

# HealthyActions

Achieving Your Goals for Healthy Living



## Your Heart and Diabetes

One sure step to a healthy heart is finding out if you have high blood sugar.

Diabetes (die-uh-bee-teez) is when too much sugar stays in the blood. The sugar should be carried to other cells in the body.



If you have diabetes, you are two to four times as likely to have heart disease than someone who doesn't have it.<sup>1</sup>

The problem is with the way the heart pumps blood through the body. If you have diabetes, you are more likely to have problems with high cholesterol (cole-es-ter-all)—a waxy film that can build up and slow your blood flow. That's why you should know your heart numbers, including cholesterol and triglyceride (try-gliss-er-ide) levels, blood sugar level, and blood pressure.

### If you are an adult with diabetes, you should be tested every year for:

**LDL "bad" cholesterol**—sometimes sticks to the walls of your arteries, the tubes that bring blood to your heart and your body. Over time, this blocks your arteries.

**HDL "good" cholesterol**—helps free some of the LDL cholesterol from the walls of your arteries. Then, your blood can flow better.

**Triglycerides** (try-gliss-er-ides)—fats you get from food and that your body makes. These can raise the risk of heart disease and blood vessel disease.

Your doctor can test for all of these. Talk to your doctor about the levels that are right for you. (Women usually need higher HDL cholesterol levels.)

If you have diabetes, you increase your risk of a heart attack, stroke, kidney disease, or poor blood flow. You can lower your chance of having a heart attack by keeping your LDL cholesterol low.<sup>2</sup> Get your cholesterol levels tested at least once a year.

### Keep your diabetes under control by checking:

your sugar level

your foot health

your eyes

### You can also:

eat healthy foods

exercise

take your medications



# Your Heart and Diabetes

Diabetes drugs may affect your cholesterol levels. They can even help you.



## How Diabetes Affects Cholesterol

Diabetes tends to lower “good” cholesterol and raise triglycerides and “bad” cholesterol. That means your heart health is going in the wrong direction.

If this happens to you, you could also be at risk for insulin (in-suh-lin) resistance. Insulin controls your blood sugar.

Insulin resistance is when your body doesn’t control your blood sugar well.

### As a result, in people with diabetes<sup>3</sup>:

Heart disease may occur earlier in life.

Heart disease is 2 to 4 times as common.

Heart disease is more likely to be serious.

## What Can You Do?

If your levels are still high, you may also need to take a diabetes drug. Ask your doctor how diabetes drugs may affect your cholesterol levels. Sometimes, they can even help you lower your cholesterol.

**Lower your cholesterol, exercise, and eat healthy foods.**

### References

1. American Heart Association. “Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease.” Available at: <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3044762>. Accessed April 25, 2007.
2. American Heart Association. “Cholesterol Medications.” Available at: <http://www.s2mw.com/heartofdiabetes/cholesterolmeds.html>. Accessed April 25, 2007.
3. American Diabetes Association. “Cholesterol, Heart Disease and Diabetes.” Available at: <http://www.diabetes.org/diabetes-forecast/cholesterol.jsp>. Accessed April 25, 2007.

**Innoviant**<sup>SM</sup>  
A Prescription Solutions Company

P.O. Box 8082  
Wausau, WI 54402-8082  
[www.innoviant.com](http://www.innoviant.com)