

Heart Health for People with Diabetes

If you have diabetes, you're at increased risk for heart attack or stroke.

Your ABC Check List

Talk to your doctor about your ABC numbers and what target numbers are right for you.



A A1C

The A1C test measures your average blood glucose (sugar) over the last 3 months. Having high levels of blood sugar for a long time can harm your blood vessels, kidneys, eyes, and feet.

Healthy A1C: below 7
Tested at least twice a year.



B Blood pressure

High blood pressure makes your heart work too hard. It can cause a heart attack, stroke, and damage your kidneys and eyes.

Healthy blood pressure for diabetics:
Below 140/90*
Get it checked at every doctor visit.



C Cholesterol

Bad cholesterol, or LDL, clogs your blood vessels which can cause a heart attack or stroke. HDL, or "good" cholesterol helps remove the "bad" cholesterol from your blood vessels.

Healthy Cholesterol: Below 100 for LDL
Get a cholesterol test at least once a year.

How can I control my ABC numbers?

Below are important things you can do to control your ABC numbers.



Eat Well.

- Eat high-fiber foods like whole grain breads and cereals, brown rice, lentils, beans, fruits, and vegetables.
- Eat heart-healthy fats such as fish, nuts, seeds, and avocado.
- Eat less foods with high-trans or saturated fats, sugar and salt. Try skipping the salt or add less, and order a smaller size – like a kid’s size of French fries. Instead of frying, try baking, broiling, or grilling with oils instead of butter, cream, shortening, lard, or margarine.

Get moving.

- Adults should get 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity at least 5 days a week. You can break up 30 minutes into smaller amounts of time throughout the day.
- You can get active without a gym membership! Walking, dancing, bike-riding, or tennis are all ways to get physical activity without going to a gym.

For more tips on healthy eating and physical activity, visit www.mass.gov/massinmotion

Take your medicine following your doctor’s directions.

Keep taking your medicines until you talk to your doctor.

Get help to deal with stress.

Ask for help if you feel down. Talk to a mental health counselor, a friend, family member or a religious or spiritual leader that you trust, and can listen to your concerns.

Quit smoking.

For help quitting, call **1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)** or visit www.makesmokinghistory.org

Do you know the signs of a heart attack?

Learn more about heart health, including the signs and symptoms of a heart attack, by visiting: www.mass.gov/dph/heartstroke

To learn more about diabetes, visit mass.gov/dph/diabetes

