

# Living in Balance

Fond du Lac Human Services *Diabetes Newsletter*

Fall  
2022

## What is Blood Sugar?

Your body turns the carbohydrates in the food you eat into sugar (glucose) to fuel your body.

- The sugar enters your blood stream to reach all the cells in your body.
- Insulin helps move the sugar from your blood into your cells to give them the energy your body needs.
- When you have diabetes, insulin does not work as it should, and sugars build up in your blood to give you high blood sugar.

### Why is this important?

Having diabetes means that the carbohydrates you eat will not be turned into energy very well and can build up as sugar in your blood. Over time, high blood sugar can harm almost every part of your body. What you eat, when you eat and how much you eat can quickly change your blood sugar levels.

**When you have diabetes, your blood sugar can be controlled by:**

- Being physically active and eating the right foods at the right time in the right amounts.
- Taking insulin and/or diabetes medicines.

**Work with your provider or diabetes educator to set goals for your blood sugar levels.**

- Know what to do to stay at your goal.
- Your provider and diabetes educator can tell you what simple steps to take when your blood sugar is too high or too low.

**Treating diabetes should bring blood sugars to near normal levels, but you may still have blood sugar highs and lows.**

- Blood sugar levels that are too high can make you thirsty, tired and have to urinate often.
- High blood sugars can, over time, cause blindness, kidney and heart disease, stroke and other problems.
- Blood sugar levels that are too low are also dangerous if it causes you to fall, faint, or pass out.

**How do you know when your blood sugar levels are good? By:**

- Using a glucose meter or continuous glucose monitor will tell you what your blood sugar level is right now.
- Having a blood test called an A1C that you get at your clinic. This test will tell you what your blood sugar levels have been over the last 2-3 months.



**Testing your blood with a glucose meter over time or wearing a continuous glucose monitor can show patterns of daily ups and downs.**

*An A1C test will tell your provider if your treatment is working, even with the daily ups and downs.*

## What is an A1C?

**The A1C test tells you how well controlled your blood sugar levels have been for the last 2-3 months.**

- Know what your A1C number should be (usually less than 7).
- Ask your provider or diabetes educator if you do not know your A1C number or what it should be.
- If you are told your A1C is too high, ask what you should do to lower your A1C.
- An A1C cannot tell if your blood sugars are high once in awhile or all the time. It gives you an average blood sugar level. A glucose meter or continuous glucose monitor will tell you when your blood sugars are too high or too low.

### Why is this important?

**The A1C test shows you how well you are controlling your diabetes.**

- A good A1C number means that your blood sugars are where they should be most of the time.
- A high A1C number means your blood sugars are generally too high-sometimes or all the time.
- High blood sugars can, over time, cause blindness, kidney and heart disease, stroke and many other health problems.
- Your provider or diabetes educator may choose a different treatment option if your blood sugar levels are too high.

**Get your A1C tested every 3 months. Your provider or diabetes educator may want to test your A1C more often if:**

- -Your treatment was changed recently.
- -Your A1C number has been too high.
- -You have other health problems.

**The A1C test tells your provider and diabetes educator if your treatment plan is working or if it needs to be changed.**

- Your diabetes treatment should help keep your blood sugar levels within normal range and lower your risk of getting other health problems from your diabetes.

*The A1C test does not replace testing your blood sugar with a glucose meter or continuous glucose monitor. Testing with a meter or continuous glucose monitor tells you what your blood sugar level is right now.*

## What is a Carbohydrate?

Carbohydrate refers to sugars, starches and fiber in foods. When you eat, your body breaks down carbohydrates into simple sugars (known as glucose), which gives your body the energy it needs.

- When you have diabetes, insulin does not work in getting the sugar into your cells. The sugar builds up in your blood, giving you high blood sugar. Having diabetes means that the carbohydrates you eat will not be turned into energy very well and can build up as sugar in your blood.

