

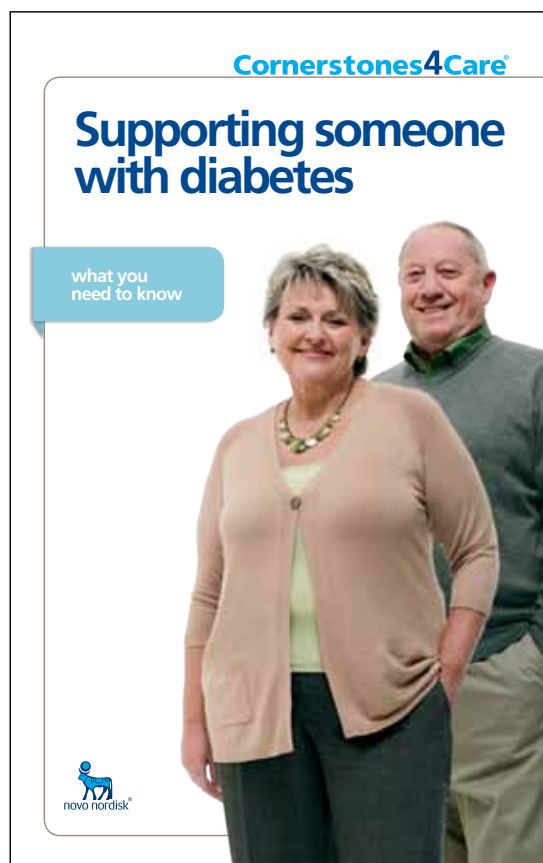
# Understanding the diabetes care plan—for the care partner

Cornerstones4Care®

Your loved one is likely to have many members on his or her diabetes care team. But the most important members of the team are your loved one—and you. You are the one who is there every day. You are there for the ups and downs. You are there to provide a listening ear and much-needed emotional support. And you are there to help your loved one understand the diabetes care plan and carry it out.

All the parts of a diabetes care plan work together. Some care partners focus on just one part of the plan, often the meal plan. But you can help with every part of the plan, if you and your loved one agree.

It's best to sit down with your loved one and go through each part of the plan. Talk openly about how you both feel about your helping with each part. This guide briefly reviews the parts of a typical diabetes care plan. For more information, ask the diabetes care team for the **Cornerstones4Care** booklet *Caring for Someone with Diabetes: What You Need to Know*. You can also visit [Cornerstones4Care.com](https://www.cornerstones4care.com) to learn more about managing diabetes.



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## The members of the diabetes care team

It's a good idea to know the members of the team by name and to know how to reach them. Write that information in the spaces below.

### The diabetes care team

Team member	Role	Name	Telephone number
<b>You and your loved one</b>	Partners in diabetes care; the most important members of the team		
<b>Primary health care professional</b>	Doctor you see for general checkups and if you are sick; may provide diabetes care if he or she cares for many people with diabetes		
<b>Endocrinologist</b>	Doctor who specializes in the treatment of diabetes		
<b>Diabetes educator</b>	Nurse or other health care professional who specializes in teaching people about diabetes		
<b>Nurse</b>	Health care professional who can help teach you about diabetes and parts of your care		
<b>Registered dietitian</b>	Specialist in nutrition; can help you make your meal plan		
<b>Cardiologist</b>	Heart doctor		
<b>Podiatrist</b>	Foot doctor		
<b>Ophthalmologist</b>	Eye doctor		
<b>Nephrologist</b>	Kidney doctor		
<b>Dentist</b>	Health care professional who cares for your teeth		
<b>Pharmacist</b>	Person who is licensed to prepare and dispense medicines		
<b>Emergency contact</b>	Person the team should contact if you and your loved one need help in an emergency		
<b>Other contacts</b>			

## The diabetes care plan

You can help your loved one best if you understand each part of the diabetes care plan.

