Diabetes Resources for Patients – Calgary Zone


**Education and Diabetes Questions**

- **Phone-line, Email**
  - Diabetes Canada’s support services: 1-800-BANTING (1-800-226-8464) or visit their website to email them a question or to read frequently asked questions [https://www.diabetes.ca/campaigns/information---support---virtual-care](https://www.diabetes.ca/campaigns/information---support---virtual-care). They answer more than 20,000 questions a year!
  - Diabetes Educator: If you already have a diabetes educator in your primary care network (doctor’s office) or diabetes clinic, call him or her. Many pharmacists are also diabetes educators. Ask!

- **Diabetes Classes:**
  - Alberta Healthy Living Program Classes: To view and sign up online for diabetes classes (and much more) visit [https://app.bookking.ca/ahlpcalgarypub](https://app.bookking.ca/ahlpcalgarypub). If you need help booking classes, call 403-9-HEALTH. They may also have virtual classes.
  - Primary Care Network (PCN) education: Find and visit your PCNs website at [www.mypcn.ca](http://www.mypcn.ca) to see what education classes they may offer. PCNs are groups of family doctors that offer extra services to their patients.

- **Online Education**
  - Diabetes Canada Home page [www.diabetes.ca](http://www.diabetes.ca)
  - MyHealth.Alberta: Visit [https://myhealth.alberta.ca/](https://myhealth.alberta.ca/) and search Diabetes

**Glucose Monitoring**

1. Pharmacies: Pharmacy staff train on glucose meters obtained through their pharmacy.
2. Diabetes educators: Educators at your Primary Care Network (doctor’s office) or diabetes centre (if you are currently attending) may assist with glucose meter training.
# Staying Healthy with Diabetes

## Diabetes Canada Recommended Diabetes Checks:


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<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td><strong>A1c</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Target is usually 7% or less. Check with your healthcare team.&lt;br&gt;• Ask for a standing-order A1c from your doctor so it is easier to get an A1c done every 3-4 months. You do not need to fast for this lab-work.&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Why it’s important:</strong> A target A1c can lower the risk of complications. Dropping the A1c one point, e.g. from 8% to 7%, may lower risk by up to 35% in type 2 diabetes. Dropping the A1c from 9% to 7% may lower risk by up to 60% in type 1 diabetes.</td>
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<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td><strong>Blood pressure (BP)</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Aim for less than 130/80. Monitor at home, pharmacy, MD office.&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Why it’s important:</strong> Blood pressure control can reduce the risk of stroke, heart attack, dementia, eye and kidney damage and erectile dysfunction.</td>
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<td><strong>C</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cholesterol</strong>&lt;br&gt;• LDL target is less than 2.0 mmol/L for most with diabetes&lt;br&gt;• Ask your doctor to send you to lab yearly (you don’t need to fast).&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Why it’s important:</strong> High LDL and diabetes both raise the risk of heart attack &amp; stroke.</td>
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<td><strong>D, D</strong></td>
<td><strong>Drugs to decrease heart disease risk</strong>&lt;br&gt;• See your doctor to discuss possible protective medications&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Why it’s important:</strong> Some medicines reduce the risk of stroke and heart attack.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Dental care</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Perform daily dental care. Have regular dental appointments.&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Why it’s important:</strong> Diabetes increases the risk of gum disease; gums support teeth!</td>
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<td><strong>E</strong></td>
<td><strong>Exercise and Healthy Eating</strong>&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Why it’s important:</strong> Your healthy habits help increase overall health while lowering blood sugars, the risk of heart disease and other complications.</td>
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<td><strong>S, S, S</strong></td>
<td><strong>Self-Management Support</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Set goals and identify barriers that keep you from reaching your goals&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Why it’s important:</strong> Goals focus your energy and help with next steps.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Screening</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Heart: Have BP, cholesterol and other tests done by doctor.&lt;br&gt;• Feet: Examine feet daily. See doctor if you have open wounds or concerns.&lt;br&gt;• Eyes: Get a diabetes eye exam with optometrist or ophthalmologist.&lt;br&gt;• Kidney: Have urine and blood checks done yearly by your doctor.&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Why it’s important:</strong> The sooner complications are found, the sooner they can be managed and the less likely they’ll affect your quality of life.&lt;br&gt;<strong>Stop Smoking</strong>&lt;br&gt;• When ready, see your doctor, pharmacist or visit <a href="https://www.albertaquits.ca/">https://www.albertaquits.ca/</a>&lt;br&gt;• <strong>Why it’s important:</strong> Quitting smoking reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke, many cancers, dying early and exposing loved-ones to smoke.</td>
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1:1 Diabetes Help

