

Bonnie Huang Hall, MD PhD  
510 624 9137  
[www.bonniehuanghall.com](http://www.bonniehuanghall.com)

## Diabetes

Diabetes is high blood sugar. Our bodies naturally reduce sugar levels with a hormone called insulin. Diabetes results when there is not enough insulin to bring down the blood sugar to normal levels. High blood sugar is bad for your health because it causes eye damage, nerve damage, vessel damage, and kidney damage. This can lead to blindness, numbness and amputations, heart attacks, or kidney failure, if untreated. You can treat diabetes with diet, exercise, and medications.



**Diet:** eat less carbohydrates, switch to whole grains (whole wheat bread, brown rice, or whole wheat pasta). Choose low glycemic foods that prevent the vicious cycle of blood sugar spike, insulin spikes, and then intense hunger pains – which make you eat more- resulting again in blood sugar spikes. Choose low glycemic index foods: <https://fifty50foods.com/Learn/Low-Glycemic-Diet-GI-Food-List>  
Recipes also found at <https://www.diabetesfoodhub.org/>

**Exercise:** Exercise after meals to bring sugar down. Brisk walking 30 min 5x a week is recommended

### Monitor Checklist

A1c every 3-6 mo, cholesterol at least yearly, and see the ophthalmologist every year. Get a foot exam every year as diabetes affects nerves on your feet more, which can lead to numbness and injury.

Test	Recommended Checkup times	Result and Date of last checkup
Hga1c (3 mo blood sugar average)	3 mo if uncontrolled 6 mo if controlled	
LDL (Bad cholesterol)	Every year if controlled	
Microalbumin (urine protein)	Every year if normal	
Ophthalmologist visit	Every year if controlled	
Foot Exam	Every year	

**Supplements:** Take your medications as prescribed. However, if you choose to take supplements – take as an addition to your healthy regimen, and don't forget to tell the doctor what you are taking. There is mixed evidence on supplements, however, cinnamon, chromium, and bitter melon may show promise in helping to lower blood sugar levels.