

CHAPTER ONE



GETTING STARTED

By now your doctor has told you that you have diabetes.

Diabetes is a serious disease.

The normal range for your blood sugar after not eating for 12 hours (fasting) is between 65 mg/dl and 110 mg/dl. Many things such as food, activity, medications, stress, and illness can affect your blood sugars.

When you have diabetes, your body's insulin is not working properly to keep your blood sugar in this normal range. If you have two fasting blood sugars over 126 mg/dl, you have diabetes.

Other names for diabetes are “high blood sugar” and “hyperglycemia.” There is NO “borderline diabetes” or “touch of sugar.” People with Type 1 diabetes **MUST** take insulin. People with Type 2 diabetes **MAY** or **MAY NOT** take insulin.

Studies have proven that keeping blood sugars as close to normal as possible can prevent or delay long term problems from diabetes. These problems affect your eyes, heart, nerves, feet, and kidneys.

MAJOR RISK FACTORS FOR DEVELOPING DIABETES INCLUDE:

- Overweight
- Family history
- Advancing age
- History of diabetes during pregnancy or giving birth to a baby over nine pounds
- Race or cultural background

WARNING SIGNS OF DIABETES MAY INCLUDE:

- Increased urination
- Unusual feelings of being tired
- Increased thirst
- Dry and itchy skin
- Dry mouth
- Infections occurring often
- Change in vision
- Slow healing
- Increased hunger

Different people have different warning signs; some people have no warning signs at all. If you have diabetes, your physician will refer you to a certified diabetes education team who will assist you in making your own treatment plan.

YOUR TEAM WILL REVIEW THE FOLLOWING TREATMENT PLAN:

- Healthy eating habits
- Diabetes medication, if needed
- Regular exercise
- Regular self-blood sugar monitoring

Because you have Diabetes you may need the following:

Every 3 months

- Physician visit
- HbA1c (a special test for diabetes)
- Foot exam by podiatrist (foot doctor)

Every 6 months

- Dental visit

Every 12 months

- Eye exam by ophthalmologist or optometrist (eye doctors) with pupil dilation (widening)
- Urine test for microalbumin (protein in urine)
- Lipid profile (fats in the blood)
 - Cholesterol less than 200 mg/dl
 - HDL (good cholesterol) above 55 women, 45 men
 - LDL (bad cholesterol) less than 100
 - Triglyceride (fats) level less than 150

In addition:

- Maintain blood pressure no higher than 130/80
- Do not smoke

OK!

You have heard all of this before. This sounds like a lot of work. You are right! It will require some work on your end. **You can do it. This booklet can help.**



OK! What about your weight? You have tried before and have not been able to change your weight. You are not alone. Many, many people, even people without diabetes have these concerns.

You and your doctor will work together to manage your diabetes. Here are four things that **YOU** can do. You should do these every day as part of your routine.

Get your family to help you.



Eat healthy
food



Get regular
exercise



Take your
medicine for
diabetes



Test your
blood sugar

OK! What if you do all of that, will it really help? If you follow this 4-step method, you will see results. This method is also known as personal continuous quality improvement. The word “continuous” is very important. Improving our health and ourselves is a continuous process.

STEP ONE



STEP 1 PLAN - IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM

Identify a problem you would like to work on first. Change the problem to a challenge. You can overcome a challenge, but sometimes problems are scary.

Remember the four things that you can do to help manage your diabetes.

Eat healthy food



Get regular exercise



Take your medicine for diabetes



Test your blood sugar



Please write down which one of these things you would like to work on as your first step.

STEP TWO

STEP 2 DO - GET MORE INFORMATION

The next step is to get more information on this challenge.



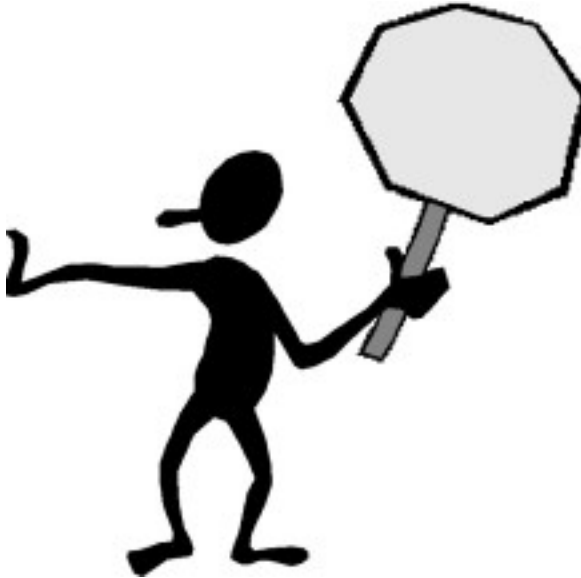
Every champion knows that in order to beat a challenger, they have to get as much information on their challenger as possible. With information they can know how to tackle and win.

The more you know about your challenger, the better able you are to make changes. You can learn about your challenge by observing and writing down things that you find yourself doing or not doing.

Let's look at an example:

If your challenge is to lose weight, you could write down things like:

- What foods you are eating
- How much and how often you are eating
- What exercises you are doing



**Take your time on this step!
It is very important.**

You never really know exactly where to improve until you have taken the time to observe the process. Think about what you did or are doing, and then write it down

The information you collect will be very valuable for the next step.

You can collect this information on the next 2 pages.

Collect for 7 days.

