Intermountain® Healthcare

Diabetes in Remission

Great news! Your blood glucose has gone down

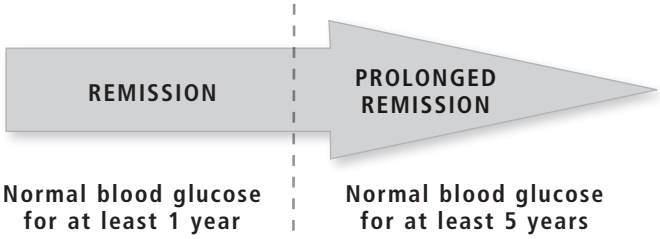
Congratulations! You've been taking care of yourself and your blood glucose has gone down. Your blood tests show that your blood glucose has been in the "normal" range for a number of months. This means your diabetes may be in remission.

Normal blood glucose
HbA1c less than 5.7% and Fasting blood glucose less than 100 mg/dL

What is remission?

Being in remission means you no longer have the signs of diabetes. Technically, diabetes never goes away. You are in **remission** when your blood glucose has been normal for at least a year. When your blood glucose has been normal for at least 5 years, you are in **prolonged remission.**

You'll remain in remission or prolonged remission as long as your blood glucose remains in the normal range.



What does this mean for my health?

Now that you're in remission, your health risks have gone down. Compared to when your blood glucose was high, you now have a lower risk of stroke, heart problems, kidney problems, foot problems, and vision problems. Because you have had diabetes, however, your risk of these problems is still higher than someone who never had diabetes.

Great job making choices that brought your blood glucose down! You and your doctor can decide whether to make changes to the way you manage and monitor your health.

How long do I need to keep doing diabetes tests and measures?

When your blood glucose was high, your doctor recommended a regular schedule of monitoring your blood glucose, cholesterol, blood pressure, kidney function, and eyes.

How long do you need to keep doing these things? Not enough research has been done yet to clearly answer this question. In the future we will likely know for sure. Currently experts at the American Diabetes Association recommend that you continue to do the same monitoring you did before **until you are in prolonged remission** — when your glucose has been normal for 5 years.

You and your doctor should consider your personal health risks and decide on the best plan for you. Review the list of tests on page 2 of this handout and consider each one.

How should I monitor my health now?

Consider the recommendations in the table below for someone with diabetes. You and your doctor can choose the best plan for you going forward. **For each test, you can choose to:**

- Continue to monitor your health in the way you did when your blood glucose was high.
- Monitor your health in the same way as a person who has not had diabetes, according to your personal risk factors.

Recommended plan for someone with diabetes	The care you choose when your diabetes is in remission	
	Continue with the same plan	**Change plan**
HbA1c test once a year (many doctors recommend continuing this)	❑	❑ Notes: _____
Cholesterol test once a year, and take a cholesterol-lowering medication if recommended	❑	❑ Notes: _____
Blood pressure managed to 140/80	❑	❑ Manage to: _____
Urine test once a year to check your kidney health	❑	❑ Notes: _____
Eye exam every 1 to 2 years to watch for signs of retinopathy	❑	❑ Notes: _____

Keep up your healthy lifestyle

You've done a great job to get to this point. Whatever choices you made above, one thing remains the same. **The key to keeping your diabetes in remission is to keep up your healthy lifestyle.** Continue to make healthy lifestyle choices, including:

- Controlling your diet carefully by limiting processed carbohydrates like breads and pasta, eating plenty of fruits and vegetables, having consistent eating patterns, and controlling portion sizes.
- Being physically active day. Aim for at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity activity (like a brisk walk). Add in strength training twice a week.
- Maintaining a healthy weight

Keep up the good work!

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