

family health



Kern Family
Health Care

The Friendly Face

Summer 2006

Things to Know The A1C of diabetes

When you have diabetes, you need to test your blood sugar at home.

But you also need to have an A1C test at your doctor's office at least twice a year.

The A1C is a test that measures your average blood sugar over the past three months.

It's the best way to see how your treatment plan is working.

The A1C test is quick and easy. The lab checks a sample of blood from your finger or arm.

The more sugar you have in your blood, the higher your A1C reading will be.

For most people with diabetes, a good A1C is less than 7.

If your number is higher than 8, ask your doctor what you can do to lower it.



Sources: American Diabetes Association;
National Institutes of Health



Starting your baby on solids

Around 6 months of age, most babies are ready for a big change. They're ready to eat solid foods.

If you watch carefully, they'll let you know they're ready. They can:

- Hold their heads upright.
- Open their mouths for a spoon and close their lips around it.
- Swallow most of their food—rather than pushing it out with their tongues.
- Try to chew.

Most babies enjoy rice cereal for their first food, followed by oatmeal and barley cereal. Then they're ready for meat, vegetables and fruits.

Let a few days pass between every new food that you serve.

And always use a tiny spoon to feed your baby. Putting solids in a baby bottle can cause choking.

If your baby fusses or turns away when you first offer solids, don't worry. Just go back to only

nursing or offering formula. Then try again in a week or two.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics; Baylor College of Medicine

Si necesita esta información en español, llame al 1-800-391-2000.

Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Tacoma, WA
Permit No. 1066



A guide for staying healthy

One of the best things you can do for yourself and your family is to take care of your health.

Screening tests are a good way to do that.

Some tests help your doctor keep an eye on your heart health. Others can find diseases early, when they're usually easier to treat.

Some screening tests can spot diseases early, when they're usually easier to treat.

Some of the more common screening tests are listed below. You might need to start tests earlier if you have certain risk factors. For instance, you might need to have your cholesterol checked before age 45 if you smoke or have diabetes.

Take this list to your next doctor's visit. He or she can talk to you about which tests you might need and when.

Sources: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; National Women's Health Information Center

TEST	WHEN TO START	HOW OFTEN TO RECHECK
Blood pressure	Age 18	At least every 2 years
Cholesterol	Age 45, or earlier if you have risk factors	Ask your doctor.
Blood sugar (for diabetes)	Age 45, or earlier if you have risk factors	Every 3 years. Ask your doctor.
Mammogram	Age 40	Every 1 or 2 years. Ask your doctor.
Pelvic exam and Pap smear	Age 21, or when you start having sex	Every 1 to 3 years. Ask your doctor.
Colorectal cancer tests (includes rectal exam, fecal occult blood test, sigmoidoscopy, colonoscopy)	Age 50, possibly earlier for rectal exam	Fecal occult blood test is yearly. Others range from every 5 to 10 years. Ask your doctor.
Chlamydia	When you start having sex	Ask your doctor.
Sexually transmitted diseases	Before having sex, both you and your partner should be tested.	Before having sex, both you and your partner should be tested. Retest with each new partner.
Bone density test (for bone health)	Age 65, or earlier if you have risk factors	Ask your doctor about repeat testing.
Thyroid	Age 35	Every 5 years



To learn more about your child's health, call our Health Education Department at 1-800-391-2000.

your child from many serious diseases.

Be sure to check with your doctor about which shots your child needs and when.

Eye and ear exams.

Your child's eyes and ears are important classroom tools.

You should have your child's vision and hearing tested before he or she first starts school. And have it checked again if your child ever has problems seeing or hearing.

A dental checkup. A sore tooth can make it hard for your child to focus on school. A regular visit to the dentist is a good way to make sure your child's teeth are in good shape.

A sports physical. School sports can be good for kids. Sports can improve their self-esteem and teach them new skills.

But before your child begins play, make sure he or she is in good health. Schedule a physical exam for your child before school begins.

Emergency information.

It's important to give your child's school your emergency contact phone numbers.

Make sure school officials know about any health problems your child has, such as asthma or diabetes. You should also tell the school about any medicines your child may need to take during the school day.

