

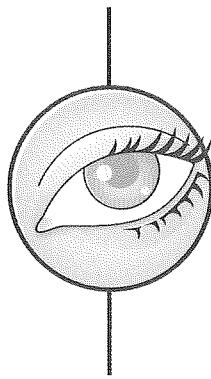
# DIABETES COMPLICATIONS

## Diabetes affects more than blood sugar

Diabetes can affect many parts of the body. When blood sugar levels are not controlled, the eyes, heart, kidneys, and nerves can be harmed. Taking good care of yourself today can help avoid problems in the future.

### Your eyes

Uncontrolled blood sugar and blood pressure can damage the blood vessels in the retina (the back part of the eye) over time. This is called *retinopathy* (ret-tin-AH-pa-thee). It can also increase the risk for glaucoma (glau-COH-ma) and cataracts (CAT-a-rakts). Over time, these problems can make it hard to see or may even cause blindness.

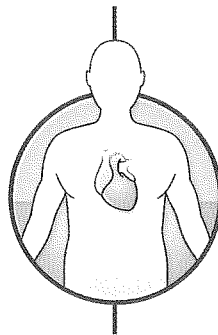


### Preventing eye problems

- ✓ Keep your blood sugar and blood pressure under control
- ✓ Visit your eye doctor at least once a year for a dilated eye exam. A dilated eye exam checks your vision *and* tests for eye problems

### Your heart

High blood sugar can damage the heart and blood vessels. It also puts you at risk for heart attack and stroke.

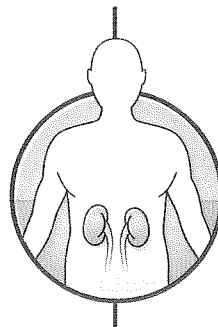


### Preventing heart problems

- ✓ Control your ABCs—**A**1C, **b**lood pressure, and **c**holesterol
- ✓ Take your medicines as prescribed
- ✓ Talk with your healthcare provider about a plan to be active and to eat healthfully

### Your kidneys

Uncontrolled blood sugar and blood pressure can harm the kidneys. Over time, it can cause them to stop working. Some people may need a treatment called *dialysis* (dye-AL-a-sis) to do some of the work their kidneys used to do. Others may need a new kidney.

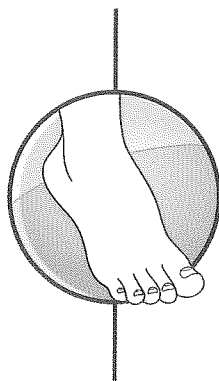


### Preventing kidney problems

- ✓ Keep your blood sugar and blood pressure under control
- ✓ Have your healthcare provider do a blood and urine test at least once a year

## Your feet

Uncontrolled blood sugar can harm the nerves in the feet. This can make them feel numb or tingly. It can also keep you from feeling heat, cold, or pain. Damaged nerves can cause poor blood flow to your feet. Poor blood flow can make your foot less able to fight infection and make it hard for a cut or sore to heal. These problems can have serious effects, such as amputation.



## Preventing foot problems

- Keep your blood sugar under control
- Check your feet each day for cuts, sores, blisters, redness, calluses, or other problems
- Talk with your healthcare provider about ways you should take care of your feet

## Preventing diabetes-related health problems

Managing your diabetes can help you prevent the problems that diabetes can cause. The chart below can help you keep track of the steps your healthcare provider may suggest. Take this chart to your next visit. Ask your healthcare provider to fill it out with you.

Ask your healthcare team about these steps at your next visit. In the extra space, add any other steps your healthcare provider suggests.

Steps I can take to help prevent diabetes-related health problems	When this should be done	My goals	Notes
Check my blood sugar at home			
Have my A1C checked			
Check my feet for sores, cuts, or blisters that are not healing			
Have my blood and urine tested			
Check my blood pressure			
Have my cholesterol checked			
Have a comprehensive eye exam			
Tell my healthcare provider about changes in my eyesight			
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To learn more about diabetes complications, visit the American Diabetes Association Web site at [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org) or call 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383).