



Ask the Nutritionist

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Dear Sandy,

I recently had some bloodwork done. My doctor said my blood sugar was high and wants me to come back for a hemoglobin A1C test. What type of test is this and should I be concerned?

Answer:

Thank you for your question. A hemoglobin A1C (HbA1C) test is a blood test that shows what your average blood sugar (glucose) level was over the past two to three months.

An A1C test is usually ordered when pre-diabetes or diabetes is suspected. To diagnose diabetes or prediabetes, the percentages commonly used are:

- **Normal:** A1C below 5.7%
- **Prediabetes:** A1C between 5.7% and 6.4%
- **Diabetes:** A1C of 6.5% or higher

Prediabetes affects approximately 88 million adults in the US. It is estimated 84% of people with prediabetes don't know they have it. The CDC reports that 15-30% of these individuals will develop type 2 diabetes within five years.

When caught early, prediabetes can effectively be "reversed" and reduce the chances of developing type 2 diabetes. Making careful food choices, increasing daily activity, and weight loss can improve blood sugar levels. However, some people may have underlying factors, such as family history and genetics that put them at a greater risk of developing type 2 diabetes. In this instance, it is important to pay attention to blood sugar levels and lifestyle choices.

MIIA's WellAware program offers programs on nutrition, weight loss and exercise to support healthy lifestyle choices. For more information, go to www.emiia.org

Also, MIIA/BCBSMA subscribers with a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes can access Good Health Gateway, a diabetes management program. Call or click here for more information: 800.643.8028, <http://miiagoodhealthgateway.com/>.

