The ABCs of Managing Diabetes

Taking care of diabetes can seem overwhelming. It doesn't need to be. Knowing the ABCs and the ABC targets can help.

A Hemoglobin A1C

The **A**1C test is a blood test for diabetes. It tells the VA provider if a diabetes treatment plan is working. The **A**1C test shows blood sugar measurements for the past 2 – 3 months. The lower daily blood sugars are, the lower the **A**1C will be. High blood sugars over time can lead to complications from diabetes.

- The **A**1C blood test is given 2 - 4 times a year
- The **A**1C goal for most people with diabetes is less than 7 (see chart inside)

B Blood Pressure

High **b**lood pressure, called hypertension, makes a heart work harder. High **b**lood pressure increases the risk for heart attack, stroke and kidney disease.

- **B**lood pressure should be checked at every visit
- The **b**lood pressure goal for most people with diabetes is 140/80 or less

C Cholesterol

High **c**holesterol levels, especially LDL (bad) **c**holesterol, can make blood vessels narrow and hard. High **c**holesterol levels can cause a buildup that clogs blood vessels. Over time, this can cause a heart attack or stroke.

- The **c**holesterol blood test is given at least once a year
- The LDL cholesterol goal for most people with diabetes is less than 100

VA Butler Healthcare

…providing quality health care to our nation's Veterans

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Diabetes

Diabetes Self-Management Education Program and Diabetes Support Group

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Diabetes Self-Management Education Programs
at VA Butler Healthcare

Diabetes is a condition in which the blood sugar level is high due to the body's inability to use blood sugar properly. Without proper blood sugar control and management of diabetes, damage can occur to the eyes, kidneys, heart, and nervous system.

Routine Maintenance for Controlling Diabetes:

- **Test blood sugar levels** (glucometer)
  (Keep a log and take it to your appointments)
- **Exercise and maintain a healthy diet**
- **Take medications as prescribed**
- **Continue regular foot care and inspections**
- **Have a yearly dilated eye exam**
- **Get an A1C blood test and urine test**
  (urinalysis for microalbumin)

VA health care providers may report A1C results using the same measurement units that are seen routinely in blood glucose measurements, called estimated average glucose (eAG). This table shows the relationship between A1C and eAG. Using eAG can help improve diabetes management.

A1C to eAG Conversion Chart:

A1C %	Average Glucose mg/dl
6	126
6.5	140
7	154
7.5	169
8	183
8.5	197
9	212
9.5	226
10	240

Goal: less than 7

VA Butler Healthcare offers a monthly **Diabetes Self-Management Education Program** for Veterans. Veterans are provided with the information they need to control their diabetes and slow down or prevent complications of the disease.

Class Agenda

9 – 10 am
Diabetes/Its Signs and Symptoms, and Routine Maintenance for Controlling It
(presented by a registered nurse)

10 – 10:20 am
Coping with Diabetes (presented by a social worker)

10:20 – 10:30 am
BREAK

10:30 – 11:00 am
Dental Care for the Diabetic
(presented by a dental hygienist)

11:00 am – 11:45 am
Medications Used in the Treatment of Diabetes
(presented by a pharmacist)

11:45 am – 12:15 pm
Exercise for the Diabetic
(presented by a physical therapist)

12:15 pm – 1 pm
LUNCH (on your own)

1– 2 pm
Diet and Diabetes (presented by a registered dietician)

2 pm
Question and Answer Session

Diabetes Support Group

VA Butler Healthcare offers a weekly *Diabetes Support Group* for Veterans.

A diagnosis of diabetes can be overwhelming. It affects many aspects of a person's life. Support from family, friends and other people living with diabetes helps those with diabetes manage their disease from day to day. **Live a long and active life** with diabetes…we can help.

For information call 800.362.8262, ext. 5024 or 724.477.5024

VA Butler Healthcare offers regular support meetings for Veterans with diabetes. We are here for you…

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."
Benjamin Franklin