

Doctor's visits and tests

Overview

To stay healthy you should see your doctor often.

Usually this is two to four times each year. You should also have some tests done every year.

These may help prevent problems later on.

OBJECTIVE: To know what to discuss with your doctor at each visit.

Things you should talk to your doctor about at each visit:

- Any problems you are having. This may include if you have been sick or are having any aches or pains.
- How your blood sugar levels are doing. Your doctor should set some goals for a good blood sugar range. Bring your log book and go over the results with your doctor.
- How your diabetes pills or shots are working. The doctor may want to increase or decrease the amount you take. Your blood sugar levels will help your doctor decide this.
- How your other medicines are working. Tell the doctor if you are taking them every day. Let the doctor know if you are having any problems. Let your doctor know if you are taking any herbs, vitamins or over-the-counter medicines. If you have questions, be sure to ask them.
- How you are doing with your meal plan. Your doctor may want you to change the amounts of some of the foods you eat. You may also need to change the time you eat meals or snacks.
- What type of exercise you are doing and how often. Your doctor may suggest doing more exercise to help control your blood sugar levels. If you are having any problems with exercise, the doctor can help solve them.
- The amount you smoke or how much alcohol you drink. Drinking too much or smoking can cause problems. Your doctor may advise you to cut down or quit.
- What any test results mean. Your doctor should talk to you about why you had lab tests done and what the results mean. Ask your doctor what you can do to improve the results.
- Any plans to have a baby. If you plan to become pregnant, ask the doctor what you should do to have a healthy baby.
- Any feelings you have about diabetes. Tell the doctor if you are depressed or having problems.
- Any question you have about diabetes or your health. Write these down so you don't forget to ask them.



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QUIZ

Things your doctor should check at each visit:

- Your weight. Ask your doctor what a good weight is for you.
- Your blood sugar logbook. This will show your doctor if he needs to change any of your medicines.
- Your blood pressure. Most people should aim for 130/80 or less.
- Your feet. Your doctor should look at your feet to see if you have any problems.

Things you should have done once or twice a year:

- An A1c test. This blood test should be done at least two times a year. Your doctor may do it more often. This test shows how your blood sugar has been in the past three months.
- A dilated eye exam. This should be done at least once a year. The exam should include eye drops so the doctor can see inside your eyes. This allows the doctor to see if you have any problems in the back of your eyes.
- A complete foot exam. This should be done at least once a year. This includes tests to see if you have feelings in your feet. It also tells if you have other foot problems.
- A kidney test. At least once a year you should have a urine test. This tells if you have protein in your urine. If you do, you may be starting to have kidney problems.
- A blood fat test. At least once a year, you need a blood test to see if your fat levels are high. If you do, lowering this level can help prevent heart attacks and strokes.
- A dental exam. You should see your dentist at least twice a year.
- A flu shot. You should get a flu shot every fall.
- A pneumonia vaccine. This is a once in a lifetime vaccine.

By seeing your doctor and having tests done, you can stay healthy. Between visits, be sure to call your doctor if you are having any problems.

QUESTIONS

1. True or False: Always talk to your doctor about your depression.
2. True or False: You should see your doctor every two to four times each year.
3. Your doctor should set _____ ranges

ANSWERS

1. True
2. True
3. blood sugar