



American Heart Association.



# Life's Essential 8<sup>TM</sup> for Women

## KEEP BLOOD SUGAR IN CHECK

### Getting to Know Blood Glucose

The first step to managing your blood sugar is to understand what makes blood sugar levels rise.

- » **Glucose:** The carbohydrates and sugars in what you eat and drink turn into glucose (sugar) in the stomach and digestive system. Glucose can then enter the bloodstream.
- » **Insulin:** Insulin is a hormone made in the pancreas that helps the body's cells take up glucose from blood and lower blood sugar levels.

Type 2 diabetes occurs when glucose builds up in the blood instead of going into cells because:

- » The body develops "insulin resistance" and can't use the insulin it makes efficiently.
- » The pancreas gradually loses its ability to produce insulin.

The result can be a high blood glucose level.

### Know Your Numbers

Health care professionals can take blood glucose readings, help you understand your levels, and provide recommendations. If you're diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes, you will need to monitor your blood sugar level regularly to help keep your heart healthy.

[Know Diabetes by Heart](#) can help you manage Type 2 diabetes.

#### Fasting Blood Glucose Level, Diagnosis and What it Means:

- » Lower than 100 mg/dl – Normal – Healthy range.
- » 100 to 125 mg/dl – Prediabetes (Impaired Fasting Glucose) – At increased risk of developing diabetes.
- » 126 mg/dl or higher – Diabetes Mellitus (Type 2 diabetes) – At increased risk of heart disease or stroke.

## SECRETS FOR SUCCESS

*Remember these tips to help you stay on track with your blood sugar goals.*

### » EAT SMART

Eat a healthy diet of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, plant-based proteins, and lean animal proteins like fish and seafood. Limit sugary foods and drinks, red or processed meats, salty foods, refined carbohydrates and highly processed foods.

### » MOVE MORE

Being physically active can lower your risk of developing diabetes and help you manage the disease if you already have it.

### » STAY WELL WITH WEIGHT

Stay at a healthy weight to help prevent, delay, or manage diabetes.

### » DON'T BE TOXIC

Smoking, vaping, exposure to secondhand smoke or using tobacco can increase your risk of heart disease, stroke, many cancers and other chronic diseases. It may also make prediabetes and diabetes harder to manage.



## GO RED TOGETHER

Help other women in your life keep their blood sugar in check. Share resources and ways to rethink what you drink from [heart.org/sugar](http://heart.org/sugar).

Learn more at [goredforwomen.org/lifes8women](http://goredforwomen.org/lifes8women)

©2024 American Heart Association, Inc., a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit. All rights reserved. Go Red for Women is a registered trademark of AHA. The Red Dress Design is a trademark of U.S. DHHS. Unauthorized use prohibited.

Go Red for Women is nationally sponsored by

