

PATIENT TOOLKIT

A little clarity can change the next step.



A practical toolkit for adult primary care, internal medicine and charity clinics in the U.S. and India.

What is inside

Two original guides - blood pressure and type 2 diabetes - plus all 10 planning worksheets for care plans, medicines, tests, follow-up and practical support. Printable, accessible without an account, and available in English, Spanish and Hindi.

Designed for the conversation after a visit

Use a short guide to explain the essentials, then complete a blank action plan together. Patients leave with room for questions, contact details and a next step they can follow.

Review record

Clinical and language review completion confirmed by the foundation on October 13, 2026. Individual reviewer names, qualifications and actual approval dates were not supplied. Clinic teams should confirm suitability for their local workflow.

PATIENT TOOLKIT | <https://helpingotherssmile.org/patient-toolkit/clinical-review>

Follow your care-team instructions.

Patient guide

Blood pressure: a clearer plan at home



Understand your numbers. Build a calm routine. Know your next step.

Patient guide

Adult guide for patients in the U.S. and India. Follow your individual care-team instructions. Pregnancy and pediatric care need separate guidance.

1

Your numbers tell a story

Blood pressure is the force of blood against your blood vessels. The top number (systolic) is the pressure when your heart beats. The bottom number (diastolic) is the pressure between beats. Readings use mm Hg.

High blood pressure often has no symptoms. Checking it and following your care plan can help protect your heart, brain, kidneys, and eyes. One reading does not tell the whole story; your care team looks at the pattern.

2

Leave the visit with a clear plan

Ask your care team to write your personal target, when to check, when to call, and your follow-up date on the worksheet. Targets and treatment depend on your health and circumstances.

Choose your first step

What is the one thing you will do next? Write it down with a date.

Know how to share readings

Confirm whether to bring a paper log, call, or use your clinic's secure portal.

A plan that fits you

If you are pregnant or recently gave birth, ask for a specific blood pressure plan. This general adult guide does not cover pregnancy care.

Follow your care-team instructions.

3 Take a reading you can trust

Choose a validated automatic upper-arm monitor with a cuff that fits your arm. Ask your clinician or pharmacist to check the model and cuff size; bring the monitor to a visit.

30 minutes before

Avoid caffeine, smoking, and exercise. Empty your bladder.

Settle for 5 minutes

Rest quietly. Sit with your back supported, feet flat, and legs uncrossed.

Position the cuff

Put it on bare upper-arm skin. Support your arm so the cuff is at heart level. Follow the device instructions.

Measure and repeat

Stay still and do not talk or use your phone. Take two readings, one minute apart, and record both.

4 Keep a simple record

Use the blood pressure log for the date, time, both readings, and notes your team requests. Check at the times agreed with your team. Bring the log and your medicine list to follow-up.

If a reading is higher than usual and you feel well, repeat it and record both. Ask your team about repeated readings outside your personal range. Use the urgent instructions below for very high readings.

No monitor yet?

Tell your clinic. Ask about a loan program, a suitable lower-cost option, or where you can get a reliable reading. Availability and costs vary.

5 Make medicines easier to manage

Take blood pressure medicines as prescribed. Do not stop, double, or change a dose because of a home reading unless your care team has given you a specific plan.

Keep an updated list of medicines, vitamins, and supplements. Ask your pharmacist before starting an over-the-counter medicine, including cold or pain products. Ask what to do if you miss a dose or notice a side effect.

Before you run out

Write your refill contact on the worksheet. Tell the team early if cost, side effects, or getting to the pharmacy makes treatment difficult.

Follow your care-team instructions.

6 Choose a change you can keep

Ask what food choices, activity, sleep, stress support, and tobacco or alcohol changes fit your health. Choose one realistic step rather than trying to change everything at once.

Food that fits your life

Discuss ways to use less salt and include vegetables, fruit, and other foods your team recommends. Ask about kidney disease or other diet restrictions before using salt substitutes.

Movement that fits your body

Ask which activities are safe for you and how to build up gradually.

Support is part of care

Mention food costs, work hours, transportation, language, or worries. Ask whom the clinic can connect you with.

