

# Diabetic Monthly

January 2013

Gunnison Valley Diabetes Self-Management Education Program  
45 East 100 North Gunnison, Utah 84634

## January Support Groups: *A1C Testing*

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January is the perfect time to check your A1C. We will be offering this test at our January support groups in Gunnison and Monroe. We are offering it at a reduced cost of \$5.00. We can only accept cash or checks. Insurance companies will not be billed for this test. We invite everyone in the community who may be concerned that they may have diabetes to come in and be tested. The A1C test will measure your average blood glucose for the past two to three months. The American Diabetic Association recommends getting your A1C checked at least every six months. The results will give you a good idea of how well your diabetes is being managed. If your last A1C was greater than 7.0 we highly recommend you have it re-checked every 3 months. We are going through a transition period with our Diabetic program. We want you to know we are here to answer your questions. Please call us with any concerns at 1-435-528-3955. We look forward to seeing you all for the support group.

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*Dr. Steven Embley  
will be teaching our  
February support  
group.*

*Melissa Argyl our  
Registered  
Dietician will be  
teaching our March  
Support Group*

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## Support Group Schedules

### Gunnison Support Group

Gunnison Homecare building at 45 East 100 North Gunnison

January 15, 2013 at 3:00 – 4:00 pm

### Monroe Support Group

South Sevier Senior Center at 140 West 100 South Monroe

January 15, 2013 at 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

## Top 10 Benefits of Being Active

### Tip of the Day

#### Question

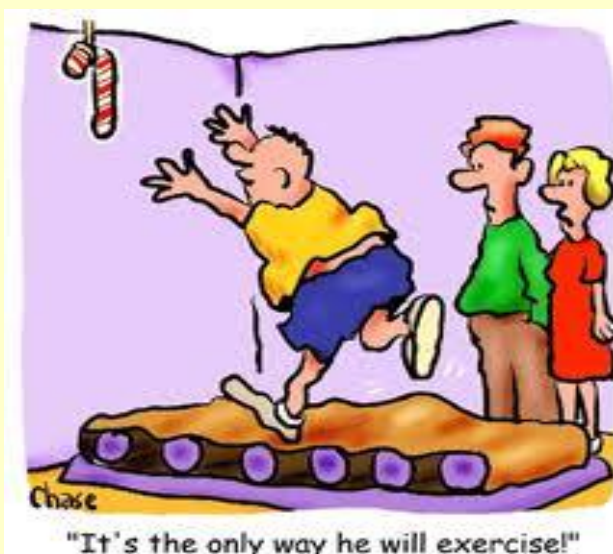
Can exercise cause my blood glucose to drop hours later?

#### Answer

Yes.

Depending on the intensity and duration of your activity, you can burn glucose for up to 24 hours after exercise. With long or hard exercise, you use glucose stored in your liver for fuel. After the exercise is over, your body wants to replenish those glucose levels as soon as possible. If there is no food available, the glucose is pulled from your blood stream, which can cause hypoglycemia. To help prevent low blood glucose, check your blood glucose about every 45 minutes after a hard workout and gauge whether your blood glucose is going down, going up, or leveling off. If it is going down, eat a few carbs and keep checking until you level off.

1. Improve blood **glucose management**. Activity makes your body more sensitive to the insulin you make. Activity also burns glucose (calories). Both actions lower blood glucose.
2. Lower blood pressure. Activity helps your heart pump stronger and slower.
3. Improve blood fats. Exercise can raise good **cholesterol** (HDL) and lower bad cholesterol (LDL) and triglycerides. These changes are heart healthy.
4. Take less insulin or diabetes pills. Activity can lower blood glucose and weight. Both of these may lower how much insulin or diabetes pills you need to take.
5. **Lose weight** and keep it off. Activity burns calories. If you burn enough calories, you'll trim a few pounds. Stay active and you'll keep the weight off.
6. Lower risk for other health problems. Reduce your risk of a heart attack or **stroke**, some cancers, and bone loss.
7. Gain more energy and sleep better. You'll get better sleep in less time and have more energy, too.
8. Reduce **stress**, anxiety, and depression. Work out or walk off daily stress.
9. Build stronger bones and muscles. Weight-bearing activities, such as walking, make bones stronger. Strength-training activities, such as lifting light weights (or even cans of beans), make muscles strong.
10. Be more flexible. Move easier when you are active.



