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A Newsletter for AvMed Members

YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE WITH DIABETES



Understanding your A1C results

The numbers on lab reports aren't always easy to understand. Learn what this key test measures and what your results may reveal about your diabetes management.

What is an A1C test?

An A1C test shows your average blood sugar levels over the past two to three months. It measures how much sugar (glucose) is attached to proteins in your red blood cells. The test is simple and usually does not require any prep.

Healthcare providers use this test to help diagnose prediabetes, diabetes, and to monitor blood sugar levels over time.

What do my results mean?

A1C results are reported as a percentage. In general:

- **Below 5.7%**: Normal
- **5.7% to 6.4%**: Prediabetes
- **6.5% or higher**: Diabetes

For many adults with diabetes, a goal below 7% is often recommended. However, there is no one-size-fits all target. If your provider believes your A1C result doesn't match your overall health, you may need more testing.

When should I talk to my physician?

It is always a good idea to discuss your A1C results with your physician. It may be time to check in if an A1C result:

- Is higher or lower than expected
- Does not seem to match daily blood sugar readings
- Raises questions about your diabetes management plan



Ask the pediatrician

Q What should parents know about managing diabetes during growth spurts?

A Growing up comes with plenty of changes. For children with diabetes, this can include changes in blood sugar and insulin needs, too.

Chad McRae, MD, FAAP, a pediatrician with Nemours Children's Health, answers your top questions about managing diabetes during growth spurts.

How do growth spurts affect blood sugar levels? Higher levels of growth hormone power those new inches. But growth hormone also makes the body's cells less responsive to insulin and can lead to unexpected high blood sugar levels.

What are the signs that your child's insulin needs may be changing?

- Persistently high blood sugar levels
- Blood sugar levels that stay high despite corrections
- Unexplained high readings that last for several days

How can increased appetite affect diabetes management? As your child eats more, their insulin needs may change, too. But with growth hormones also causing insulin resistance, it can be tricky to tell what's behind high blood sugar levels.

When should parents contact their child's diabetes care team? Contact your child's care team if you notice:

- High blood sugar readings lasting more than a few weeks despite insulin increases
- Moderate to high ketones
- Signs of illness or vomiting
- Unintentional weight loss

To reach a Case Manager
Simply call 1-833-609-0735, email DM@AvMed.org or scan this QR code.

Make the most of your daily walk



Put a little pep in your step with these expert-approved tips for turning an ordinary walk into a feel-good fitness routine.

You don't need a gym membership or fancy equipment to get moving. In fact, walking is one of the easiest ways to work toward the recommended 150 minutes of weekly exercise.

"If you can't make it around the block just yet, walking can be a way of building up strength and fitness," says Michele Stanten, a fitness consultant at Harvard Health Publishing and author of *Walk Off Weight*.

Ready to get moving? Talk with your physician first, then try these pro tips from Stanten.

Start small

The most important thing is to get into a habit and be consistent, Stanten explains. Start with 5 to 10 minutes a day, at a time you can regularly commit to.

Each week, add another five minutes, until you reach 30 minutes.

Focus on good form

Proper form is the secret to transforming an ordinary walk into a workout, Stanten says. Here's what that looks like:

- **Walk tall.** Your shoulders should line up under your ears.
- **Draw your belly muscles up and in.** It helps support your spine as you walk.
- **Step heel-ball-toe.** This pattern helps you stay stable while in motion.
- **Look up.** You want to look about 10 to 15 feet in front of you as you move. This helps you identify and avoid any trip hazards.

Leave the weights at home

Stanten does not believe hand weights are the best way to raise the difficulty of your routine.

Instead, further challenge yourself by speeding up or walking for longer. You'll burn more calories going faster than you will by holding weights, Stanten says.

All in all, walking is a great way to start—and maintain—a fitness routine. If you're not sure where to begin, a good first step is talking with your physician or RN Case Manager.

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