Foods that have a lot of carbohydrates are:

- Tortillas, bread, bagels, taco shells, rice, pasta
- Sweets, such as pastries, cakes, cookies, jam, candy and other desserts
- Starchy vegetables such as corn, peas, potato, and sweet potatoes
- Potato chips, pretzels, popcorn
- Fruit and fruit juices
- Soda pop, sweet tea and coffee
- Milk, yogurt and ice cream

High carbohydrate foods can be healthy if they have a lot of fiber, vitamins and minerals such as fruit, whole grain foods, milk and yogurt.

- Eating healthy carbohydrates in the right amounts can help you control your diabetes.
- Foods that are mostly sugar are not healthy. These include most desserts, pastries, candy, soda pop, sweet tea and coffee and some juices.
- If your diabetes is under control, you can still eat sweets sometimes.

Ask your dietitian or diabetes educator how to read food labels and learn what to eat, how much to eat and when to eat.

- If you like sweets, ask about sweeteners that do not raise blood sugar levels, such as aspartame, sucralose, saccharin and stevia.

What carbohydrates you eat, when and how much you eat can quickly change your blood sugar levels.

- Many foods have hidden sugars and carbohydrates. Even foods that are called "sugar free" may have a lot of other carbohydrates.
- You should know how many carbohydrates to eat with each meal for your diabetes treatment to work.

**Call 218-878-2190 to schedule a diabetes appointment with your primary provider, diabetes educator or dietitian.**

### TAKE ACTION

How ready are you to learn more about taking care of diabetes?

- I want to learn something now.
- I am thinking about learning more in the future.
- I am not ready to do this right now.

What questions do you have about diabetes?

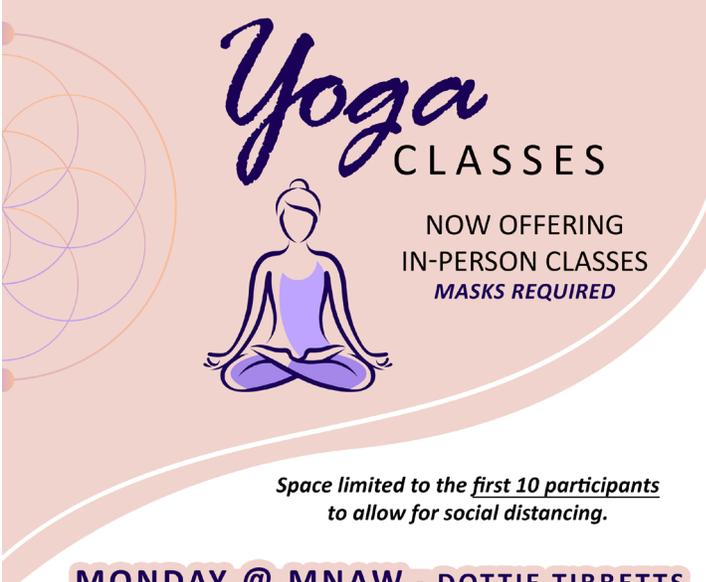
What are your blood sugar and A1C goals?

I want to \_\_\_\_\_

By this date \_\_\_\_\_

## FAMILY FALL ACTIVITIES

Visit a Pumpkin Patch | Make an Autumn Wreath  
| Roast Pumpkin Seeds | Play Outside | Go  
Camping | Visit a Corn Maze | Visit an Apple  
Farm | Take a Nature Walk | Jump in a Pile of  
Leaves | Visit a Farmer's Market



# Yoga

## CLASSES

NOW OFFERING  
IN-PERSON CLASSES  
**MASKS REQUIRED**

*Space limited to the first 10 participants  
to allow for social distancing.*

**MONDAY @ MNAW - DOTTIE TIBBETTS**  
12pm - 1pm

**WEDNESDAY @ CAIR - LAKE SUPERIOR ROOM**  
12:10pm - 12:55pm

The classes are open to the Fond du Lac Community and Employees.



Must meet program eligibility requirements.  
Fond du Lac Human Services Division | Medical Department

