

## Step 4: Test your blood sugar

Testing your blood sugar will help you control your diabetes. Testing will also help you know if your diet, diabetes pills or insulin are keeping your blood sugar under control.

### Points of Action:

- Molina Healthcare will help you get a blood glucose meter and testing supplies
- Ask your provider when and how often you should test
- Work with your provider to set blood sugar target ranges for each testing time
- Always keep a log of your blood sugars and ask your provider to look at your log

## Step 5: Take your diabetes pills or insulin

Insulin shots and diabetes pills are used to lower your blood sugar. You will need insulin shots if your body has either stopped making or does not make enough insulin. Diabetes pills are used if your body makes insulin, but the insulin is not lowering your blood sugar.

### Points of Action:

- Take your diabetes medicine (pills or insulin) as prescribed
- Ask your provider or pharmacist how and when to take your medicine
- Always tell your provider if you think your diabetes pills or insulin are making you feel worse



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## First Steps in Taking Care of Your Diabetes



Your Extended Family.

## Step 1: See your provider

Your provider and other members of your diabetes team play a very important role in helping you learn how to control your diabetes. Be sure to visit your provider often. Diabetes changes how you feel and how you live. Learn how to control your diabetes. Start now to stay healthy. Know about other tests and screenings you should have:

**A1c lab test** – This gives a three month average of your blood sugar levels. Your A1c should be less than 7%. If it is higher than 7%, your provider or diabetes educator can help you lower it. This test should be done one to four times a year.

**Blood pressure** – Your provider should check your blood pressure at every visit. People with diabetes have a higher risk of having high blood pressure. Ask your provider what your numbers are and where your numbers should be.

**Urine test** – A test called microalbumin checks for kidney disease (nephropathy). If you have kidney disease, you may need to change your diet to lower how much salt and protein you eat. Kidney disease can lead to kidney failure, dialysis and transplant. This test should be done at least once a year.

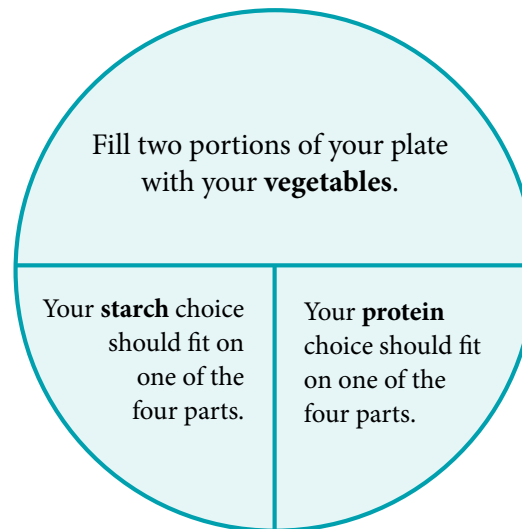
**Lipid test** - This measures the total cholesterol, HDL and LDL cholesterol levels, and triglyceride levels in your blood. These levels help rate your risk for heart disease. Adults with diabetes should have this test at least once a year.

**Foot exams** – Your provider should check your feet at each visit. Your provider will look for cuts, sores or calluses on your feet that you may not notice due to nerve damage. Foot sores heal slower in people who have diabetes and can lead to infection and loss of a limb. You should also check your feet daily.

**Dilated eye exams** - Your eyes should be checked at least once a year by an eye care provider. Drops will be used to dilate your pupils and check the back of your eye for damage caused by your diabetes. This damage can cause poor vision or blindness.

## Step 2: Eat a healthy diet

Learn what, when and how much you should eat. A balanced diet is the key to a healthy diet plan. You should have your own diet plan. Work with your provider or Dietitian if you do not have a diet plan. Molina Healthcare can also send you more learning tips about a healthy diet.



### Points of Action:

- Eat foods that are low in salt, fat, sugar and high in fiber
- Check your blood sugar before eating
- If you use insulin, take your shot before you start eating (ask your provider whether you should use your insulin before or after you eat)
- Eat around the same time every day
- Do not skip meals (never go more than 4 to 6 hours without eating)
- Choose a variety of foods each day
- Spread your servings of food throughout the day

## Step 3: Exercise every day

Walking, swimming, dancing, riding a bike and playing sports are all good for you. Always check with your provider about how much exercise you should get. Exercise will help you keep your weight down. This helps to lower your blood sugar and gives you more energy. If you are not used to exercising, you should start slowly. Aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise each day.

### Points of Action:

- Try to exercise at least three times a week for about 30 minutes each time
- If you use insulin, exercise after eating, not before
- Test your blood sugar before, during and after you exercise (do not exercise if your blood sugar is over 240)
- Do not exercise right before bedtime. This could cause low blood sugar during the night