



Diabetes 101

If you have Type 2 diabetes, you're not alone. About 11 percent of Americans have diabetes. Of those, 90 – 95 percent have Type 2. With proper care, you can manage your diabetes and live your best life. Monitor your A1C levels. Get other routine blood tests as directed by your doctor. Take care of your eyes with routine vision screenings. Take medicines as prescribed.

Understanding your A1C

Your A1C level tells how well you're managing diabetes. It measures how much sugar (glucose) has attached to your hemoglobin, an important protein in red blood cells. An A1C test reveals your average blood sugar levels over the past three months. Doctors use it to detect prediabetes and diabetes.

Doctors say an A1C level below 5.7 percent is in the "normal" range. Results between 5.7 percent and 6.4 percent indicate prediabetes. An A1C level of 6.5 percent or above indicates diabetes.

If you have diabetes, get your A1C levels checked at least twice a year. Talk to your doctor about an A1C test schedule that makes sense for you.

Focus on your eyes

Diabetes is linked to a high risk of serious eye problems. These include diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, cataracts and macular edema. Many of these don't cause symptoms until it's too late to treat them.

For this reason, people with diabetes should get dilated eye exams each year. This will help catch problems early. It may even save your vision.

Follow your doctor's orders

People with diabetes often need medicine for other conditions. Taking medicines as prescribed is key to health and wellness. Many people don't take them as they should.

Research shows up to 30 percent of prescriptions in the United States are never filled. Close to half of all medicines for chronic conditions are taken incorrectly.

Taking medicines correctly:

- Decreases chances of hospitalization.
- Reduces health care costs.
- Lowers death rates.

If you have trouble taking your medicines, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

Help in your own backyard

In South Carolina, more than 500,000 adults have diabetes. About 35 percent of adults have prediabetes. One in five people may not know they have the disease.

Continued





To improve these numbers, BlueChoice HealthPlan of South Carolina and the BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina Foundation worked with the Alliance for a Healthier South Carolina and the Department of Health and Environmental Control to create Diabetes Free SC. It aims to reduce diabetes and its complications. It has three strategic directions.

They are:

- To improve pregnancy outcomes and the health of women with or at risk for diabetes.
- To reduce lifelong risk of diabetes in children.
- To prevent diabetes and its complications in adults.

Diabetes Free SC creates long-term partnerships and programs that address its objectives. For more information, visit www.DiabetesFreeSC.org.



My Diabetes Discount Program

[My Diabetes Discount Program](#) lets members get insulin with a \$0 copayment when they meet program requirements. To qualify for the \$0 insulin copayment, members must meet both of these criteria:

- Have a Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes diagnosis
- Actively be on insulin therapy

If the members meet these qualifications, eligibility requirements for the \$0 copayment are as follows:

- Primary care physician visit (annually)
- Comprehensive metabolic panel (annually)
- Hemoglobin A1C (semiannually)
- Diabetes risk factor assessment of feet and eyes (annually)
- Flu vaccine (annually)
- Diabetes education*

We assess requirements each quarter. The \$0 insulin copayment will begin the quarter after the member completes all requirements. These requirements must be maintained on an annual basis to continuously receive discounted benefits. The \$0 copayment is available for one year from the start date of the benefit, such as April 1, 2023 through March 31, 2024.

The initial education requirement is two consecutive quarters of calls with a care manager **or viewing two consecutive quarters of Healthwise material **or** completion of a diabetes or related program in My Health PlannerSM **or** completion of a diabetes education course at a physician's office or diabetes education facility.*

