

Diabetes

self-care centre

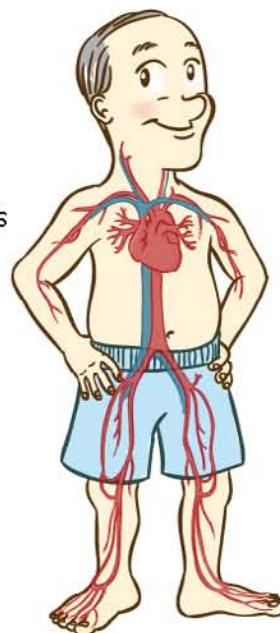
The Big Picture

The approach to self-care of diabetes care has changed in recent years. We now know that it involves more than just monitoring your blood sugar levels. In fact, other factors such as your blood pressure, waist measurement, and cholesterol are just as important and part of the Big Picture of diabetes management.

Diabetes and your cardiovascular health

Your heart and blood vessels together are called the cardiovascular system. Elevated sugar in the blood from diabetes for a long period of time can damage both large vessels and small vessels. These cardiovascular problems can eventually lead to vision loss, kidney problems, nerve damage and even heart attack and stroke.

These serious cardiovascular complications are why managing your diabetes includes more than just tracking your blood sugar levels.



The Healthy Heart Lifestyle

The best way to manage diabetes and significantly reduce your risk of diabetes problems is by maintaining a **Healthy Heart Lifestyle**. This includes:

1

at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day to feel better and control weight



2

a low-fat, high-fibre diet, with sensible portions



3

being systematic about tracking your ABCs with your doctor



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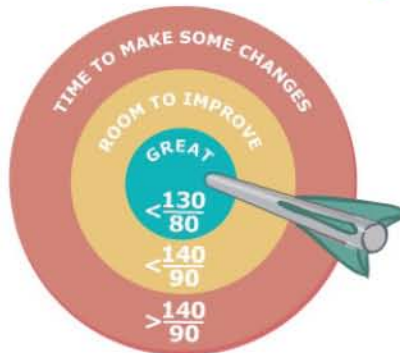
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♥ What are the **ABCs** of diabetes management?



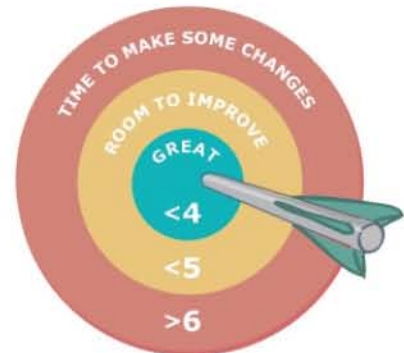
HgbA1c

The Hemoglobin **A1c** test gives us a big picture of your blood sugar control as it tells us how you have been doing for the last 3 months.



Blood Pressure

High blood pressure and high blood sugar overworks your heart and damages your blood vessels. This is why it's so important to get your blood pressure down! The target blood pressure for people with diabetes is lower compared to that of an average person.



Cholesterol

Your doctor will calculate your HDL/TC, the ratio of good cholesterol to total cholesterol. This score is a good reflection of your overall cholesterol status since it accounts for good and bad cholesterol.

♥ Where to start

Diabetes is a manageable disease! In fact, many people have used diabetes as an opportunity to make the positive lifestyle changes they've always wanted to make!

■ Learn more about diabetes

and its management from your physician and trusted resources like:



HealthyOntario
www.healthyontario.com

Canadian Diabetes Association
www.diabetes.ca

■ Focus on the basics

Try making a "To Do" list of the changes you'd like to make in your lifestyle. Getting enough sleep, eating well, and taking time to exercise and to relax are great starting points.



■ Build stress and time management skills

Making positive changes for yourself while under the stresses of everyday life can be a challenge.

Start with a plan to reduce stress and manage your time more effectively. Invite your friends and family to support your lifestyle changes.



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