7 A very high reading needs a response

If the top number is higher than 180 OR the bottom number is higher than 120 mm Hg and you have chest pain, shortness of breath, back pain, numbness, weakness, vision changes, or trouble speaking: call your emergency number now: 911 in the U.S., 112 in India, or the local number elsewhere. Do not wait for the pressure to fall.

If either number is above that level and you have no symptoms: wait at least one minute, then check again. If it is still that high, contact a healthcare professional immediately. Do not take extra medicine on your own.

Do not wait for a blood pressure reading

Sudden one-sided weakness, trouble speaking, or sudden vision loss can be stroke signs. Even without a blood pressure reading, call your emergency number now: 911 in the U.S., 112 in India, or the local number elsewhere.

8 Bring the story back to your team

Bring your readings, medicine list, questions, and monitor if requested. Mention dizziness, fainting, side effects, or readings that concern you; ask your team when these require urgent help.

Before leaving, confirm the next appointment, how soon to expect a reply to a message, and whom to contact outside office hours. Ask an interpreter or trusted support person to help if you would like.

Follow your care-team instructions.

Questions to ask

- ☐ What is my target and when should I check?
- ☐ Can you check my cuff, monitor, and technique?
- ☐ Which readings or symptoms mean I should call?
- ☐ What should I do if I miss a medicine dose?
- ☐ How will we review the log, and when is my next visit?

Worksheet

Use the matching blood pressure worksheet to record your personal plan and both readings. Fill in targets and contact instructions with your care team.

The foundation confirmed completion of clinical and language review on October 13, 2026. Source links are included with this guide.

Follow your care-team instructions.



PATIENT TOOLKIT

Sources & further reading

The foundation confirmed completion of clinical and language review on October 13, 2026. Source links are included with this guide.



CDC | About High Blood Pressure

<https://www.cdc.gov/high-blood-pressure/about/index.html>

American Heart Association | Home Blood Pressure Monitoring

<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/understanding-blood-pressure-readings/monitoring-your-blood-pressure-at-home>

American Heart Association | Managing High Blood Pressure Medications

<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/changes-you-can-make-to-manage-high-blood-pressure/managing-high-blood-pressure-medications>

American Heart Association | Managing Blood Pressure with a Heart-Healthy Diet

<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/changes-you-can-make-to-manage-high-blood-pressure/managing-blood-pressure-with-a-heart-healthy-diet>

CDC | Signs and Symptoms of Stroke

<https://www.cdc.gov/stroke/signs-symptoms/index.html>

American Heart Association | How Potassium Can Help Prevent or Treat High Blood Pressure

<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/changes-you-can-make-to-manage-high-blood-pressure/how-potassium-can-help-control-high-blood-pressure/>

World Health Organization | Hypertension

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/hypertension>

American Heart Association | Understanding Blood Pressure Readings

<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/understanding-blood-pressure-readings>

CDC | Measuring Your Blood Pressure

<https://www.cdc.gov/high-blood-pressure/measure/index.html>

American Heart Association | How to Manage High Blood Pressure

<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/changes-you-can-make-to-manage-high-blood-pressure>

American Heart Association | When To Call 911 About High Blood Pressure

<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/understanding-blood-pressure-readings/when-to-call-911-for-high-blood-pressure>

FDA | Create and Keep a Medication List for Your Health

<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/create-and-keep-medication-list-your-health>

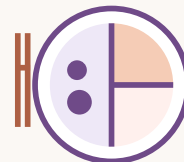
Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India | Emergency Response Support System (ERSS)

<https://www.mha.gov.in/en/commoncontent/emergency-response-support-system-erss>

Follow your care-team instructions.

Patient guide

Type 2 diabetes: your everyday care plan



Make room for real life. Learn your plan. Take the next step with support.

Patient guide

Adult guide for patients in the U.S. and India. Follow your individual care-team instructions. Pregnancy and pediatric care need separate guidance.

1 You do not have to figure this out alone

With type 2 diabetes, your body does not use insulin well or does not make enough. Insulin helps blood sugar (glucose) enter your cells for energy. Too much sugar can stay in your blood.

