

# Hemoglobin A1c

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## What is Hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c)?

If you have diabetes, checking your HbA1C is important because it provides a measure of your average blood sugar levels over the past 2-3 months. The HbA1C test measures the amount of glucose that has attached to the hemoglobin in your red blood cells.

Regulating your blood sugar levels is an essential part of managing your diabetes – it can help reduce the risk of complications such as nerve damage, kidney disease, vision problems, and cardiovascular disease. By monitoring your HbA1C levels regularly, you can get an idea of how well your blood sugar is controlled over time, and adjust your treatment plan if necessary.

The American Diabetes Association recommends that people with diabetes have an HbA1C test *at least twice a year, or more frequently if their blood sugar is not well controlled*. Ideally, the goal for most people with diabetes is to keep their HbA1C levels below 7%. However, your target may be different based on your age, overall health, and other factors. It's important to discuss your target HbA1C level with your healthcare provider.

## What Should I Expect?

You don't need to fast for the A1C test, so you can eat and drink normally before the test.

During the A1C test, a member of your health care team takes a blood sample by inserting a needle into a vein in your arm or by pricking your finger tip with a small, pointed lancet. If the blood is taken from a vein, the blood sample is sent to a lab for analysis. Once the results are finalized you will receive a message from your Crossover Health Primary Care Provider.

A1C test results are reported as a percentage. A higher A1C percentage corresponds to higher average blood sugar levels. For most adults living with diabetes, an A1C level of less than 7% is a common treatment target. Lower or higher targets may be appropriate for some people.

The target of less than 7% is associated with a lower risk of diabetes-related complications. If your A1C level is above your target, your doctor may recommend an adjustment in your diabetes treatment plan.