

Take control of your health

You have the power to manage your health



You want to do all you can to live a long, healthy life.
So take control of your health.

Use this guide to talk with your doctor about how to:

- Keep your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol in a healthy range
- Get the screenings, vaccines, and medicines you need
- Choose a healthy lifestyle

**Remember—small steps can add up to
big changes in your health.**



High Blood Sugar

Type 2 diabetes happens when your blood has too much glucose. That's a type of sugar. If diabetes is not treated, it can cause vision loss, nerve and kidney damage, heart disease, amputations, and more.

You are more likely to get type 2 diabetes if you:

- Weigh too much
- Are 45 or older
- Have a close family member with diabetes
- Got diabetes when you were pregnant

Pre-diabetes happens when your blood sugar is higher than normal. But it's not high enough for diabetes. Nine out of 10 people with pre-diabetes don't know they have it.

If you have pre-diabetes, you are at risk for diabetes. One out of two people with pre-diabetes will get diabetes if they don't reduce their risk.

Talk with your doctor. Ask if you should get your blood sugar or your A1c (an estimate of your average blood sugar over the past 3 months) checked. If you have diabetes and are taking insulin you should check your blood sugar at home. Here's some advice on how to choose a blood glucose meter <http://bit.ly/1FP7v4U>

Also talk with your doctor about implementing the healthy lifestyle changes in this guide. Ask if you should take medicines to lower your blood sugar. And discuss how to choose a diet that is low in sugar and other carbohydrates, and what kind of exercise you need.

High Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is the amount of tension in the walls of your blood vessels. The higher your blood pressure is, the harder your heart needs to work to pump blood to your brain and other organs. If high blood pressure is not treated, it can cause heart attack, stroke, and kidney failure.

High blood pressure often has no symptoms. That's why it's sometimes called the "silent killer."

You are more likely to have high blood pressure if you:

- Have a close family member with high blood pressure
- Have unhealthy eating habits
- Weigh too much
- Sit or lie around too much
- Smoke
- Drink too much alcohol
- Take certain medicines
- Have certain health problems



Talk with your doctor. Ask if you should get your blood pressure checked. And ask if you should check your own blood pressure between visits. Here's some advice on how to choose a blood pressure monitor <http://bit.ly/118mEOq>.

Also talk with your doctor about the healthy lifestyle changes in this guide. Ask if you should take medicines to lower your blood pressure. Talk to your doctor about the DASH diet or other healthy eating plans that are low in salt.

Healthy choices for a healthier you

Choosing a healthy lifestyle can help you keep your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol in a healthy range. Take these 6 steps.

To learn more about healthy lifestyle changes, see the Advice from Consumer Reports on the next page.



High Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a fatty substance in the blood. If you have high levels of this fatty substance it can build up on the sides of blood vessels and clog them. Clogged vessels can lead to heart attack and stroke.

You are more likely to have health problems from high cholesterol if you:

- Have diabetes or high blood pressure
- Have a close family member with heart disease
- Smoke

Talk with your doctor. Ask if you should get your blood cholesterol checked. Talk about the healthy lifestyle changes in this guide. Discuss how to choose a diet that is low in cholesterol. Ask if you should take medicines to lower your cholesterol.

What is high value care?

High value care balances how much a test or treatment could help you against how much it could harm you. Appropriate screening and lifestyle changes are high value because they are low risk and help prevent you from getting sick and needing more harmful or expensive medical care.

High value care gets you:

- The right amount of care
- In the right place
- At the right time

The goal is to make sure you get the best care. To take control of your health, choose a healthy lifestyle. And get the screenings, vaccines, and medicines you need.



Advice from Consumer Reports

Tips for living well

Healthy habits can help you have a long and healthy life. Here are some ways to live well.

Be active. Be active through moderate exercise at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week. That means you can talk, but not sing, while you're active. For instance, take a brisk walk. Once you reach that goal, add some strength exercises a few days each week. These build your muscles. Also add some stretching exercises. These help you stay limber.

Eat well. For most people, a healthy diet is high in vegetables, fruit, whole grains, and lean protein. Most people should also have some healthy fats, such as olive oil. Ask your doctor what diet is right for you.

Maintain a healthy weight. Body Mass Index (BMI) is a measure of body fat. It's based on your height and weight. You can ask your doctor for your BMI. Or you can figure it out online. For most people, a healthy BMI is 18.5 to 24.9 but this may vary based on your sex and ethnicity. Ask your doctor what BMI range is healthy for you.

Don't smoke. Smoking is the top cause of death that can be prevented. It can cause heart disease, cancer, and lung disease. Quitting smoking is the single best thing you can do for your health. Talk to your doctor about ways to quit. These include counseling and medicines.

Limit alcohol. Most women should have no more than one drink per day. Most men should have no more than two drinks per day. An example of a drink is a 5-ounce glass of wine or a can of beer.

Work closely with your doctor to make healthy lifestyle changes. If you already have a chronic health problem, this teamwork is even more important. Together, you and your doctor can make sure you stay in the best health.

ConsumerReports®

ACP
American College of Physicians
Leading Internal Medicine, Improving Lives

ACP | High Value
Care



This report is for you to use when talking with your healthcare provider. It is not a substitute for medical advice and treatment. Use of this report is at your own risk.

© 2015 Consumer Reports. Developed in cooperation with the American College of Physicians. To learn more about the sources used in this report and terms and conditions of use, please visit ConsumerHealthChoices.org/about-us/.