

Essential advice for people
with diabetes from **Accu-Chek®**

Roche

*The **inside**
story on Type 2
diabetes*

Diabetes matters

Let's Chat
ACCU-CHEK®



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Introduction to diabetes:

Diabetes (diabetes mellitus) is a condition which affects people worldwide. Estimates from 2015 from the International Diabetes Federation show that diabetes will continue to increase and by 2040 will have increased by 55% globally¹. Unfortunately, Africa is the region which is showing the highest increase in diabetes with this increase set to triple by 2040¹. If you or a loved one have just been diagnosed with diabetes, well done on taking the first step to understanding your condition and learning to manage it by reading this leaflet.



Definition of Type 2 diabetes



Before being diagnosed with diabetes, you may have had some of the following symptoms which are characteristic of Type 2 diabetes¹:



Increased thirst



Blurred vision



Weight loss



Frequently passing urine



Extreme tiredness



*Cuts and wounds
that heal slowly*

It is important to remember with Type 2 diabetes that symptoms can be absent or go unnoticed for many years before diagnosis. As a result many people with Type 2 diabetes are undiagnosed and unaware that they have this serious condition¹. It is therefore more important to consider certain factors that can put you or a loved one at risk of Type 2 diabetes, if these factors apply to you discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist. The following 4 risk factors are the most common for Type 2 diabetes¹:



45 or older?



Overweight?



*Physically inactive/
unhealthy lifestyle?*



*Family history
of diabetes?*

Other risk factors for Type 2 diabetes can include¹:

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- A family history of heart disease
- Gestational diabetes or a baby born bigger than 4kg's



Treating and Managing Type 2 Diabetes

The diagnosis of diabetes

If you or a loved one have just been diagnosed with diabetes, you will be feeling an overwhelming amount of mixed emotions. Diabetes is a complex and serious condition, and living with it every day can be challenging. Part of that challenge is due to the fact that the management of diabetes will largely rest in your hands and this can be daunting. Be kind to yourself and remember that small positive steps every day will make a difference in the long run.

Getting started with self-management

Ideally, on diagnosis, you should have access to a team of Health Care Professionals that may include the treating doctor, a diabetes educator or coach, and possibly a dietitian. However, in many cases you might only have access to a doctor and your time spent with him or her in consultation will be limited. In the beginning you may feel overloaded with information about what to eat, how much to exercise, when to take your medicine, how to test as well as confusing terminology such as HbA1c, hyperglycaemia, hypoglycaemia, glycaemic control etc.

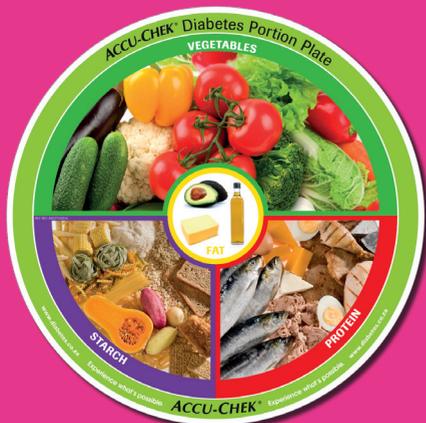
To help you make sense of it all, diabetes educators have developed some key areas to focus on²:



1. Healthy Eating

Having diabetes does not mean you must give up your favourite foods. Over time and through experience, you will learn how the foods you eat affect your blood glucose. You should eat regular meals and make food choices that will help control your diabetes better². Work with a dietitian or diabetes educator to develop a healthy, balanced eating plan that suits your lifestyle. Remember that it is ok to treat yourself once in a while.

You can also visit the Accu-Chek website at www.accu-chek.co.za and download the Accu-Chek portion plate which will give you some practical tips on healthy eating.





