

What should you do if you have both high blood pressure and diabetes?

To reduce your risk of health problems, work with your doctor to:

- Keep your blood pressure below 130/80 mm Hg.³
- Have an A1C test at least twice a year to check your blood sugar levels over the past two to three months. The target A1C for most people with diabetes is less than 7.
- Keep your cholesterol under control. Have it checked at least once a year.

Many of the things you do to control your blood pressure will also help keep your diabetes in check:

Reach and Maintain a Healthy Weight

Being overweight makes it harder for your body to make and use insulin. Extra weight can also contribute to high blood pressure.²

- Talk with your doctor to find your ideal weight.
- If you need to lose weight, work with your healthcare provider to design an eating plan that works for you.
- An ideal diet should be low in fat, calories, and salt, and high in fruits and vegetables.¹

Be Physically Active

Exercise can help lower your blood sugar and blood pressure.¹

- Choose activities you enjoy.
- Aim for 30 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise daily.
- Brisk walking, water aerobics and riding a bike are all good forms of moderate exercise.⁴

Take Your Prescribed Medications

If you need medicine to control your blood pressure or diabetes, take them as your doctor prescribed. You may also need medicine to lower your cholesterol.

- If you have trouble remembering to take your pills, post a reminder on the refrigerator or by the bathroom mirror.
- You can also set your watch alarm or ask a family member or friend to remind you.

By following your treatment plan, you can enjoy a healthy and active life, while managing your high blood pressure and diabetes at the same time.

Sources:

1. American Diabetes Association. High Blood Pressure (Hypertension). <http://www.diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/complications/high-blood-pressure-hypertension.html>. Accessed April 15, 2011.
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3. National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse. Prevent Diabetes Problems: Keep Your Heart and Blood Vessels Healthy. http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/complications_heart/index.htm. Accessed April 18, 2011.
4. CDC. How much physical activity do adults need? Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/adults.html>. Accessed April 25, 2011.

If you have diabetes and high blood pressure, you are at increased risk for serious health problems. But with the right treatment and lifestyle changes, many people are able to prevent or delay these problems.¹

