



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Health



A movement for lifestyle change

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

**DIABETES AND HYPERTENSION
SELF MANAGEMENT BOOKLET**



GENERAL INFORMATION

Name.....

Address.....

Phone.....

Email.....

Company Name.....

Address.....

Phone/Fax.....

Email.....

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Notify.....

Relationship.....

Home Phone.....

Work Phone.....

Address.....

E-mail.....

Or Notify.....



MEDICAL INFORMATION

Physician.....Phone.....

Blood Type.....

E-mail.....

Allergies.....

Current Medication/s:

Current Medical Problem/s.....

.....

.....

.....

MEDICAL HISTORY:

Diabetes

High Blood Pressure

Heart Disease

Cancer

High Cholesterol

Asthma

Stroke

Seizure Disorder

Arthritis

Other Medical Conditions.....



FAMILY HISTORY:

Diabetes

High Blood Pressure

Heart Disease

Cancer

High Cholesterol

Asthma

Stroke

Seizure Disorder

Arthritis

Other Medical Conditions.....

SOCIAL HISTORY:

Do you smoke?

Yes

No

Do you consume alcohol?

Yes

No

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is the force exerted by circulating blood against the walls of the body's arteries the major blood vessels in the body.

Blood pressure is written as two numbers:

1. *Systolic* – the pressure in the blood vessels when the heart contracts or beats.
2. *Diastolic* – the pressure in the blood vessels when the heart rests between beats.

What is hypertension?

Hypertension is when blood pressure is too high.

What are some signs and symptoms of high blood pressure?

There are usually no noticeable signs or symptoms of hypertension. However, very high blood pressure may cause chest pain, neck pain, blurry vision and dizziness among other symptoms.

Testing your blood pressure regularly is the only way to know for sure if you have high blood pressure.

Managing Your High Blood Pressure

Lowering and maintaining a normal blood pressure is possible by making the following lifestyle changes:

1. Increasing daily physical activity – aim for 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity for at least 5 days a week.
2. Eating healthy, balanced meals – that is, one low in saturated fats, low in sodium and processed sugars and high in fibre eg fruits and vegetables.
3. Lowering your alcohol intake.
4. Maintaining a healthy body weight by doing 1 and 2 above.
5. Managing stress – increased levels of stress can cause your blood pressure to increase; making time to relax and find a work life balance can help you manage your stress levels.

Other important ways to keep your blood pressure in check:

1. Take your medication – ensure that you follow your healthcare provider's instructions and never stop taking your medication without speaking to your doctor first.
2. Manage your diabetes – some people with diabetes also have hypertension, it is important to regularly check your blood sugar levels to ensure that it is within target range.

Helpful tips to remember:

1. Eat more fruits and vegetables.
2. Increase your daily levels of physical activity.
3. Take medications as prescribed.
4. Schedule and attend regular doctor appointments.

Tips for measuring your blood pressure using a home monitoring device

- Avoid activities that can raise your blood pressure in the short term, such as eating before testing, smoking, exercising or drinking caffeinated beverages such as coffee, before testing.
- Wear loose fitting clothes.
- Rest for at least five minutes before testing.
- Ensure that your arm is supported and at the same level with your heart.
- Make sure that you are relaxed and comfortable.
- Sit upright with your feet flat on the floor (if you can).
- Make sure that the blood pressure cuff is applied to a bare arm and not on your clothing.

Be sure to read the instruction manual that comes with your specific device

What do the numbers on your home device mean?

Blood pressure is written as two numbers:

1. **Systolic** – the pressure in the blood vessels when the heart contracts or beats.
2. **Diastolic** – the pressure in the blood vessels when the heart rests between beats

Blood Pressure Classification	Systolic Blood Pressure	Diastolic Blood Pressure
Normal	<120 mmHg	<80 mmHg
Pre-Hypertension	120-139 mmHg	80-89 mmHg
Hypertension		
Stage 1 Hypertension	140-159 mmHg	90-99 mmHg
Stage 2 Hypertension	≥160 mmHg	≥100 mmHg



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		Systolic	Diastolic	
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DIABETES

What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a chronic disease where either a person's body does not produce enough insulin, or it cannot use the insulin it produces efficiently. This results in a high blood sugar (glucose) level. There are two main types of diabetes:

1. Type 1 Diabetes which occurs when the body's immune system attacks and destroys the cells that produce insulin.
2. Type 2 Diabetes which occurs when the body does not produce enough insulin or the body's cells do not use the insulin properly

What is Pre-Diabetes?