## A1C

- The A1C test measures your average blood glucose control for the past 2 to 3 months.
- It is determined by measuring the percentage of glycated hemoglobin, or HbA1c, in the blood.
- Check your A1C twice year at a minimum, or more frequently when necessary.
- It does not replace daily self-testing of blood glucose.

Checking your blood glucose at home with a meter tells you what your blood sugar level is at any one time, but suppose you want to know how you're doing overall. The A1C test gives you a picture of your average blood glucose control for the past 2 to 3 months. The results give you a good idea of how well your diabetes treatment plan is working.

In some ways, the A1C test is like a baseball player's season batting average, it tells you about a person's overall success. Neither a single day's blood test results nor a single game's batting record gives the same big picture. You may also be interested in our book, [50 Things You Need to Know About Diabetes](#).

How does it help diabetes control?

These are some ways the A1C test can help you manage your diabetes:

- Confirm self-testing results or blood test results by the doctor.
- Judge whether a treatment plan is working.
- Show you how healthy choices can make a difference in diabetes control.

How does it work?

Hemoglobin, a protein that links up with sugars such as glucose, is found inside red blood cells. Its job is to carry oxygen from the lungs to all the cells of the body. When diabetes is uncontrolled, you end up with too much glucose in the bloodstream. This extra glucose enters your red blood cells and links up (or glyicates) with molecules of hemoglobin. The more excess glucose in your blood, the more hemoglobin gets glyicated. By measuring the percentage of A1C in the blood, you get an overview of your average blood glucose control for the past few months.

How does the A1C test look backward?

Suppose your blood sugar was high last week. What happened? More glucose hooked up (glycated) with your hemoglobin. This week, your blood glucose is back under control. Still, your red blood cells carry the "memory" of last week's high blood glucose in the form of more A1C.

This record changes as old red blood cells in your body die and new red blood cells (with fresh hemoglobin) replace them. The amount of A1C in your blood reflects blood sugar control for the past 120 days, or the lifespan of a red blood cell.

In a person who does not have diabetes, about 5% of all hemoglobin is glyicated. For someone with diabetes and high blood glucose levels, the A1C level is higher than normal. How high the A1C level rises depends on what the average blood glucose level was during the past weeks and months. Levels can range from normal to as high as 15% or more if diabetes is badly out of control for a long time.

You should have had your A1C level measured when your diabetes was diagnosed or when treatment for diabetes was started. To watch your overall glucose control, your doctor should measure your A1C level at least twice a year. There are times when you need to have your A1C level tested about every 3 months. If you change diabetes treatment, such as start a new medicine, or if you are not meeting your blood glucose goals, you and your doctor will want to keep a closer eye on your control.

What are the limitations?

Although the A1C test is an important tool, it can't replace daily self-testing of blood glucose for those who need it. A1C tests don't measure your day-to-day control. You can't adjust your insulin on the basis of your A1C tests. That's why your blood sugar checks and your log of results are so important to staying in effective control.

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*“Although the A1C test is an important tool, it can't replace daily self-testing of blood glucose for those who need it.”*

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## Quick-Simmer Chili Soup

### Ingredients

6 oz reduced-fat breakfast sausage  
1 16-oz can dark kidney beans, rinsed and drained  
1 14.5-oz can stewed diced tomatoes with Mexican seasonings  
1 cup finely chopped green bell pepper  
1 cup water  
1 1/2 tsps sugar or pourable sugar substitute  
1 tsp ground cumin



### Nutrition Information

Exchange/Choices

1 Starch

2 Vegetable

1 Med-Fat Meat

1/2 Fat

Calories: 225

Calories from Fat: 65

Total Fat: 7.0 g

Saturated Fat: 2.2 g

Polyunsaturated Fat:

Monounsaturated Fat:

Cholesterol: 20 mg

Sodium: 670 mg

Total Carbohydrate: 29 g

Dietary Fiber: 7 g

Sugars: 8 g

Protein: 14 g

### Preparation

1. Place a large saucepan over medium heat until hot. Coat saucepan with cooking spray, add sausage, and cook 2 minutes or until beginning to lightly brown on edges, stirring constantly.
2. Add remaining ingredients, except 1/4 tsp of the cumin. Bring to boil over high heat, reduce heat, cover, and simmer 8 minutes.
3. Break up large pieces of tomato with fork. Remove from heat, stir in remaining 1/4 tsp cumin.

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