Your care plan brings together food, activity, medicines when prescribed, and follow-up. It also protects your heart, eyes, kidneys, nerves, and feet. Start with one doable step and ask for support.

2 Know your plan and your medicines

Use the worksheet to record your medicines, instructions, monitoring plan, and next appointment. Ask what each medicine is for, how to take it, possible side effects, what to do after a missed dose, and how to get refills.

Take medicines as prescribed. Do not change or ration them on your own. Tell your team if you cannot afford them. If you use injections, ask someone to show you the technique, storage, and safe disposal of needles.

Ask for a demonstration

“Please show me, then let me try.” A pharmacist or diabetes educator can help you practice.

Follow your care-team instructions.



3

Make a monitoring plan that fits you

Ask whether you need to check glucose at home, which device to use, and when to check. Not everyone has the same monitoring needs. Ask for your personal target range and what readings should trigger a call.

A meter gives a reading at that moment. A continuous glucose monitor (CGM) shows trends. The A1C blood test reflects average glucose over about three months. Ask what your A1C goal is and when to repeat the test.

Write a useful record

If asked to monitor, note the date, time, reading, and context such as meals, activity, symptoms, or illness. Share it as your clinic directs.

Check the units

Meters may display mg/dL or mmol/L. Have your care team write the units and your targets on the plan; do not compare different units as if they were the same.

Use your meter safely

Wash and dry your hands before testing. Follow your device instructions. Do not share your meter or finger-pricking device with another person.

4

Keep foods you enjoy; make a workable plan

Ask a dietitian or diabetes educator to help fit meals to your culture, budget, schedule, and medicines. For meals such as rice or roti with dal and vegetables, ask how portions and meal timing can fit your personal plan. Choose water or unsweetened drinks when they fit your plan.

Ask which activities are safe for you and start gradually. If your medicines can cause low glucose, ask how meals, activity, alcohol, or fasting affect that risk. Tell the team about foot pain, limited movement, sleep problems, stress, or difficulty getting food.

One small step

Pick a change you can repeat this week. Your plan can grow from there.



5

Know what to do about low blood sugar

Insulin and some diabetes medicines can cause low glucose. Signs can include shakiness, sweating, hunger, dizziness, or confusion. Ask if you are at risk and carry the fast-acting glucose your team recommends.

Below 70 mg/dL (3.9 mmol/L): the 15-15 rule

For an adult who is awake and can swallow safely: take 15 grams of fast-acting carbohydrate, wait 15 minutes, and check again. Repeat if still below 70 mg/dL (3.9 mmol/L). Glucose tablets or gel: use the label amount for 15 grams. Follow your team's individualized plan.

After recovery

When back in your target range, have a snack or meal with carbohydrate and protein. Report lows to your team; do not change medicines yourself. If symptoms do not improve after treatment, get emergency medical help. Do not drive yourself.

Severe low glucose is an emergency

If a person is unconscious, has a seizure, or cannot swallow safely, give nothing by mouth. Call your emergency number now: 911 in the U.S., 112 in India, or the local number elsewhere. A trained helper should give prescribed glucagon if available, following its instructions.

6

Have a sick-day and high-glucose plan

Ask for written instructions for illness: when to check glucose or ketones, which medicines to continue or temporarily change, how to stay hydrated, and when to call. These instructions depend on your medicines and health.

Thirst, frequent urination, tiredness, or blurry vision can occur with high glucose. Contact your team for readings above your agreed limit or symptoms that concern you. Do not take extra medicine unless your written plan says to.

Get urgent help

Go to an emergency department if you cannot keep liquids down for more than 4 hours or have ketones in your urine. For trouble breathing, collapse, or severe confusion, call your emergency number now: 911 in the U.S., 112 in India, or the local number elsewhere. Do not drive yourself if you cannot think clearly.

7 Feet, eyes, kidneys, and heart matter too

Check your feet every day, including between the toes. Use a mirror or ask someone to help if needed. Wear protective shoes and socks. Call your care team promptly for red, warm, or painful skin, or a cut or blister that is not starting to heal.

