team match treatment to your needs. You'll start to recognize patterns that lead to enhanced self-care, giving you a well-deserved sense of accomplishment.

A diabetes care and education specialist can be a great resource to help you choose the right monitoring device, and one you can afford. They will work with you on how to use the device correctly and understand the results. Together, you will collaborate to stay on track and make progress by setting small, measurable goals. Ask your provider to refer you. You deserve it!



To learn how a diabetes care and education specialist can help you, visit DiabetesEducator.org/LivingWithDiabetes.

For more on this and other behaviors for better diabetes management, visit DiabetesEducator.org/AADE7.