

Diabetes Management

When to Carry On and When to Seek Care



Safe Zone | Carry On

You're in the safe zone if:

- Your HbA1c is less than 7%
- Your fasting blood sugar levels are between 80–130 mg/dL
- Your blood sugar is less than 180 mg/dL one to two hours after your first bite of food
- Your blood pressure is less than 140/90 mmHg, or less than 130/80 mmHg if you have a history of heart disease
- You are able to do your normal activities

The safe zone means your blood sugars are under control and you should continue:

- Taking all medications as prescribed
- Routine blood glucose monitoring
- Following a healthy eating plan and activity routine
- Attending all healthcare appointments



Warning Zone | Monitor and Adjust

You're in the warning zone if:

- Your HbA1c is 7–9%
- Most of your fasting blood sugars are under 200 mg/dL
- Your average blood sugar is 140–200 mg/dL
- You've had more than one unexplained low blood sugar episode of less than 70 mg/dL
- Your blood pressure is greater than 140/90 mmHg
- You have some signs/symptoms of high or low blood sugar

Low: Headache, hunger, irritability, blurred vision, sweating

High: Increased thirst, increased urination, blurred vision, headaches, decreased concentration, sleepiness, confusion

The warning zone may indicate that you need to:

- Talk with your doctor about adjusting your medications
- Follow your healthy eating plan
- Follow a healthy activity routine of at least 150 minutes a week

Remember: If you are in the warning zone even though you are following a healthy eating plan, staying active, and taking your medications as directed, talk with your healthcare team about other possible changes that are needed.

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Medical Alert Zone | Seek Additional Care

You're in the medical alert zone if:

- Your HbA1c is greater than 9%
- Most of your fasting blood sugars are over 200 mg/dL
- Your average blood sugar is over 200 mg/dL
- You've had more than one unexplained low blood sugar episode of less than 54 mg/dL
- Your blood pressure is greater than 160/100 mmHg
- You have many signs/symptoms of high or low blood sugar

Low: Headache, hunger, irritability, blurred vision, sweating

High: Increased thirst, increased urination, blurred vision, headaches, decreased concentration, sleepiness, confusion

The medical alert zone is serious and you should:

- Call your healthcare team right away
- Call your doctor if your blood sugar is over 200 mg/dL for more than three consecutive, as you may have an infection or your medication may not be working properly
- Call 911 if your blood sugar is under 54 mg/dL

Remember: If your blood sugar is uncontrolled and you feel unsafe at home, go to the nearest emergency room or call 911.



<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/index.html>