This occurs when the blood sugar level is above the normal range but is not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. Pre-diabetes puts you at risk for Type 2 diabetes which can increase your risk for strokes and heart disease.



Risk Factors for Diabetes

Risk factors for Type 1 diabetes include:

1. Family history – having a parent or sibling with diabetes increases your risk.
2. Age – you can develop Type 1 diabetes at any age, however it is more common in children, teens and young adults

Your risk for Type 2 diabetes is increased if you:

1. Are overweight,
2. Have prediabetes,
3. Are 45 years or older,
4. Family history of diabetes – having an immediate relative with Type 2 diabetes i.e., a parent or sibling,
5. Lack physical activity – less than 3 times a week,
6. Had gestational diabetes or gave birth to a baby heavier than 9 pounds.

Signs and Symptoms of Diabetes

General symptoms of diabetes may include:

- Frequent urination, often at night
- Increased thirst
- Weight loss without activity
- Increased hunger
- Blurry vision
- Tingling hands or feet
- Tiredness
- Dry skin
- Slow healing cuts or sores
- Increased number of infections

If you experience any of the symptoms above, you should visit your doctor as soon as possible.

Type 1 Diabetes

The main symptoms include nausea, vomiting and stomach pains and these may develop very quickly, over a few weeks or over a few months, potentially becoming severe.

Type 2 Diabetes

Symptoms of Type 2 diabetes develop over a period of years and may sometimes be unnoticeable.

Managing Diabetes

Lifestyle changes are the best and most effective way to prevent the onset of Type 2 diabetes as well as managing the existing condition.

These changes include:

- Increasing daily physical activity
- Quitting smoking
- Decreasing your alcohol intake
- Eating healthy, balanced meals by reducing the amount of sugar and saturated fat you consume
- Maintaining a healthy body weight

How can I check my blood glucose (sugar)?

You can check your blood glucose (sugar) levels at home by using a blood sugar meter (glucometer). This requires a small sample of blood from your fingertip to get a reading.

When do I check my blood glucose?

The time of day you check your blood sugar is dependent on which type of diabetes you have and whether or not you have taken medication. If you have Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes and take insulin or you often have low blood sugar, it is recommended that you check your blood sugar levels more frequently, such as; before or after physical activity.

The most common times to check your blood sugar are:

- When you first wake up, before eating or drinking (Before breakfast)
- Before lunch
- Before dinner

Note: If a blood sugar reading must be taken after a meal, it must be taken no less than 2 hours after eating in order to ensure accuracy of the reading.



How can I treat low blood glucose (sugar)?

Symptoms:

If you experience any of the following symptoms: shaking, (cold) sweating, light headedness or hunger, you should check your blood glucose levels immediately. If you do not have any symptoms but suspect that your levels may be low, it is also important to check it.

What to do:

For a blood sugar reading lower than 70 mg/dl, you can do one of the following:

- Eat 1-4 pieces of hard candy,
- Drink four ounces of fruit juice or,
- Drink four ounces of regular soft drink (not diet soft drinks) or,
- Take four glucose tablets.

After 15 minutes, check your blood sugar again and continue the above recommendation until it is above 70 mg/dl. It is recommended that you eat a light snack, if your next meal is more than one hour away from your last meal intake.

Seek medical attention if symptoms persist*

How can I treat a high blood sugar?

It is important to speak to your doctor about keeping your blood sugar levels within target range.

Symptoms:

If you experience any of the following symptoms: shaking, (cold) sweating, light headedness or hunger, you should check your blood glucose levels immediately. If you do not have any symptoms but suspect that your levels may be high, it is also important to check it.