Seek help if …

- You are planning a pregnancy. (Ask your doctor to refer you to a “Diabetes in Pregnancy Clinic” now, before you become pregnant.)
- You frequently have glucose readings less than 4.0 mmol/L
- You frequently have glucose readings above 10 mmol/L
- You are frequently peeing, thirsty, having infections
- You have an open wound on your leg or foot
- You find it hard to take care of your health because of finances, disabilities, stress and other mental health concerns.
- You are due for regular diabetes checks for A1c, heart, feet, eyes, kidneys

Make an appointment to discuss with:

1. Your family doctor, nurse practitioner or the health educators in your Primary Care Network [www.mypcn.ca](http://www.mypcn.ca). Primary Care Networks are groups of family doctors that may share the services of social workers, behavioral health consultants, chronic disease management nurses, pharmacists and dietitians. If you don’t have a family doctor, find one at [www.calgaryareadocs.com](http://www.calgaryareadocs.com). Please note, the Mosaic PCN also has a Refugee Health Clinic [http://mosaicpcn.ca/Programs/Pages/Refugee-Health-Clinic.aspx](http://mosaicpcn.ca/Programs/Pages/Refugee-Health-Clinic.aspx)

2. Your pharmacist. They may be a diabetes educator. Ask!

3. Your diabetes centre or diabetes doctor: If you don’t see an educator at a diabetes centre, it may be that your diabetes doesn’t need specialist care. Ask your doctor if you need a referral to a diabetes centre or to a diabetes doctor.

4. An Alberta Healthy Living Program (AHLP) Dietitian: You may call to book an appointment with an AHLP dietitian after you’ve been to a Diabetes Essentials class. Call 9-HEALTH (403-943-2584) to make this appointment.

5. The resource people at:
   - Access Mental Health 403-943-1500 or The Distress Centre [www.distresscentre.com](http://www.distresscentre.com) to help you find the right resource.
Seek Urgent Help When:

1. **You have signs and symptoms of a heart attack or stroke** (www.heartandstroke.ca/heart or www.heartandstroke.ca/stroke)
   - Call 9-1-1 or have someone drive you immediately to urgent care or an emergency department. You should be seen immediately. Do not drive yourself.

2. **You are on an insulin pump and it stops working. (Remember, you cannot be without insulin for more than 2 hours.)**
   - Use the plan you have for coming off pump or
   - Call your diabetes educator during daytime hours or
   - Call your diabetes doctor or their after-hours physician

3. **You have type 1 diabetes or take a pill called an SGLT-2 inhibitor and have nausea or vomiting, abdominal pain and/or trouble breathing you may be experiencing diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA).**
   - Visit urgent care, an emergency department or if you feel too unwell to travel, call 9-1-1. Calgary emergency department wait times are listed here: http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/waittimes/waittimes.aspx
   - You may also test ketones (see the DKA handout you were provided) and call your diabetes educator during daytime hours to help determine if it is DKA.

4. **You (or another person) with type 1 diabetes is having a severe low blood sugar. Glucose tablets or juice are not working or the person is unconscious, severely agitated or not responding to you.**
   - Call 9-1-1 so EMS can respond to treat
   - And administer glucagon if you’ve been trained on this

5. **You learn you are pregnant.**
   - Ask your doctor to make an urgent referral to a “Diabetes in Pregnancy Clinic”.

6. **You made a big mistake with your insulin, like taking too much of the fast acting insulin.**
   - Call Poison and Drug Information Services (PADIS) for insulin dose errors Alberta & NWT 1-800-332-1414 available 24 hours a day.
   - Call your diabetes educator during daytime hours. Don’t leave a message if unable to reach an educator. Call PADIS immediately.

7. **You feel distressed and worry you may hurt yourself:**
   - Call the Distress Centre Calgary 403-266-4357 (403-266-HELP)

8. **You feel unwell but are unsure if you need urgent diabetes care:**
   - Call Health Link 8-1-1 or your diabetes team so they may assess, or visit urgent care.