

A1C

An important part of monitoring your blood glucose (sugar) levels is having your glycohemoglobin (A1C) checked by your physician on a regular basis. This laboratory blood test is a tool that was developed to measure the amount of glucose in the blood stream that attaches to the hemoglobin portion of red blood cells. As glucose levels increase, more glucose binds with the hemoglobin and results in a higher A1C level. This test provides information that reflects the average blood glucose level for the past 3 months. Individuals without diabetes will have an A1C reading below 6.0.

For individuals with diabetes who take insulin to control blood glucose, this test is recommended every 3 months. For those who do not require insulin management, it is recommended that the A1C test be performed every 6 months. Your doctor uses the A1C value along with the results of other laboratory tests in developing your diabetes care plan. The following table shows the A1C value and its corresponding blood glucose level:

A1C	Average Blood Glucose Level
6.0	135
7.0	170
8.0	205
9.0	240
10.0	275
11.0	310
12.0	345

Tracking A1C values shows the effects that diet, exercise, illness and medications can have on blood glucose over time. These values, along with home blood glucose monitoring results and other physician-ordered laboratory tests, guide your physician in setting realistic treatment goals and follow-up care plans.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has published a book titled *Take Charge of Your Diabetes*. The first half of this publication has general information regarding diabetes that is tabbed for easy reference. The second half of this publication provides charts for recording home test results as well as results of the lab tests that your physician orders. This book is free, available in English or Spanish, and may be ordered by calling (877) 232-3422. *Take Charge of Your Diabetes* is also available on the internet at www.cdc.gov/diabetes.

To learn more about the A1C blood test contact:

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HEALTHY INITIATIVES

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