

Hemoglobin A1C (HbA1c) Test What is it for? When and why do I need it?

What does a Hemoglobin A1c test look for?

Hemoglobin is a protein in your blood that sugar sticks to. If your average blood sugar is high, a lot of sugar will be stuck on the hemoglobin. The HbA1c test shows an average of your blood sugar for the past three months.

Why is this average of blood sugar important?

People with diabetes are at high risk for heart attack, stroke, kidney damage and blindness. Averaging your blood sugar levels for three months shows if your current treatment plan is working. When your level is in one of the safe zones (green or yellow), you reduce the risk of having problems with your heart, kidneys and eyes.

How often do I need to have the HbA1c test done?

The HbA1c test should be done at least two times every year. You may need more testing, usually every third month, if your results are higher than the recommended level of 7 or less.

The chart below shows how the HbA1c Level compares to the Blood Sugar Level

Stay **OUT** of the **Red** Zone

Stay **IN** the **Green** Zone

	HbA1c Level		Average Blood Sugar Level
Red Zone	16	Stop! You need to talk with your doctor about your current diabetes care plan and possibly make some changes	420
	15		390
	14		360
	13		330
	12		300
	11		270
	10		240
	9		210
Yellow Zone	8	Caution! Be Careful	180
	7		150
Green Zone	6	Good Going! Great Control!	120
	5		90

STAY ON TARGET: 7 OR LESS