

Diabetes Care in Older Adults

Everyday support for blood sugar, meals, and foot care

Easy guide for families

Why this matters

Diabetes care in later life often focuses on safety, consistency, and preventing complications. Family caregivers can help with meals, medicines, hydration, foot checks, and recognizing high or low blood sugar symptoms.

What you may notice

- Excess thirst or frequent urination
- Low energy, blurred vision, or confusion
- Shaking, sweating, or sudden weakness
- Slow-healing cuts or foot problems

Daily care at home

1. Follow the meal and medicine plan given by the care team.
2. Do not skip meals when insulin or diabetes pills are scheduled.
3. Keep quick treatment for low blood sugar nearby if recommended.
4. Check feet daily for redness, blisters, cuts, or swelling.
5. Encourage fluids unless there are fluid restrictions.

When to call the doctor

- Repeated low or high blood sugar readings
- Poor eating, vomiting, or diarrhea
- New foot wound, redness, or drainage
- Confusion or repeated falls
- Trouble using the meter, insulin, or supplies

Call 911 now if...

- Severe low blood sugar with fainting or seizure
- Trouble breathing, severe dehydration, or vomiting that will not stop.
- Chest pain or stroke warning signs
- Sudden confusion that is severe or rapidly worsening

Questions for the care team

- What is our target blood sugar range, and what is too low or too high?
- What should we do on sick days?
- How often should feet be checked by a professional?
- Can the plan be simplified to match the person's abilities?

Quick daily checklist

- Meals taken on time
- Medicines or insulin given
- Blood sugar checked
- Feet inspected
- Water or allowed fluids offered
- Symptoms of low sugar reviewed

Safety first

Older adults may show low blood sugar as confusion, weakness, sleepiness, or a fall. Learn the person's usual signs and keep the treatment plan in an easy-to-find place.

Caregiver reminder

Consistency matters more than perfection. A simple meal, medicine, and monitoring routine can prevent many urgent problems.

