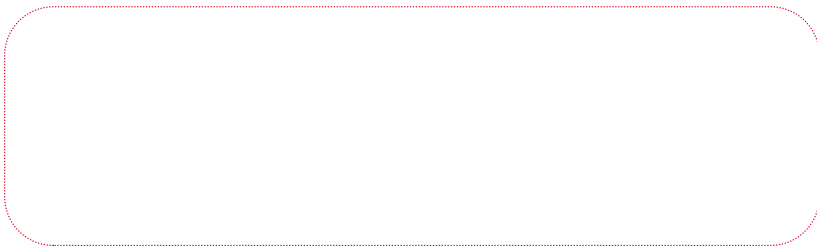


PLACE
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***OPEN NOW—
UNCOMPLICATE YOUR LIFE***



SIMPLE STEPS TO A HEALTHIER LIFE



BRISTOL PARK
M E D I C A L

HOW YOU CAN PREVENT DIABETES COMPLICATIONS

What Are Diabetes Complications?

- Diabetes complications are diseases that occur when your blood-glucose level stays too high for a long time
 - Complications can begin even when you don't have any symptoms
 - Vision changes, foot problems, kidney problems, and heart disease are four conditions that can result from poorly controlled diabetes
 - The good news is that EARLY detection, along with proper blood-glucose control, can help prevent diabetes complications
 - Visiting your doctor regularly and getting simple tests—for the presence of eye and foot disease, levels of cholesterol, protein in the urine, and blood sugar—is the only way to prevent diabetes complications



Keep Diabetic Eye Disease Out of Sight: Get a Yearly Eye Exam From Your Eye Doctor or Eye-Care Specialist

- Diabetes can cause loss of vision and even blindness by damaging blood vessels and nerves
 - Retinopathy is damage to blood vessels in your retina, which is the part of the eye that receives images from the world much like the film of a camera and sends them through the optic nerve to the brain
- Diabetic retinopathy is the leading cause of vision loss among adults in the US
 - It can become severe before vision changes or other symptoms appear
 - If retinopathy is treated in time, the risk of severe vision loss can be reduced to less than 2%
- Diabetes also causes other eye diseases, such as glaucoma (pressure in the eye that damages the optic nerve) and cataracts (clouding of the lens of the eye)



Yearly dilated eye exams can detect early evidence of eye disease and along with timely treatment, can prevent loss of vision

Stamp Out Diabetic Foot Disease: Report Changes and Have Feet Checked at Every Doctor Visit

- Diabetic foot problems begin with uncontrolled blood-sugar levels
- Hyperglycemia—blood glucose that is too high—is hard on your feet:
 - Prevents normal healing
 - Reduces feeling in the feet through nerve damage and causes numbness and burning
 - Causes drying and cracking
 - Causes poor circulation due to atherosclerosis (the narrowing of the passageways of blood vessels)
- Follow the self-care advice of your doctor or diabetes educator to prevent foot injury and infection



Control of diabetic foot disease depends on regular foot exams by your healthcare provider

- Always remember to ask about your feet, and get in the habit of removing your shoes and socks in the examination room before the doctor comes in

Count Yourself In: Make Sure You Request an HbA_{1c} Test From Your Doctor Every 3 Months

- HbA_{1c} refers to the test for glycosylated hemoglobin (also known as glycohemoglobin)
 - “Hb” refers to hemoglobin (part of your red blood cells) and “A_{1c}” refers to this particular type of hemoglobin (there are many variations of hemoglobin)

— Normally, HbA_{1c} makes up 4% to 6% of the body's total hemoglobin, but it may make up twice that amount in people with diabetes. Your HbA_{1c} number tells whether your blood sugar level is well controlled

HbA_{1c} Value

4-6%

Value for someone without diabetes

6-7%

Usual target value for someone with diabetes

Find out what your target HbA_{1c} level should be. Then find out the results of your HbA_{1c} test. If you are consistently above 8%, then you'll want to talk with your healthcare team about things you can do to bring down your number.

You do want to be careful about having a glycohemoglobin level that is too low, however (if it means you are having frequent hypoglycemic reactions)—or low blood sugars

- Know your HbA_{1c} number, and if it is too high, strive to lower it
 - Your doctor uses your HbA_{1c} level to determine how well your treatment is working
 - Discuss your current HbA_{1c} level with your doctor
 - Set a "target" number that you can strive for

You may be asked to have an HbA_{1c} test up to four times a year; the results will help your doctor better monitor the success of your treatment

Take Your Lipid Levels to Heart

- Having high cholesterol—high blood levels of lipids (fatty substances)—can increase your risk of heart disease
 - 75% of diabetes-related deaths are a result of heart disease
 - Your risk of heart disease can be lowered by regular blood pressure checks, which will detect high cholesterol early
 - In addition to total cholesterol, it is important to monitor LDL, HDL, and triglycerides too
 - Like high blood sugar, high cholesterol can be lowered by changing your lifestyle and eating habits
 - Eat a balanced diet low in saturated fat
 - Increase your daily activity (with permission of your healthcare provider)
 - Strive to attain a more healthy weight

Cholesterol tests should be repeated every 5 years for those who have acceptable levels; and more frequently for those with higher levels who are therefore at higher risk

We Want to Help You Control Your Diabetes and Avoid Complications

To avoid diabetes eye and foot diseases, and to lower your risk of heart disease, you need to have these tests and checkups on a regular basis:

- **See your eye-care specialist once a year**
- **Get your feet checked by your provider and inspect your feet regularly at home**
- **Have a cholesterol test once a year**
- **Know your HbA_{1c} level and get a test from your doctor every 3 months**
- **Have an annual check for urine protein (microalbuminuria) to help reduce the risk of kidney problems**

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