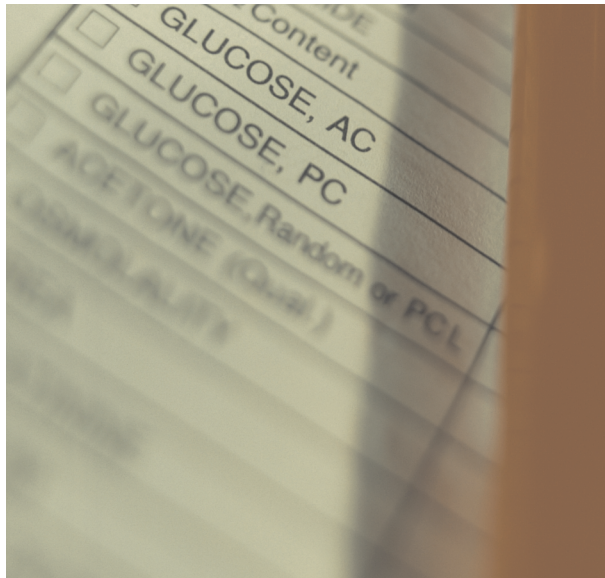


Your Test: Diabetes Testing



You may need a test for diabetes if you have been having symptoms of abnormal blood sugar. Or you may need it if you have a higher risk of getting diabetes.

Symptoms of abnormal blood sugar include feeling more hungry or thirsty than usual. You may have to urinate more, especially at night. You may have lost weight, feel very tired, and have blurry vision.

Testing, or screening as it is sometimes called, is easy. All it takes is a simple blood test that can be done at your doctor's office or a lab.

Should you be tested for diabetes?

Talk with your doctor about what is putting you at risk for diabetes and whether you should be tested. Some experts suggest screening for diabetes if your blood pressure is more than 135/80. Other experts suggest screening for diabetes if you are age 45 or older, especially if you are overweight. You are considered overweight if your body mass index (BMI) is 25 or above. Your BMI is a measure of your weight compared with your height. For example, a person who is 6 feet tall and weighs between

185 to 225 pounds is considered overweight. Your doctor can help you find your BMI.

If you are younger than 45 and overweight, you should consider a test if:

- You have a parent, brother, or sister who has type 2 diabetes.
- You are African American, Hispanic, Native American, Asian American, or Pacific Islander.
- You have prediabetes. This means your blood sugar is above normal but is not high enough to be diabetes.
- You have high blood pressure.
- Your cholesterol is not normal. This means your "good" HDL cholesterol is low (35 or lower) or your triglycerides are 250 or higher.
- You had diabetes while pregnant (gestational diabetes) or you have delivered a baby who weighed 9 pounds or more.
- You do not get any exercise.
- You are a woman with polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS).

How is the test done?

There are several different tests. Your doctor will decide which one you need.

- **Fasting blood sugar (FBS)** measures blood glucose after you have not eaten for at least 8 hours. It often is the first test done to check for diabetes.
- **A1c test** estimates your average blood sugar level over the last 2 to 3 months. It can be done any time during the day, even after a meal. Recent changes in diet, exercise, or medicines do not affect the test results.
- **Random blood sugar (RBS)** measures blood glucose no matter when you last ate. Several tests may be taken throughout the day.

Random testing is useful because glucose levels in healthy people do not change much during the day. Blood glucose levels that vary widely may indicate a problem.

- **Oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT)** is used to diagnose diabetes that occurs during pregnancy. This test is a series of blood tests done after you drink a sweet liquid that contains glucose. This test is sometimes used for diagnosing diabetes in someone who is not pregnant.
- **2-hour postprandial blood sugar (2-hour PC)** measures blood glucose exactly 2 hours after you eat a meal.

How often do you need the test?

If your blood pressure is higher than 135/80, talk to your doctor about how often to be tested.

If you are 45 or older, you should have the test **every 3 years**.

If you are 45 or older and overweight, you should have the test more often.

If you are younger than 45 and you are overweight or have any of the health issues listed above, you should have a test more often.

Questions to ask your doctor

List your questions or concerns below. Take this sheet with you to your next doctor visit.

Questions about diabetes testing: