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Managing Diabetes

In North America, people who manage diabetes are getting better at meeting their care goals, but improvement is very slow and about half of diabetics are still not reaching their targets for blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol.

So, what are we aiming for?

- A1C below 7%,
- Blood pressure below 130/80 mm Hg,
- LDL cholesterol below 2.0 mmol/L
- No smoking.

GI Blues

The Glycemic Index is a useful tool to assess the quality of the carbohydrates diabetics consume. Carbohydrates, converted to sugar in the blood stream, are necessary sources of energy. The trick is to manage how much is taken in and the impact on blood sugar.

You can find out what's good by checking out: <http://www.the-gi-diet.org/glycemicindexchart>

Aim to use foods from the green zone rather than the yellow or red zones.

Read the Label

Food labels hold valuable information for everyone – but particularly for diabetics.

However, many people find the information provided overwhelming. Here's what to do:

- Pay attention to the serving size, especially if comparing foods.
- Aim for little or no fat, especially saturated and trans-fats.
- Choose low salt, ideally, less than 1 mg for each calorie of the serving.
- Fibre is good – a good source is 5 gm or more per serving.
- Minimize sugar, which can directly lead to elevated blood sugar.
- Consume whole grains or complex carbohydrates.
- Compare the grams of carbohydrate to the grams of fibre. A desirable ratio is 10-to-1, or less.

Our pharmacists have a wealth of information on living with diabetes at their disposal – and would be more than happy to share and translate. Visit us soon!