



Tips for Improving Your A1c

What are some tips for improving my A1c?

- Checking your blood sugar more often gives you more data and increases your ability (and ours) to make informed decisions about your diabetes care.
- Writing down your blood sugars can help you can see the “trends” or “patterns.”
- Taking your insulin before meals will help lower your blood sugars after meals.
- Careful “carb” counting and matching insulin to the “carbs” helps control the blood sugars after meals.
- Limiting the “carbs” for meals to 90 grams or also helps prevent high blood sugars after meals.
- Choosing “quality carbs”: fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grain breads and cereals, milk, yogurt help improve your blood sugar control.
- Increasing the protein in your meals and limiting the carbs may help you feel “fuller” after eating.
- Drinking only water and milk – Juices and soda pop have as much as 9 teaspoons of sugar for an 8-ounce serving.
- Foods with fiber slow the absorption of the carbohydrate and prevent a sharp rise in the blood sugar after meals. This improves control and makes you feel full after eating.
- Regular exercise can help lower your blood sugars. Bigger muscles help burn more sugar 24 hours a day.
- Rotating your sites - using a new area will greatly improve the absorption.

What is A1c?

The A1c test is your “report card” of how well your diabetes is controlled. The lower the number the better your overall control. The sugar in your blood “sticks to” the hemoglobin in your red blood cells. The red blood cells die after about 120 days that is why we say the A1c is an average of the last 8-12 weeks of blood sugar control.

For someone without diabetes the normal A1c test is 4.3-6.3%. For someone with diabetes, the target will vary by age. We will work with you to get in the best control possible.

| Age | Target A1c |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Below 5 years of age | 7.5-8.5% |
| 5-11 years old | Less than 8% |
| 12 years old or older | Less than 7.5% |
| Adult | Less than 7% |

Disclaimer: This document is for informational purposes only and is not intended to take the place of the care and attention of your personal physician or other professional medical services. Talk with your doctor if you have questions about individual health concerns or specific treatment options.

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