

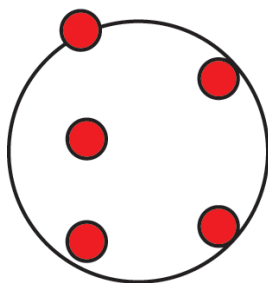
There are two ways to find out how you are doing with your diabetes: the first is to check your blood glucose at home with a meter, and the second is to get a blood test called a hemoglobin A1C, or A1C.

## What is an A1C test?

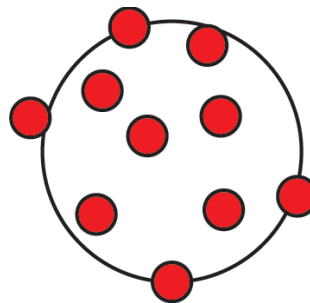
An A1C blood test is one of the most important tests for people with diabetes. This test tells the average of all the glucose results over the past two to three months.

## What does the A1C measure?

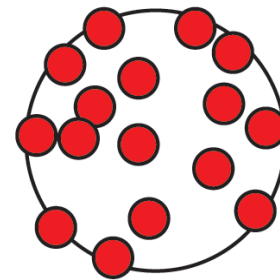
The test measures the amount of glucose that attaches to hemoglobin, part of red blood cells. As the hemoglobin travels through the bloodstream, it picks up glucose; the more glucose in the blood, the more glucose attaches to the hemoglobin. For most people with diabetes, the A1C should be less than 7% or as close to the non-diabetes range as safely possible. An A1C of 7% means that your average blood glucose readings are about 154 mg/dl.



**Non-diabetes  
range: 4 - 6%**



**Goal A1C: less  
than 7%**



**High A1C:  
7% or greater**

## How often should the A1C be checked?

Have your A1C checked between two to four times a year. Make sure you know your results.

## Why should you lower your A1C?

Lowering your A1C level may greatly reduce your risk for developing diabetes complications. For every one point you lower your A1C, you lower your chances of getting diabetes complications by up to 35%!

## How can you lower your A1C if it's too high?

If your A1C isn't at your target level, talk to your healthcare team about what you can do. You may start on diabetes medicine or change the dose that you currently take. Meet with a registered dietitian to review your meal plan and food intake. And doing regular physical activity can help you meet your A1C target, too.