CONGRATULATIONS

CONGRATULATIONS ON COLLECTING ALL OF THAT INFORMATION

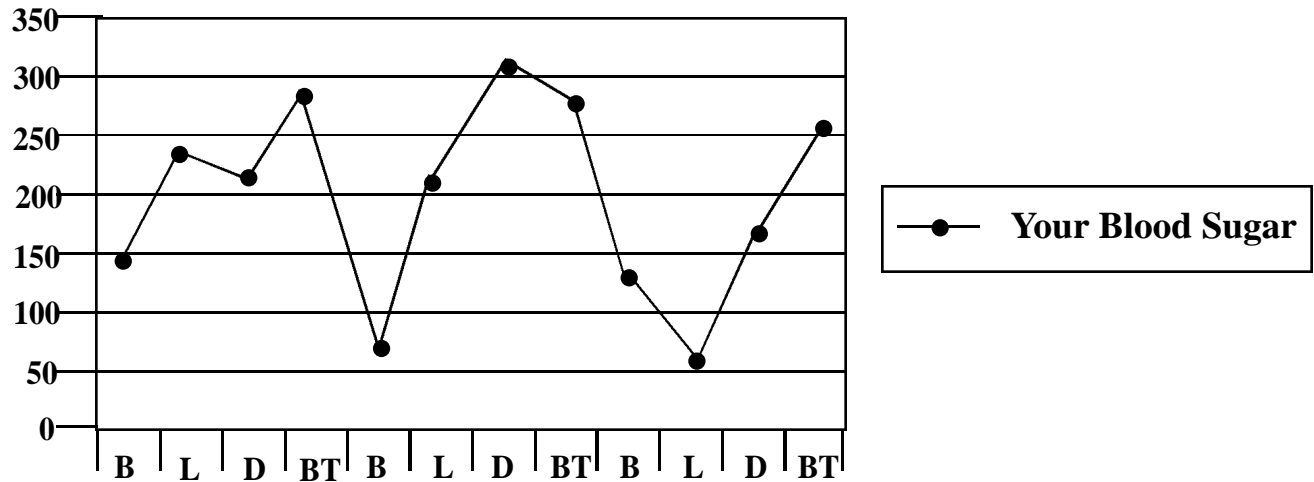
Now let's take another look at this information.

We created the diabetes graph paper you will find on the next pages.

Here are the steps to doing a good graph:

- 1 At the bottom of the graph, mark the time of your blood sugar reading. For example, a time could be before or after breakfast, lunch, dinner, or bedtime.
- 2 Possible blood sugar reading values are located on the left hand side of your graph.
- 3 Find the line that is for the day and time of your blood sugar reading.
- 4 Follow that line up to the actual blood sugar reading.

This is an example of a graph:



Repeat this every time you test your blood sugar.

Go ahead and graph your blood sugar levels. If you are able to see that it goes up and down a lot, you can always go back to the information you collected on pages 8 and 9 to see why this is happening.

When you use the graph paper, you will be able to see if it stays within normal range or not. This will provide YOU with information about YOUR blood sugar. It is not to be used to judge yourself or anyone else.

STEP THREE

STEP 3 STUDY THE RESULTS

The third thing you do is study the information you have just collected. This will help you see exactly where you could make a change.



If your challenge is to eat healthy, does the information you collected tell you that you are eating too much or too often?

Are you eating the right foods?

Your information will help you find ways to attack and overcome your special challenge. As you are looking at your information, ask your family and friends how they can help you.

From the information you collected on the last 2 pages, where can you make a change?

Please write it down.

STEP FOUR



STEP 4 ACT - TAKE ACTION

The fourth thing you do is create a plan of action. Now, ask yourself, “How will I tackle this challenge?”

The information you collected helped you identify exactly where you can win. This will then help you create your plan. Your plan should be realistic but simple.

Remember, the goal may seem big, but you will get there one step at a time. And remember, you can always get help from your family and health care team.

**How do you plan to make changes?
Write down your plan of action!**

THE FUN HAS JUST BEGUN

You will now start all over again, back to step 1, where you collect information that relates to your plan.

The next few pages are blank so that you can create your own information sheet.

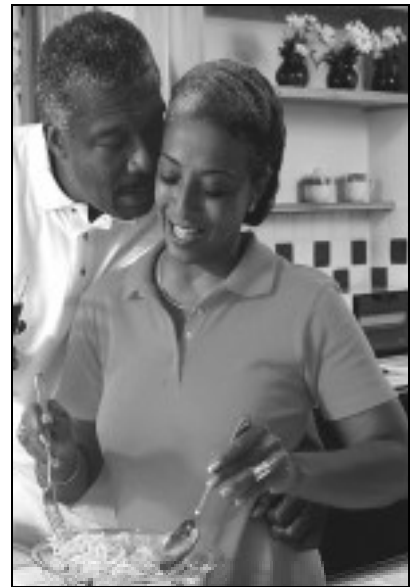
What goes on your information sheet?

- Information you want for your plan
- Challenges you may face
- Ideas that make it easy

Write all of this down. These ideas will help you later. As you go over the results of your plan of action, you will find it easier to create the next plan.

Improving yourself and your health is an ongoing process.

Just remember, the more information you have, the better prepared you are to face and overcome all challenges.



Nothing is more believable than real life. So here is what someone who learned this method had to say about it.

“My goal was to lower my blood sugars that were going off the scale. To date, I NO LONGER have to take insulin and have lost more than 40 pounds. Most folks see me now and don’t recognize me. My health has improved and as a result I’m a lot happier with me. Thank you once again for the experience,”

Soujourner McCauley, New York, 1999

**Yes you can
do it too!
And you
have
already
started!**



YOUR NOTES

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