### A plan for taking diabetes medicines

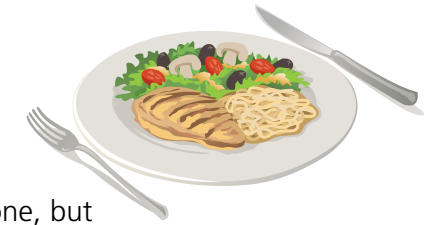
If your loved one's blood sugar levels are above his or her goal with a meal plan and physical activity alone, then your loved one might need diabetes medicine. Most people with diabetes will need medicine as their diabetes changes over time.

There are many kinds of diabetes medicines. Some are pills, and some are taken by injection. Many people take more than one type of diabetes medicine. The diabetes care team will work with you and your loved one to decide which type of medicine is best for him or her.

Medicines are the part of the plan that many people with diabetes need the most help with. If your loved one is open to it, try to be available to go to office visits with him or her. That will help you better understand the medicine plan. Think about keeping a list of medicines, and write down any changes you see so that you can talk about them with the team.



## A meal plan



Healthy eating is important for everyone, but it's even more important for people with diabetes. People with diabetes don't have to ban any foods from their meal plan, but they may need to limit the amounts they eat. Your loved one's meal plan will list good choices for him or her and suggest how much to eat and when.

Your loved one should be honest with the diabetes care team about what foods he or she likes and doesn't like. That's because he or she will be much more likely to follow the plan if it's made up of foods he or she likes.

Be sure to visit [Cornerstones4Care.com](http://Cornerstones4Care.com) to find meal-planning tools, including a menu planner with printable recipes. You can even print a shopping list. Bring your list with you when you shop to be sure to buy just what you need.

## A plan for physical activity

It can be difficult to get more physical activity. But you can help your loved one by breaking it down to these 3 steps:



**Step 1: Talk with the doctor before getting started.** Talk about what kind of activity is best for your loved one.

**Step 2: Help your loved one choose an activity** that he or she enjoys. Ideally, it should be one that you enjoy too, so that you can be active together!

**Step 3: Set a goal.** The American Diabetes Association recommends being active for at least 150 minutes a week, spread out over at least 3 days a week. So for many people, that works out to being active for at least 30 minutes, at least 5 days a week.

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## A plan for checking blood sugar

There are many kinds of blood sugar meters available. The diabetes care team can help you and your loved one choose a meter and show both of you how to use it. They can also give you a schedule for checking.

The table below shows blood sugar goals for many people with diabetes. The diabetes care team will set the goals that are right for your loved one. You can write the goals down in the last column to help you both keep track.



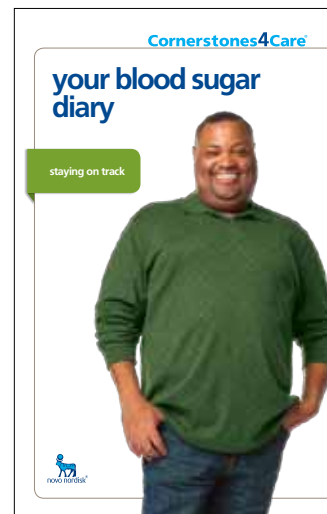
Time	Goal for many people with diabetes	Individual goals
Before meals	70 to 130 mg/dL	
1 to 2 hours after the start of a meal	Less than 180 mg/dL	
A1C	Less than 7%	

Adapted from the American Diabetes Association. Standards of medical care in diabetes—2013. *Diabetes Care*. 2013;36(suppl 1):S11-S66.

## A plan for managing changes in blood sugar

As part of a diabetes care plan, it's important for both you and your loved one to know what may happen when blood sugar goes too high or too low. You also need to know what you should do if this happens.

Blood sugar levels go up and down all the time. It can be frustrating. But the changes do not mean failure. With time, both of you will understand how best to manage your loved one's blood sugar. Ask your team for a copy of the **Cornerstones4Care® Blood Sugar Diary**. Both of you can use it to write down your loved one's blood sugar and share the results with the team.



For more information, visit  
[Cornerstones4Care.com](http://Cornerstones4Care.com)

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