



A Healthier You!  
Every Day and  
in a Public Health  
Emergency

# Diabetes SELF CARE

IT MAKES **ALL** THE DIFFERENCE



NEW MEXICO  
DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH**  
PUBLICATION

# Take Charge!



**Whether you have type 1 or 2 diabetes, have just been diagnosed or have lived with diabetes for a long time,** are a student or a senior, the most important message is this: *Self Care can change your life, your health, and your attitude.* Small changes can add up to a big difference.

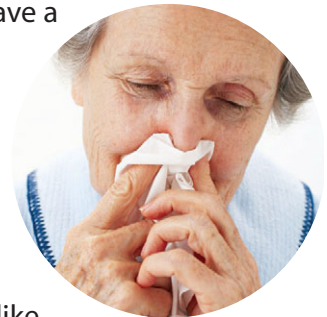
When you have diabetes, it is vital to adopt a problem-solving approach. Setting goals, recognizing challenges and reducing risks are important. By taking an active role in controlling your diabetes, you will feel better, have more energy, prevent complications and live longer.

It is also essential to seek support. Your health care providers, family, friends, and others with diabetes can become your network. Diabetes requires attention and healthy behaviors. It is often a roller coaster ride. Ups and downs can take their toll. It is easy to burn out from the demands. That's when it's vital to have trusted people to turn to for support and help. And support yourself too. Celebrate your successes, learn from the things that don't work. Reward yourself and give yourself credit for making small improvements.

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## A Plan for When You Are Sick

Because colds, flu and other illnesses put stress on the body, which can raise your blood sugar, it is important to have a sick day plan. If you lose your appetite or take over-the-counter medications, it can change your body chemistry and make it harder to stay healthy.



### When you are sick:

- **Check your blood glucose more often,** every 3-4 hours.
- **Keep sick-day foods on hand.** If you don't feel like eating, try mild foods like rice, crackers, toast and hot cereal. Or consume fluids like soup, applesauce, broth or frozen fruit bars.
- **Drink extra fluids, including non-caffeine drinks.** If you are able to follow your meal plan, stick to water and diet soft drinks. If you cannot follow your meal plan, you will need fluids with sugar and carbs, including juice and regular soft drinks.
- **Follow medication instructions exactly.** For insulin and oral diabetes medication, take your normal dose unless your doctor tells you to change it. Be sure you understand instructions for any changes. **Check with your doctor before taking over-the-counter medicines, supplements or remedies.** They can raise your blood sugar.
- **Call your doctor if you don't improve in a day or two** or have had vomiting or diarrhea for more than 6 hours, if your ketones are too high, if you feel sleepier than normal, have trouble breathing or thinking clearly, or if you are taking insulin and your blood sugar level spikes (over 240mg/dl) or drops (under 60mg/dl).

**B**efore you make any changes... Check with your doctor before you change your diet, start to exercise or make other changes in your routine. Your health care provider can also help you develop a detailed self management plan to control your diabetes and improve your health.

## Tools to Use:

### Prediabetes: Lower Your Risk!

Many New Mexicans – more than half – are overweight or obese and have not made exercise a part of their regular routine. If you are among them, here's the good news: studies have shown that simple lifestyle changes can lower your risk of developing type 2 diabetes. You can reduce your risk by 58% just by sustained modest weight loss and increased physical activity – walking for a half hour a day!



### New Mexico Provides:

#### Your Diabetes Care Card

You can easily get a diabetes wallet card that will tell others how to help you if your blood sugar drops. It tracks doctor visits, lab tests, and immunizations, describes your allergies and lists your medications. For your New Mexico Diabetes Care Card in English or Spanish, call the NM Department of Health Diabetes Program toll free number, 1-888-523-2966.

### Food: Have it your way

Kitchen Creations, a cooking school for people with diabetes and their families, provides a 4-session series of cooking classes statewide. You can have your tortilla and eat it too! The course will give you and your family tips for meal planning, food preparation, portion control and adaptation of recipes from your tradition. For more information about Kitchen Creations Schools, call the toll free diabetes number, 1-888-523-2966.

### Visit our website

The New Mexico Department of Health Diabetes Website offers useful information, resources, support and links. Visit: [www.diabetesnm.org](http://www.diabetesnm.org)

## ICE

### In Case of Emergency!

**In an accident or emergency**, first responders are now trained to check your cell phone for an emergency contact person, listed under the heading ICE.

**Why not put ICE in your phone now?** It only takes a few seconds and it could help save your life. Simply select "new contact" and enter ICE and the number of the contact person.



## Important Tips for Parents

**I.D.:** Young children should always wear medical identification. A wallet card is not enough in an emergency. Ankle bracelets or medallions laced on to their shoes are safer for children than neck chains.

**Inform:** Provide the school with your child's current medication. When there is a change, update your child's medical management plan. Schedule a visit to your child's doctor before school starts to get required forms signed.

**Provide:** Keep a supply of testing equipment and snacks at school for prevention and treatment of low blood sugar.

**Prepare:** Be sure your child's teachers and the school office have your current contact information. Sign a written medical release so teachers can contact your child's doctor in an emergency. Ask to have a copy of your child's medical management plan placed in the substitute teacher's folder with a photo of your child, symptoms and treatment of an insulin reaction, when your child usually eats a snack, and where the treatment supplies are kept.

# READY!

## Diabetes Self Care for a Public Health Emergency

**Everyone should be prepared for an emergency.** It's especially important for people with diabetes to ensure that they will have what they need to stay healthy. Here are some tips.

### Make a plan and organize:

- Your basic medical supplies and medications
- Food and water
- A backpack packed with clothes, a sweater, toothbrush, and comb
- Flashlights with fresh batteries
- A contact plan with family members in case of separation



### Pack your pantry

- A stash of food that has a long shelf life and doesn't require refrigeration is best. A hand operated can opener is critical for power black-outs.
- Dehydration is more dangerous than missing a meal. Stock one gallon of water per person per day, for 3 days.
- Protein: jerky, canned tuna,

sardines or salmon, tofu and peanut butter.

- All purpose meal bars: Look for bars with with less than 30-45 grams of carbs (2-3 carbohydrate servings), at least 3-5 grams of fiber, less than 5-7 grams of fat, and 5 or more grams of protein. Good choices include *Clif Bars*, *Post Raisin Bran Cereal Bars*, or *Kellogg's All Bran Bars*.
- Saltines or pretzels.
- Glucose tablets and small canned juices for lows.

**Fitness Counts!** Endurance can be crucial in dealing with disasters like power outages and storms. Walking several miles to safety can be tough if you have been a couch potato. Start walking, stretch every day and try strength training with 3-8 pound weights.

**Frantic Feelings** – Preparation is the best antidote for disaster anxiety. Knowing you are ready for natural disasters such as wildfires or severe winter storms will help prevent anxious feelings.

**Establish a Personal Support Network** of individuals who will check in on you in an emergency. Your network can be of friends, roommates, family members, co-workers and neighbors.

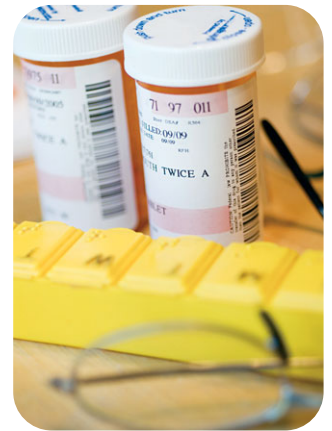
**Emergency Documents** – After a disaster, people need insurance, medical, and financial documents. Copies of life saving information – about your treatment, dialysis, or prescriptions – should be in emergency kits, and medication lists should be on your wallet card. Family records,

wills, deeds, social security numbers, charge card, bank account, and insurance papers can be put in a binder or file for an emergency.