You can help your child do well in school by taking care of his or her health needs before and during the school year.

Remember, children need to feel their best in order to learn.

A health checklist

Ready for school

There's more to the start of a new school year than buying paper and pencils.

You also need to be sure your child arrives at school in good health.

Your child's back-to-school checklist should include:

A doctor visit. A checkup lets your doctor review your child's growth and overall health.

It's also a good time for you to ask questions about your child's health.

Immunizations. Shots aren't much fun. But they do protect

When should a sick child stay home?

You want your child to be in school every day. But there are times when your son or daughter is sick and might be better off at home.

Knowing when your child is too sick to go to school can be tricky. But sending your child to school when he or she is sick is not a good idea.

Staying home from

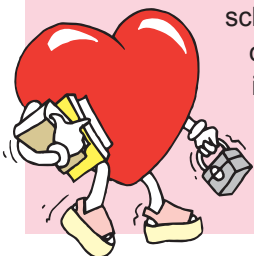
school is best if your child:

- Has a fever.
- Doesn't feel well enough to participate in class activities.
- May spread an illness to others.
- Has diarrhea or is vomiting.
- Has mucus or pus draining from an eye.
- Has a sore throat.
- Is very tired, pale or confused.
- Doesn't want to eat.

If you're not sure if your child should go to school, check with your doctor.

And once your child returns to school after being sick, make sure the school has a phone number to reach you.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics



heart health



Food fuels your heart

Next time you're at the grocery store, do your heart a favor. Before visiting the checkout stand, check out what you have in your shopping cart.

Did you choose enough whole-grain foods? Do you have a good mix of fruits and vegetables? How about dairy products? Did you pick low-fat or fat-free milk and cheese?

If so, your heart thanks you.

Picking the right food is a good way to control your cholesterol, blood pressure and weight. If

those numbers get too high, you're at greater risk for a heart attack.

You can help your heart by following these tips:

Get enough grain. Breads, cereals, pasta and rice, especially the whole-grain kinds, are the basis of a healthy diet. Eat six or more servings a day.

Pile on the fruits and vegetables. Eat five or more servings a day. Choose a variety of colors.

Don't forget dairy products. Select fat-free or low-fat milk, cheese and yogurt. Most adults need three or four servings a day.

Include lean protein. Beans, skinless chicken and

lean meat are good sources. Try to eat baked or grilled fish twice a week. You want to get a total of 5 to 7 ounces of lean protein a day.

Eating the right foods is a good way to protect your health.

Cut down on sugar, fat and salt. Limit soft drinks and candy. Curb your use of full-fat milk. Cut your salt use to about a teaspoon a day.

Sources: American Dietetic Association; American Heart Association

Protect children from heart problems

Teaching your children healthy habits now can help them avoid heart disease later.

Three of the best habits are to maintain a healthy weight, stay active and not smoke.

How can you help? Here are a few ideas:

- Offer kids a variety of fruits and vegetables.
- Serve whole grains.
- Use low-fat or fat-free dairy products.
- Keep serving healthy foods, even if kids don't like them at first.
- Serve broiled or baked fish twice a week.
- Don't give kids more than 6 ounces of juice a day. Water is a better choice.
- Limit salty or sugary snacks and fried foods.
- Don't force kids to finish meals if they're not hungry.
- Encourage at least 60 minutes of fun physical activity each day.
- Limit TV and computer time to less than two hours a day.
- Talk about the dangers of smoking.

Don't forget: Kids learn best when parents set a good example.

Source: American Heart Association



family
health

FAMILY HEALTH is published as a community service for the friends and patrons of KERN FAMILY HEALTH CARE, 9700 Stockdale Highway, Bakersfield, CA 93311, telephone 1-800-391-2000.

Information in FAMILY HEALTH comes from a wide range of medical experts. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your health care provider. Models may be used in photos and illustrations.

Editorial Board

CEO
Medical Director
Supervisor, Marketing and Public Affairs
Quality Improvement Manager

Carol Sorrell, R.N.
Lon A. Graves, M.D., F.A.C.O.G.
Louis Iturriria
Linda Howells, R.N.

Copyright © 2006 Coffey Communications, Inc.

WHN18845p