



Quick-Start Checking Guide

**Learn how fasting and paired checks can
optimize diabetes management**

Checking your blood sugar often is the best way to know how well you're managing your diabetes. It allows you to see what's working in real time and when changes are needed. The timing of your blood sugar checks can tell you how different things like food, exercise, and sleep impact your readings. Here are some common blood sugar checking strategies and how they can help.

Step 1: Choose a checking pattern



Do Fasting Checks In the Morning

A fasting check is done first thing in the morning and is a measure of your blood sugar without food, water, or activity. This baseline number helps you and your doctor understand how your diabetes management plan is working.

This is helpful for those who are:



Not yet checking daily, but want to learn more about how their diabetes management plan is working.



Checking daily, but at random times.



GOAL

Check fasting blood sugar at least five times this week and tag "Before Breakfast" on your Teladoc Health meter.

Recommended target range:
80-130 mg/dL

or



Do Paired Checks Around Meals

Paired checking means checking your blood sugar before and then again 1-2 hours after a meal. Paired checking shows you how different factors like food choices, portion sizes, and meds impact blood sugar levels

This is helpful for those who:



Want to learn more about the relationship between food choices and blood sugar.



Count carbs to dose insulin.



Are newly diagnosed.



GOAL

Log your meals in the Teladoc Health app to see the relationship between your blood sugar and your meals.

Check before and 1-2 hours after one meal a day, or more than one meal a day, for at least 5 days this week. Tag "Before and after breakfast," "Before and after lunch," or "Before and after dinner" on your Teladoc Health meter.

Recommended target range:
Before meals: **80-130 mg/dL**
After meals: **80-180 mg/dL**

Other times when it is helpful to check your blood sugar are:



Before and after exercise



Before bed



When you are sick or not feeling well

Individual blood sugar targets vary by person. Talk to your doctor or [schedule a session](#) with a Teladoc Health coach about the checking pattern that makes the most sense for you.

Step 2: Understand Your Readings



If you had readings below 54 mg/dL your blood sugar is severely low. If you are able to swallow, eat or drink 15 grams of fast-acting sugar and recheck in 15 minutes. If you are not able to swallow, inject glucagon or contact emergency services.



If you had readings between 55-69 mg/dL your blood sugar is too low. Eat or drink 15 grams of fast-acting sugar and recheck in 15 minutes. See troubleshooting tips below.



If you had readings between 70-79 mg/dL no action is needed unless you have symptoms of low blood sugar (shaky, sweaty, dizzy).



If you had readings between 80-130 mg/dL before meals and 80-180 mg/dL after meals take note of your routine for the past 24 hours. It's working for you! Keep it up.



If you had readings between 131-180 mg/dL before a meal your blood sugar is above the recommended range. See the troubleshooting tips below.



If you had readings between 181-249 mg/dL before or after a meal your blood sugar is high. See the troubleshooting tips below.



If you had readings above 250 mg/dL your blood sugar is very high. Stay hydrated with water or other zero-calorie beverages. See troubleshooting tips below.

Step 3: Troubleshoot High and Low Readings

When your blood sugar is too high or too low, sometimes it takes some detective work to figure out the cause. But once you know what's going on, it's easier to prevent future spikes or dips.



Issue: Low Fasting and Pre-Meal Blood Sugar

CAUSE: Food

SOLUTIONS:

- Eat **balanced meals**.
- Avoid skipping meals.
- Have a **balanced snack** as needed.
- Adjust portion sizes as needed.

CAUSE: Alcohol

SOLUTIONS:

- Limit to one drink per day for women and two for men.
- Don't replace food with alcohol.
- Eat normally while drinking.
- Check blood sugar more often, especially before bed.
- If you're trending down or less than 70 mg/dL, **have a balanced snack** and treat low blood sugar according to guidelines.

CAUSE: **Medications** (especially insulin and sulfonylureas)

SOLUTIONS:

- Take your meds on time, as prescribed.
- Talk with your doctor if lows are frequent. Track what doses of medication you take and when you take it so you can share this information with your doctor.

CAUSE: **Activity**

SOLUTIONS:

- Check your blood sugar before, during, and after exercise.
- If it is below 90 mg/dL before exercise or bed, have a **balanced snack** to avoid going too low later on.
- After exercise, have a meal or balanced snack to refuel your body.



Issue: High Fasting and Pre-Meal Blood Sugar

CAUSE: **Food**

SOLUTIONS:

- Eat **balanced meals**.
- Experiment with different types of food.
- Lower carb intake and decrease portion sizes as needed.

CAUSE: **Medication**

SOLUTIONS:

- Take meds at the correct time.
- Take meds even when blood sugar is in target range.
- Ask your doctor if the dose or timing of your medication may need adjusting.
- If you don't take meds, ask the doctor if they might help.
- Never stop or adjust meds without talking to your doctor first.



Issue: High Fasting and Post-Meal Blood Sugar

CAUSE: **Food**

SOLUTIONS:

- Eat **balanced meals**.
- Try different food choices.
- Decrease portion sizes as needed.

CAUSE: **Medication**

SOLUTIONS:

- Take diabetes meds regularly, on time, and as prescribed.
- Take meds on time even when blood sugar is in range.



Some other factors that can cause high and low blood sugar levels are stress, non-diabetes medications like cold medicine and steroids, and hormones released in your body when you're sleeping.

Teladoc Health coaches can help you troubleshoot the reasons your blood sugar may be fluctuating. Message a coach through the Teladoc Health app or [schedule a session](#).