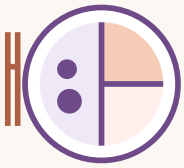
Patient guide

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.

Follow your care-team instructions.

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.

Follow your care-team instructions.

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.

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.

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

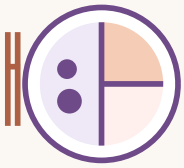
Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India | Emergency Response Support System (ERSS)
https://www.mha.gov.in/en/commoncontent/emergency-response-support-system-erss

ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition | Dietary Guidelines for Indians, 2024
https://nin.res.in/dietaryguidelines/pdfjs/locale/DGI_2024.pdf

Follow your care-team instructions.

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

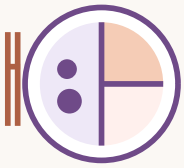
Supplies or costs I need help with

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?