**Communicate!** Be prepared to give clear, specific instructions and directions to rescue personnel or others in a crisis. Practice giving these instructions with the least amount of words in the least amount of time.

**Medications** – Something as unpredictable as a New Mexico snowstorm can keep you from taking medicines that you need. Practice these strategies to avoid a medication crisis:

- Carry a wallet card that lists your medications and doses. Include the name of your doctor and her phone number.
- Never wait until the day you run out of medicine to refill your prescription. Maintain a 7 to 14 day supply and keep it with you.
- Make copies of prescriptions to keep with you.
- Ask your provider or pharmacist about the shelf life of your medication. Ask how often to rotate stored medication to ensure its effectiveness.
- Wear identification, such as *Medic Alert*.
- Take a meter and strips when you leave home.
- If you take insulin, carry an extra vial of insulin and syringes. Keep it as cool as possible.
- If you are on dialysis, ask your dialysis center how your treatment will be handled in a public health emergency.



Published by

NEW MEXICO  
DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH

BUREAU OF  
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EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT

**Emergency Information**

**505-476-8200**

**[www.health.state.nm.us/ohem](http://www.health.state.nm.us/ohem)**

Diabetes Information: 888-523-2966 toll free

[www.diabetesnm.org](http://www.diabetesnm.org)

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## Healthy Eating

**Make healthy meals into delicious meals:** Because what you eat is such an important part of controlling your blood glucose, ask your doctor for a referral to a Certified Diabetes Educator who can help you plan a healthy diet.

## Being Active

**Get moving:** Exercise is like taking a diabetes pill. It burns up the glucose in your blood, and your blood sugar drops. Exercising benefits your heart, controls weight, reduces stress and increases well-being. Just 30 to 45 minutes a day of an aerobic activity like dancing, jogging or walking will change your health. Experts also recommend 3 sessions of weight training a week. For more information, visit: <http://diabetes.about.com/od/exercise/a/exercise.htm>

## Monitoring

**Check your blood glucose:** Knowing your levels helps you make decisions about food, exercise, medications and stress. The American Diabetes Association recommends the following blood sugar levels: 90-130 before meals, 180 two hours after meals, and 100-140 at bedtime. Ask your doctor what your blood sugar goals should be.

**Check your feet:** Foot problems can be serious and costly. Daily foot care and proper control are key to avoiding them. Check your feet yourself with a mirror or with the help of a loved one after your shower or before going to bed. If you find blisters or a wound that is not healing, see your doctor immediately.

## Taking your medications

**Organize:** Pills, insulin, aspirin, and blood pressure and other medicines must be taken exactly as prescribed, and coordinated with meals to help you get the best control. Ask your pharmacist to review your medication plan.

## Problem Solving

**Get on track:** Learn as much as possible about diabetes care and resources in your community. Get support from friends, family, support groups and your health care providers. Reward yourself when you eat well and monitor your health.

## Healthy Coping

**Practice stress management:** Emotional stress can raise blood sugar, cholesterol and adrenaline. Find what works for you: It might be yoga, prayer, or listening to music. Humor and laughter are healing. Laughter actually helps the heart, reduces stress and improves resistance to illnesses.

## Reducing Risks

**Details:** Brush and floss your teeth and see your dentist twice a year – it reduces diabetes complications. Take a multivitamin. Drink non-caffeine liquids. Avoid alcohol and cigarettes. Moisturize your skin with lotion right after showering, before you dry off.



Changing your life is a challenge that has many rewards. The care plan below can help you choose goals and work toward them. You will feel better and look great, too. Make sure you have understanding and encouragement from your friends and family. Find a buddy who needs to make changes. Set goals together. Talk to each other about how to overcome obstacles and celebrate small victories. Remember – even small changes are a reason to congratulate yourself!

## MY CARE PLAN

Behavior	Goal	Plan	Possible Difficulties	My planned reward	What worked!
<b>Food</b>					
<b>Exercise</b>					
<b>Medications</b>					
<b>Smoking</b>					
<b>Monitoring</b>					
<b>Tests</b>					