

A PRACTICAL HEALTH GUIDE

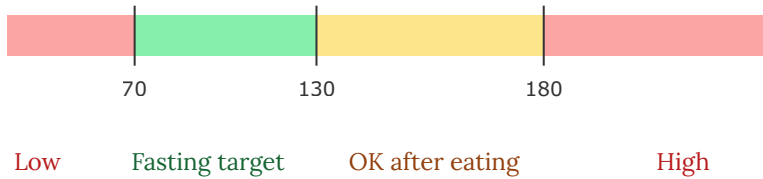


How to Live with Diabetes

Your practical guide to living with diabetes, confidently and calmly

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Two hours after a meal	Under 180 mg/dL
HbA1c (average sugar)	Under 7% for most people



Approximate blood sugar scale (mg/dL) – see Chapter Two

What Is HbA1c (Average Sugar)?

Unlike a daily measurement that gives you a "snapshot," the HbA1c test measures your average blood sugar level over the last two to three months. That's why your doctor orders it every three to six months – it's the real measure of how well your plan is working over the medium term, not just one good or bad day.

Don't Judge Yourself by a Single Number

One of the most common mistakes is seeing a high number and feeling guilty or like a failure. A single high reading might be from a large meal, stress, poor sleep, or even a minor illness like a cold. What matters is the overall trend



■ Half the plate — non-starchy vegetables

■ A quarter — protein

■ A quarter — complex carbs

- **Half the plate:** non-starchy vegetables — zucchini, cucumber, tomato, spinach, green beans, mixed salad. These don't raise your sugar much, and you can eat them more freely.
- **A quarter:** protein — chicken, fish, lean meat, eggs, or legumes like lentils and beans. Protein doesn't raise sugar directly, and keeps you full longer.
- **A quarter:** complex carbs in a measured amount — rice, bread, or pasta (whole grain preferred), or potato.

Travel: A Pre-Trip Checklist

- Carry your medications and testing supplies in your carry-on bag, not checked luggage, in case it's lost or delayed.
- Pack a few extra days' worth of medication beyond what you actually need, in case your return is delayed.
- Carry a brief medical report or a prescription in your medication's name, especially for international travel.
- If you use insulin and will cross different time zones, consult your doctor in advance about how to adjust your dosing schedule during the trip.
- Always carry a fast-acting sugar source in your bag while traveling.

Don't Let Fear Hold You Back

Advance planning means diabetes won't be the reason you miss an event that matters to you or a trip you've dreamed of. Most people with diabetes travel regularly and live a completely normal social life, with just a bit of extra organization.

Progress Doesn't Mean Perfection

Not every day will be perfect, and this plan won't be perfectly linear. The goal isn't to be flawless from day one, but to be, after thirty days, in a better place than you started — with steps you can actually keep up.