2. Being Active

There are many studies that have proven that regular physical activity significantly improves blood glucose control, reduces cardiovascular risk factors, and may reduce chronic medication dosages¹. Regular physical activity may also improve symptoms of depression and improve health-related quality of life¹. Try to include a combination of cardio and resistance training into your weekly exercise routine. There is no need to join the gym...**here are some simple ideas to get moving:**



Take the stairs instead of the lift



Walk as much as possible instead of driving / using a taxi



Download some armchair exercises off the internet – you can even do these while watching TV



Go for a brisk walk around the block with your dog



When shopping, park as far away from the entrance as possible



If you are office based and in front of a computer for most of the day, make sure to get up every hour and go for a walk around the office to ensure you keep active



Put on your favourite music and dance



3. Self-Monitoring of Blood Glucose (SMBG)

The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) recommends Self-Monitoring of Blood Glucose (SMBG) as an effective means for patients with diabetes to understand more about their condition and the influence of events such as exercise, stress, food and medication on blood glucose levels³.

In other words, you need to be able to understand what happens to your blood glucose when you eat certain foods or when you do specific exercises.

Alternatively, maybe situations like a stressful meeting or being stuck in traffic has an effect on your blood glucose.

The only way to know this is by testing your blood glucose in a structured manner. It is recommended that you practice structured testing using a tool such as the Accu-Chek 360° 3-Day Profile Tool or the Testing in Pairs Tool which can be found on our website at www.accu-chek.co.za³. Structured testing is testing at the right times, in the right situations, and frequently enough to generate useful information. Always agree with your doctor or diabetes educator what your individual structured SMBG testing plan is.



Another aspect you will agree with your doctor will be your target range for your blood glucose levels. In the beginning, understanding this range and what is considered “out of range” may be confusing so you may want to make use of a meter which offers a support tool called the target range indicator⁴.

A study done on the **Accu-Chek Instant Target Range Indicator** showed that 94% of study participants were able to easily interpret their blood glucose values through the use of the target range indicator⁴. Furthermore, 94% felt that the support tool will help them discuss their blood glucose values with their doctor⁴. To find out more information about the Accu-Chek Instant meter with Target Range Indicator visit www.accu-chek.co.za/instant.

To simplify your daily diabetes management consider making use of a diabetes management app such as mySugr.

The **mySugr app** is compatible with most smart phones and is used and loved by more than **1,000,000** people with diabetes worldwide*. Pair it with a bluetooth enabled blood glucose meter such as the Accu-Chek Instant blood glucose meter and automatically capture your readings (no need for a manual logbook) and share these with your healthcare professional. A list of compatible mobile devices with more information on the app can also be found at www.accu-chek.co.za.



*mySugr Data on file



4. Taking Medication

You may need to take medication to help keep your blood glucose level steady. Diabetes can increase your risk for other health conditions, such as heart or kidney related problems, so you may need to take medicine to help with those, too². Make sure to discuss this with your Health Care Professional.



5. Have a recommended Care Plan and Follow it

Here is a general guideline you can follow but always agree with your Health Care Professional what your specific Care Plan should be in order to manage your diabetes optimally.

At initial visit & every 3-6 months¹

- Weight, BMI, Waist Circumference & Blood Pressure
- Injection Site examination if appropriate
- Blood tests: glucose monitoring, HbA1c
- Urine tests

At initial visit & annually¹

- Detailed feet, eye, dental and cardiovascular examinations
- Blood tests for Lipids, Potassium, Creatine
- ECG

Ideally, in order to ensure ongoing education and self-management you should be seeing a diabetes educator or coach as often as possible as well as your Health Care Professional.



Life with Diabetes

Successful diabetes self-management requires a systematic approach and the need to accept that some days will be harder than others. That's ok. There are no good or bad “numbers”, or good or bad “choices” but rather the opportunity to learn from each experience and make a different decision next time. You are more than your diabetes and having this condition does not define you.

You will over time learn to plan ahead to be sure you maintain blood glucose levels as much as possible within your target range goals – not too high, not too low.