Ask when you need foot exams, an eye exam, kidney blood and urine tests, blood pressure and cholesterol checks, dental care, and vaccines. Your care team sets the schedule based on your health.

8 Ask for support and a clear next step

Bring your medicine list, questions, and records your team requests. Ask about diabetes education, a dietitian, language support, and help paying for medicines or supplies. Tell the team if diabetes feels overwhelming.

Confirm your next appointment and how to get help after hours. Before leaving, explain the next step in your own words so your team can check that the plan is clear.

Questions to ask

- ☐ Which first step matters most for me?
- ☐ Do my medicines put me at risk for low glucose?
- ☐ What are my glucose and A1C goals?
- ☐ What is my written sick-day plan?
- ☐ Which checkups are due, and where can I get help with cost?

Worksheet

Use the matching diabetes worksheet to bring medicines, monitoring, everyday goals, sick-day questions, and follow-up together. Your care team fills in personal targets and action instructions.

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Follow your care-team instructions.

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Sources & further reading

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NIDDK / NIH | Type 2 Diabetes

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/what-is-diabetes/type-2-diabetes>

NIDDK / NIH | Insulin, Medicines, & Other Diabetes Treatments

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/insulin-medicines-treatments>

NIDDK / NIH | Low Blood Glucose (Hypoglycemia)

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/preventing-problems/low-blood-glucose-hypoglycemia>

CDC | Managing Sick Days

<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/living-with/managing-sick-days.html>

NIDDK / NIH | Preventing Diabetes Problems

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/preventing-problems>

FDA | Blood Glucose Monitoring Devices

<https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/in-vitro-diagnostics/blood-glucose-monitoring-devices>

MedlinePlus / NIH | Low blood sugar

<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000386.htm>

World Health Organization | Diabetes

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/diabetes>

NIDDK / NIH | Managing Diabetes

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/managing-diabetes>

NIDDK / NIH | Healthy Living with Diabetes

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/healthy-living-with-diabetes>

CDC | Treatment of Low Blood Sugar (Hypoglycemia)

<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/treatment/treatment-low-blood-sugar-hypoglycemia.html>

NIDDK / NIH | Diabetes & Foot Problems

<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/preventing-problems/foot-problems>

CDC | About Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support

<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/education-support-programs/index.html>

MedlinePlus / NIH | Unconsciousness - first aid

<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000022.htm>

Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India | Emergency Response Support System (ERSS)

<https://www.mha.gov.in/en/commoncontent/emergency-response-support-system-erss>

ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition | Dietary Guidelines for Indians, 2024

https://nin.res.in/dietaryguidelines/pdfs/locale/DGI_2024.pdf

Follow your care-team instructions.

Worksheet

My next steps worksheet

Turn the visit into a clear, doable next step.



Follow your care-team instructions.

My plan

Visit date and care team

What we discussed

My first next step

When I will do it

Who can help

Questions I still have

My next appointment

Questions to ask

- ☐ What matters most for me to do next?
- ☐ Can you explain that in another way?

Worksheet

Blood pressure plan & reading log



Keep your personal plan and home readings together.

Follow your care-team instructions.

My plan

When my team wants me to check

My personal target from my team

Readings or symptoms my team wants me to report

When and how to contact my team

My next appointment

Bring this to your next visit

Worksheet

My reading log

Keep your personal plan and home readings together.



Record both readings. Your care team sets the target and checking schedule.

Date	Time	Reading 1 (mm Hg)	Reading 2 (mm Hg)	Pulse, if requested	Notes

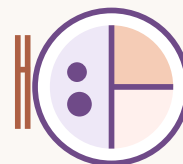
Notes

Questions to ask

- ☐ Does this monitor and cuff fit me?
- ☐ Can you watch me take a reading?

Worksheet

Diabetes plan & glucose log



Make everyday care easier to follow and discuss.

Follow your care-team instructions.

