

## A1c VALUE AND LONG-TERM COMPLICATIONS

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Along with the home blood glucose checks you do everyday, your healthcare team should perform an A1c blood test for you.

This blood test is done at your doctor's office or a lab. It shows how well you have managed your blood glucose over the past 2 to 3 months.

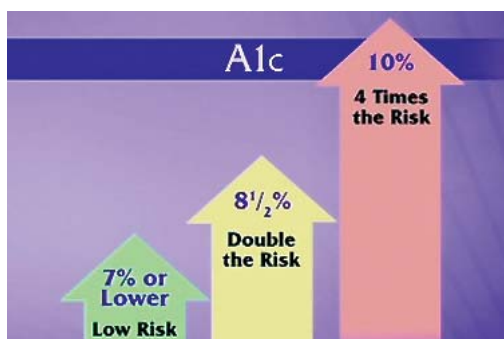
People without diabetes have an A1c range of 4 to 6%. Your goal is to keep your A1c level below 7%.

When you are first diagnosed, your diabetes care team may perform an A1c test as often as 4 times a year, to see how you are managing your diabetes.

As you gain control of your blood glucose levels, an A1c test twice a year may give you an accurate picture of your blood glucose levels and ensure that you are reaching your goals.

Consistently keeping your A1c readings below 7% gives you a better chance of delaying or preventing the long-term complications of diabetes, like: eye disease, heart disease, nerve disease, kidney disease, and amputation.

Here's a chart that can help you understand your results:



At 7% or lower, you have a low risk of developing complications. At 8-1/2% you have double the risk, and at 10% you have nearly four times the risk for complications.

To keep your A1c levels below 7%, you need to follow your diabetes management plan, which means making healthy food choices, getting physical activity, monitoring your blood glucose and taking medications, if necessary.

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*"I've been very fortunate to have brought it down from 11.5 down to 5.5. And it's because I worked at it. When I finally realized how important the A1c was, that was a challenge. And I set it to be a goal to bring it down."*

Your diabetes care team is there to help.

If your A1c is higher than 7%, go over your management plan with your diabetes care team and make changes if needed.

Talk with them about any long-term health concerns you may have, and learn about some steps you can take, or goals you can set, to help prevent the long-term complications of diabetes. Achieving your goals can help you live a long, healthy life.