

## Symptoms

The following symptoms are more likely to occur when blood glucose is 240 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dl) or higher. Not everyone will have these symptoms—and some people have no symptoms.

- Increased thirst (craving liquids).
- Dry mouth.
- Increased urination.
- Fatigue.
- Vision changes.
- Headaches.
- Increased hunger.
- Dry, itchy skin.
- Flushed face.
- Leg cramps.
- Abdominal pain.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Unexplained weight loss.
- Frequent infections.
- Wounds that won't heal.
- Numbness and/or tingling of the feet or hands.
- Unexplained mood swings.

## Diagnostic tests

There are laboratory tests your health care clinician can do to determine if you have diabetes.

- **Fasting plasma glucose test**—You have no food or liquids, besides water, for 8 to 12 hours before this blood test. A result of 126 mg/dl or greater on two occasions means a diagnosis of diabetes.
- **Random plasma glucose test**—No fasting is required for this blood test. A result of 200 mg/dl or more accompanied by symptoms of diabetes means you have the disease.

### American Diabetes Association guideline for fasting glucose

Result	Diagnosis
Lower than 100 mg/dl	Normal
100 to 125 mg/dl	Prediabetes
126 mg/dl or higher	Diabetes, if confirmed with a second fasting test

# HbA1c (or A1c) three-month test

The level of glycosylated hemoglobin (HbA1c or A1c) in your blood is an excellent measure of overall blood glucose control.

The HbA1c gives you an accurate picture of the amount of glucose in your blood over time—about three months. It does not change throughout the day, as your blood glucose does.

People *without* diabetes have HbA1c levels ranging from 4 to 6, depending on the lab method used.

According to the U.S. government's National Healthcare Quality Report, about 49 percent of people with diabetes have optimal control of their blood glucose, which is an HbA1c level below 7.

By decreasing your average blood glucose by only 30 points, you can lower your HbA1c one percent.

By decreasing your HbA1c by one percent, you can decrease the risk of severe diabetes complications by at least 25 percent.

Your health care clinician will recommend how often you should have this lab test done.

The HbA1c test is not used to *diagnose* diabetes.

If your HbA1c is (percent):	Your average blood glucose is:*
6	120-149
7	150-179
8	180-209
9	210-239
10	240-269
11	270-300

*\*If your HbA1c is over 11 percent, your average blood glucose is over 300.  
The ranges in this chart are averages and may vary depending on the lab method used.*

## What the results mean

HbA1c (percent)	Risk for chronic complications
Lower than 7.0	Low
7.0-7.9	Medium
7.9 or higher	High