My plan

Medicines and instructions from my team

Whether, how, and when to check glucose

My personal glucose and A1C targets + units

My food or activity goal

My team's written sick-day instructions

When to call and after-hours contact

Supplies or costs I need help with

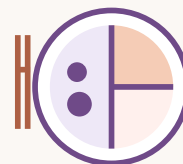
My next appointment

Bring this to your next visit

Worksheet

My reading log

Make everyday care easier to follow and discuss.



Use only if your care team asks you to monitor. Include the units used by your device.

Date	Time	Glucose + units	Meals / activity / symptoms	Notes

Notes

Questions to ask

- ☐ Which first step matters most?
- ☐ Can my medicines cause low glucose?

Worksheet

Medicine list & question card



One current list for your team and your pharmacy.

Follow your care-team instructions.

My plan

Allergies or reactions to discuss

My pharmacy and phone number

Who to contact before a refill runs out

Questions about side effects, instructions, or cost

Bring this to your next visit

Worksheet

My medicine list

One current list for your team and your pharmacy.



Include prescriptions, nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and supplements.

Medicine	Strength	What it is for	How much / when / how

Notes

Questions to ask

- ☐ What is this medicine for, and how do I take it?
- ☐ What if I miss a dose?

Worksheet

Test, referral & results checklist



Know where to go, how to prepare, and when to expect results.

Follow your care-team instructions.

My plan

Test or specialist and why it was ordered

Booking contact and location

Appointment date and time

Preparation instructions from my team

Cost, transportation, or interpreter questions

How and when I will receive results

Who to call if results are overdue

Next step after results

Questions to ask

- ☐ Who arranges this appointment?
- ☐ How should I prepare, including food and medicines?

Worksheet

Next-visit preparation sheet

Bring your priorities, questions, and updates.



Follow your care-team instructions.

My plan

Date, time, location, and contact

My most important question

Other questions

Changes since my last visit

Records or items my team asked me to bring

Interpreter, transport, or other support I need

Questions to ask

- ☐ What should I bring?
- ☐ Can a support person join me?

Worksheet

Care access & support worksheet



Make space for cost, transport, language, and everyday challenges.

Follow your care-team instructions.

My plan

The part of my plan I need help with

What makes it difficult

Person or service we discussed

Contact details

What I need to ask or bring

Next step and date

Questions to ask

- ☐ Who can help me find support?
- ☐ Can I get help with medicine or test costs?

Worksheet

My care-team contact sheet

Keep the right contact close when you need it.



Follow your care-team instructions.

My plan

Clinic and usual care-team contact

Scheduling contact

Medicine and refill contact

Test results contact

Office hours and expected response time

Clinic instructions for help after hours

Other important care contacts

Questions to ask

- ☐ Which contact should I use for this question?
- ☐ When should I expect a reply?

Worksheet

Preventive-care discussion planner

Keep recommended screenings, vaccines, and routine care on track.



Follow your care-team instructions.

My plan

Screening, vaccine, or routine-care topic

My team's recommendation

When to arrange it

Who orders or books it

Records to bring or request

Cost or access questions

Questions for my next visit

Questions to ask

- ☐ Which steps apply to me?
- ☐ When should I arrange them?

Worksheet

Health notes & questions sheet



Put changes and questions into your own words.

Follow your care-team instructions.

My plan

Date and time

What I noticed or want to ask

When it started

Other details I want my team to know

My team's instructions for reporting changes

My question or agreed next step

Questions to ask

- ☐ What should I keep track of?
- ☐ When and how should I report a change?

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Help make this useful in your clinic



Share future corrections to the clinical content, wording, translation and local workflow.

Questions to ask

- ☐ Are all clinical instructions accurate, current and appropriate for your patients?
- ☐ Are emergency steps and thresholds clear and consistent with your local protocol?
- ☐ Can patients understand the guide and explain the next step in their own words?
- ☐ Does each translation preserve meaning, numbers, units and urgency?
- ☐ Can patients use the sheets if cost, literacy, language or supplies are a barrier?
- ☐ What should change before your clinic distributes these materials?

Reviewer name / Reviewer qualifications

Review date

Review decision / required changes

Follow your care-team instructions.