What to do:

The following steps may be taken to keep your blood sugar in check:

- Take medicine as instructed by your healthcare provider
- Check your blood sugar as directed by your doctor
- Increase your physical activity levels
- Eat a healthy well balanced diet

Note: It should be noted that symptoms of high and low blood sugar levels may be similar, so it is very important to check the reading first before administering any form of treatment.

How to measure your blood sugar using a home device?

1. Ensure that the meter is clean and ready to use.
2. Remove a test strip and immediately close the container tightly, as the strips can be damaged if they are exposed to moisture.
3. Wash your hands with soap and water, dry them and massage your hand to get blood into your finger. Refrain from using alcohol as it dries the skin too much.
4. Use a lancet (needle) to prick your finger and while squeezing from the base of the finger, gently place a small amount of blood onto the test strip.
5. Place the strip into the meter. After a few seconds, the reading will appear.
6. Track and record your results and add notes about anything that might have made the reading out of your target range, such as food or physical activity, etc.
7. Properly dispose of the lancet and strip.



IMPORTANT TIPS TO REMEMBER:

- Store test strips in the container provided. Do not expose them to moisture, extreme heat or cold temperatures.
- You should not share equipment, such as lancets (needles), with anyone, even other family members.
- Be sure to read the instruction manual that comes with your specific device

What do the numbers on your home device mean?

Random blood sugar tests can be taken at any time without having to fast (not eat) first.

Fasting blood sugar tests measure your blood glucose levels after an overnight fast (approx.8hrs).

Result	Fasting Blood Sugar	Random Blood Sugar
<u>Diabetes</u>	126 mg/dl or above	200 mg/dl or above
<u>Pre-diabetes</u>	100 – 125 mg/dl	N/A
<u>Normal</u>	70-99 mg/dl	N/A

WHAT IS AN HBA1C?

HbA1C Test – stands for Glycosylated Haemoglobin Test and it measures the amount of blood sugar attached to the Haemoglobin in your blood cells. Haemoglobin is the part of your red blood cells that carries oxygen from your lungs to the rest of your body. It is an important blood test that gives a good indication of how well your diabetes is being controlled (usually for about three month period prior to taking the blood sample).

Result	HbA1C
<u>Non Diabetic</u>	Less than 6.0%
<u>Controlled Diabetic</u>	Less than 7.0 %



MY BLOOD GLUCOSE (SUGAR) DIARY

NAME: _____

Date	Time	Blood Sugar Reading (mg/dl)	Meal Record	Comments
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
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	Midday			
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	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			

MY BLOOD GLUCOSE (SUGAR) DIARY

NAME: _____

Date	Time	Blood Sugar Reading (mg/dl)	Meal Record	Comments
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			

MY BLOOD GLUCOSE (SUGAR) DIARY

NAME: _____

Date	Time	Blood Sugar Reading (mg/dl)	Meal Record	Comments
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			

MY BLOOD GLUCOSE (SUGAR) DIARY

NAME: _____

Date	Time	Blood Sugar Reading (mg/dl)	Meal Record	Comments
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			

MY BLOOD GLUCOSE (SUGAR) DIARY

NAME: _____

Date	Time	Blood Sugar Reading (mg/dl)	Meal Record	Comments
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			

MY BLOOD GLUCOSE (SUGAR) DIARY

NAME: _____

Date	Time	Blood Sugar Reading (mg/dl)	Meal Record	Comments
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
	A.M.			
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	P.M.			
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			

MY BLOOD GLUCOSE (SUGAR) DIARY

NAME: _____

Date	Time	Blood Sugar Reading (mg/dl)	Meal Record	Comments
	A.M.			
	Midday			
	P.M.			
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	Midday			
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	A.M.			
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	P.M.			
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Ministry of Health

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- 5.** World Health Organization, Diabetes Key Facts, www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/diabetes
- 6.** World Health Organization, Hypertension Key Facts, www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/hypertension



DRINK WATER

GET MOVING

**EAT FRUITS
AND
VEGETABLES**

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website at www.health.gov.tt**

or

4-6 Queen's Park East, Port of Spain, TT

Tel: (868)217-4664



www.health.gov.tt



Ministry of Health-Trinidad and Tobago



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