

# 5 ways to lower your a1c

**1** Follow your treatment plan.

**Try these tips:**

Every Sunday night, put your pills into a day-of-the-week pillbox. This makes taking pills easier during the day, and helps you track what you've already taken.

Set a reminder on your phone to help you remember to take your medication.

Talk to your doctor about your health goals. Make sure you understand what 'healthy' looks like for *you*.



**2** Move more! Try to get at least 30 minutes of exercise five days a week.

When watching TV, get up during the commercial breaks and walk around.

Walk your hallway when talking on the phone.

Take the stairs over the elevator whenever you can.

Try the 7 minute workout - do each exercise for 30 seconds, you can do anything for 30 seconds!



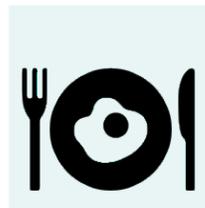
**3** Eat a balanced diet. And eat modest portions.

Avoid processed foods as much as possible. Take a pass on sodas and juices.

Make healthier foods more visible. Put fruits and veggies in the front of your fridge or on the counter.

Use the half-plate rule — fill half your plate with fruit and vegetables to keep you on track.

Pack your lunch so that you control what you eat.



**4** Check! Don't guess.

Ask your doctor how often you should test. This will make sure you are on track but not using strips and lancets for no reason.

"Test, don't guess" — studies show that people are poor judges of their own blood glucose levels.

Set a timer to help you remember when to test.



**5** Stick to a meal schedule.

If you eat too often, or forget to eat, your blood sugar levels will rise and fall more than they should. Eat on a schedule to keep your blood sugar steady.

Set a reminder on your phone to help you stay on a regular eating schedule.

Ask your doctor for a referral to a nutritionist!



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## ADDING IT UP: Diabetes care + costs

*Some "sugar-free" advice to help manage the cost of diabetes care*

*How can I afford to be a healthy patient??*



LET'S NOT SUGAR-COAT IT:

# Diabetes costs add up!

Many people feel overwhelmed by their out-of-pocket costs for diabetes care. Don't give up! Here are 6 things you can do to bring your costs down. Ask your social services advocate to help connect you.

- Find programs to help pay for drugs
  - The programs below help people find programs that help pay for medications.
  - Partnership for Prescription Assistance** is supported by drug manufacturers. Call 1-888-477-2669
  - NeedyMeds** lets you find medicines by name or by drug company. Call 1-800-503-6897
  - RxAssist** offers information about programs from drug companies, state programs, discount drug cards, and where to get help with co-pays. Call 1-877-537-5537

- Ask for samples
  - Ask for samples of your medications, supplies, and glucose meters from:
    - Your doctor
    - Your diabetes educator
    - Booths at local health fairs

- Reuse your lancets
  - If you follow safety tips below, you can safely use 1 lancet a day.
    - Never share lancets with others.
    - Put the plastic cover back on the tip between uses.
    - Don't use alcohol to clean the tip. That will remove the protective coating on the tip.

1: Add up one **month of medication** costs

My a1c level is...

6.9 or less Well-controlled	7.0 - 7.9 Moderately controlled	8.0 - 9.9 Less-well controlled	10.0 or more Least controlled
<b>METFORMIN</b> \$ _____ cost per month			
<b>EXTRA CONTROL MEDICATION</b> \$ _____ cost per month	<b>EXTRA CONTROL MEDICATION</b> \$ _____ cost per month	<b>EXTRA CONTROL MEDICATION</b> \$ _____ cost per month	<b>SHORT-ACTING INSULIN (ST)</b> \$ _____ X _____ cost per pen pens per month
<b>LONG-ACTING INSULIN (LT)</b> \$ _____ X _____ cost per pen pens per month	<b>LONG-ACTING INSULIN (LT)</b> \$ _____ X _____ cost per pen pens per month	<b>LONG-ACTING INSULIN (LT)</b> \$ _____ X _____ cost per pen pens per month	<b>LONG-ACTING INSULIN (LT)</b> \$ _____ X _____ cost per pen pens per month
<b>TOTAL MEDICATION COST</b> = _____			

2: Add in one **month of supplies** costs

My glucose testing plan

# \_\_\_\_\_ x  $\frac{30}{\text{days per month}}$  = \_\_\_\_\_  
tests per day

# \_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
# of test strips needed

# \_\_\_\_\_ x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
# of lancets needed

<b>LANCETS</b> \$ _____ X _____ cost per box # boxes needed	<b>TEST STRIPS</b> \$ _____ X _____ cost per box # boxes needed	<b>TOTAL SUPPLIES COST</b> = _____	<b>TOTAL MONTHLY COST</b> = _____
<b>Total cost of lancets</b> = _____	<b>Total cost of test strips</b> = _____		

## ↑ a1c = ↑ \$

The higher your A1C score, the more sugar is in your blood. And that means you need more medicines to control your blood sugar. The simplest way to save money on diabetes care is to lower your A1C score as much as possible.

- Ask your doctor for generics
  - Generic medicines cost less than brand names, but are the same quality. Talk to your doctor to make sure your prescriptions are for generics whenever possible.

- Shop around for the best price near you
  - The same medicine may be a very different price at different stores. The online tools below will help you compare store prices near you.

**GoodRx** goodrx.com

**ScriptSave WellRx** wellrx.com

**familywize** familywize.org  
The smart way to save on prescriptions.

- Call the experts!
  - The American Diabetes Association has a hotline with trained diabetes experts. They can give you recipes, health information and find you programs for medication assistance. Call 1-800-342-2383 Mon-Friday, 9am to 7pm

Call 211 to be connected to community services and resources. They also have programs for the elderly, disabled, and non-English speaking.