

# Living with diabetes

Diabetes is one of the top 5 chronic conditions in the United States. More than 37 million Americans live with diabetes and 8.5 million don't know they have it.<sup>1</sup> Poorly controlled diabetes is linked to more serious conditions such as cardiovascular disease, kidney failure, dialysis, blindness and amputation – conditions that greatly diminish quality of life.

## Learn how to manage your diabetes

Although diabetes has no cure, you can take steps to manage the disease and live a long and healthy life.<sup>2</sup>

- Work with your health care team to learn more about the disease and develop a self-care plan.
- Maintain healthy levels of blood glucose, cholesterol and blood pressure.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Quit smoking.
- Eat a well-balanced diet high in fiber and lower in calories, saturated fat, trans fat, sugar and salt.
- Drink water instead of soda and juice.
- Make physical activity a part of your daily routine.
- Check your blood glucose level each day.
- Take your medication as directed.

## Coping with the disease

Figuring out your “new normal” of living with diabetes can be overwhelming. That's why it's common for people to experience stress, anger and depression. Going through these emotions is a normal part of the journey but learning how to manage them is the key to a healthy life.

### Optum Rx Diabetes management program

Your plan offers a no-cost program to help you manage your diabetes. If you are eligible, you are automatically enrolled and will receive a letter with details. One of our Optum Rx Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialists (CDCES) will also call you to talk about the program and help with one-on-one support.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Diabetes Statistics Report website. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/data/statistics-report/index.html>. Accessed June 10, 2022.

2. Managing Diabetes. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/managing-diabetes>

Stress can lead to higher blood sugar levels. To help lower stress, you can go for a walk, do yoga, listen to music or meditate. Always ask for help if you're feeling down. A mental health counselor, support group, friend or family member can listen to your concerns and help you feel better.

## Resources

- [Diabetes Tests | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/getting-tested.html)  
<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/getting-tested.html>
- [4 Steps to Manage Your Diabetes for Life - NIDDK \(nih.gov\)](https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/managing-diabetes/4-steps)  
<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/managing-diabetes/4-steps>
- [Diabetes - NIDDK \(nih.gov\)](https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes)  
<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes>
- [Diabetes Research, Education, Advocacy | ADA](https://diabetes.org/)  
<https://diabetes.org/>
- [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: eatright.org](https://www.eatright.org/)  
<https://www.eatright.org/>
- [Health & Wellness | ADA \(diabetes.org\)](https://diabetes.org/health-wellness)  
<https://diabetes.org/health-wellness>
- [Losing Weight & Diabetes | ADA](https://diabetes.org/health-wellness/weight-management)  
<https://diabetes.org/health-wellness/weight-management>
- [Get Active! | Exercise & Diabetes | ADA](https://diabetes.org/health-wellness/fitness)  
<https://diabetes.org/health-wellness/fitness>
- [Mental Health and Diabetes | ADA](https://diabetes.org/health-wellness/mental-health)  
<https://diabetes.org/health-wellness/mental-health>



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