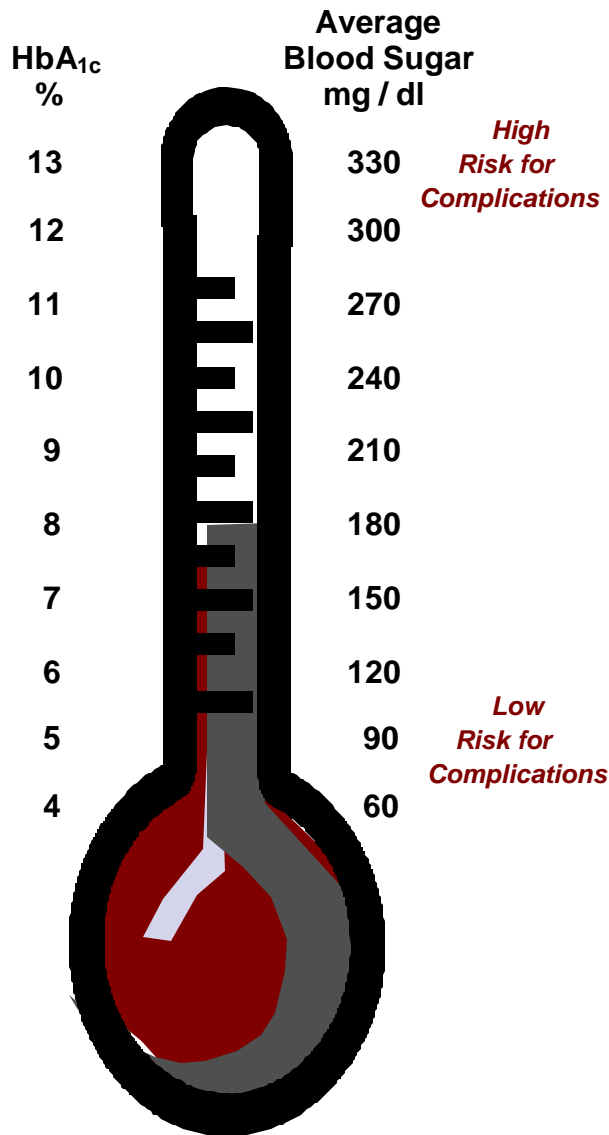


# DIABETES CONTROL MATTERS

## WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?

### Hemoglobin A<sub>1c</sub>



#### THE BEST TEST FOR EVALUATING BLOOD SUGAR CONTROL

The hemoglobin A<sub>1c</sub> test is the test that measures your average blood sugar level. As sugar travels through your blood stream, some of it sticks to the hemoglobin, a part of your red blood cells. The more sugar present in the blood over time, the more will get stuck to the hemoglobin.

The average life span of a red blood cell is about 90-120 days, so the hemoglobin A<sub>1c</sub> test can show the degree of diabetes control over the past 3 months.

Home blood sugar testing gives you information about your blood sugar at that moment, and the reading will be different in a matter of hours. It reflects the decisions made today with diet, exercise, and medicine.

The hemoglobin A<sub>1c</sub> test is valuable because it shows your average blood sugar level over time and changes only over several weeks. It takes into account the ups and downs of blood sugar that happen throughout the day. It helps you and your doctor know if your current treatment plan is working or needs adjustment.

The American Diabetes Association recommends that all people with diabetes have their hemoglobin A<sub>1c</sub> tested 2 to 4 times a year depending on their medications and current diabetes control. *Any decrease (improvement) in HbA<sub>1c</sub> reduces the risk for complications and should be your goal.* But, be sure to avoid allowing your blood sugar to go too low.

**Ask your doctor for an A<sub>1c</sub> test.**

AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION GOALS FOR BLOOD GLUCOSE		
	Normal	Goal
Before meals	<110 mg/dl	80-120 mg/dl
2 hours after meals	<140 mg/dl	<180 mg/dl
Bedtime	<120 mg/dl	100-140 mg/dl
Hemoglobin A <sub>1c</sub>	<6%	<7%

**LOURDES**  
Diabetes Center  
(607) 772-6269