As we know, things don't always go according to plan and a stressful day at the office or an unexpected illness can send your blood glucose in the wrong direction. Days like this will happen from time to time. Here are some tips to cope²:

- ✔ **Don't beat yourself up** – Managing your diabetes doesn't mean being "perfect" or achieving a certain number every time.
- ✔ **Analyse your day** – think about what was different and learn from it for the next time
- ✔ **Try to avoid possible triggers** – identify things in your day to day routine that could be impacting negatively on your blood glucose and see which of these are in your control. For example, if it's a bad habit such as smoking, try to quit or reduce the amount you smoke. If traffic is stressing you out and raising your blood glucose, look at ways to either leave home earlier or later to avoid peak traffic if your schedule allows for flexibility.
- ✔ **Discuss possible solutions for next time** – this can be with your doctor, your diabetes educator or even a face-to-face or online diabetes support group. Being around or in contact with people who are experiencing the same challenges as you are can often be a source of comfort especially if they have overcome these challenges and can offer some advice or recommendations. Sometimes, you might just need a moment to vent to someone who understands and community support groups are an excellent platform to facilitate this.



Here are some great Facebook Groups you can join:

Diabetes South Africa: A non-profit organisation providing education, literature, counselling, and face-to-face support groups.

AccuChekSubSahara: Join the Accu-Chek Facebook community of over 165 000 people and get practical tips for diabetes management, access to healthy recipes and much more.

Remember! If you are looking for medical advice always consult with your Health Care Professional before making any adjustments to your or a loved one's treatment regimen.



Here are some frequently asked questions about Type 2 Diabetes

▶ 1. Is it true that I can delay or prevent Type 2 diabetes and its complications⁵?

The earlier your diabetes is diagnosed and controlled, the healthier you will be with a lower risk of developing serious complications. Always ensure that your healthcare provider carries out all the tests and checks you may need on a regular basis.

▶ 2. Will my diabetes ever go away⁵?

Studies have shown that by maintaining good glycaemic control (i.e. keeping your blood glucose levels within range) the risk of complications are reduced. Maintaining glycaemic control requires a careful balance of a number of factors which your Healthcare Professional will advise you on.

▶ 3. What is HbA1c or A1c?

In simple terms, HbA1c provides a longer-term trend, similar to an average, of how high your blood glucose levels have been over a period of time⁷. The 2017 SEMDSA* Guidelines recommend that you have your HbA1c tested every 3-6 months¹. Two large studies done – the UK Prospective Diabetes Study (UKPDS) and the Diabetes Control and Complications Trial (DCCT) – demonstrated that improving HbA1c by 1% for people with type 1 diabetes or type 2 diabetes cuts the risk of microvascular (eye, kidney and nerve) complications by 25%⁵.

▶ 4. If I have to go on insulin, does it mean I have failed to control my diabetes⁷?

No, not at all! It is a myth that you only need insulin if you have type 1 diabetes. More and more doctors are starting to treat type 2 diabetes more aggressively with insulin right from the start⁸.

It all depends on how your body responds to the various treatment options available for Type 2 diabetes. While for some people a change in diet and increasing activity may be enough in the beginning to control blood glucose levels, it is important to keep in mind that type 2 diabetes changes over time and is a condition that progresses as beta cells produce less and less insulin. Therefore, at some point, if oral medication is no longer enough to keep your glucose levels stable, then it will become necessary to take insulin.

5. How should I store my diabetes medication including my Insulin⁹?

The insulin that you are currently using can be kept at room temperature (under 25°C) for a period of between 4-6 weeks. Keep your spare insulin in the box in the fridge. Always check the expiry dates of all your medication including the blood glucose strips that you use. If travelling, make sure you have enough supplies for the time you will be away. Some medications have slightly different storage needs, so always read the package insert that comes with yours.



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Visit www.accu-chek.co.za for more information

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