

Monitoring

Individuals with prediabetes and type 2 diabetes are more likely to have [high blood cholesterol](#), [high blood pressure](#), and, of course, high blood sugar. They are also likely to be overweight/obese. All of these factors increase the risk of developing cardiovascular disease and other serious health complications.

If you have prediabetes or diabetes, it is crucial to carefully monitor blood cholesterol, blood pressure, [blood sugar](#), and weight as a first step in controlling the disease and improving the quality of your health.

Maybe you are not experiencing any symptoms. Why is monitoring these numbers still important? Keep in mind that there are no symptoms for people with prediabetes, and diabetes may be severe before there are any warning signs. Likewise, people have no way of knowing they have high cholesterol or high blood pressure without being tested.

"Next time you visit your health care provider, be sure to ask for your critical health numbers to be screened and develop a plan, which may include [diet](#), [exercise](#) and [medication](#), to manage them," said Daniel W. Jones, M.D. and past president of the American Heart Association. Find out what else Dr. Jones has to say about monitoring your health numbers by [watching this video](#).

How Critical Numbers are Monitored

By drawing blood, your health care provider can conduct a blood lipid profile to check your blood cholesterol and [glucose tests](#) to check your blood sugar. Your blood pressure and weight are even easier to check with a blood pressure monitor and scales respectively.

Between doctor visits, you can monitor and track your blood sugar, blood pressure, and body weight. Easy-to-use home glucose monitors, blood pressure monitors, and bathroom scales are readily available at large discount retailers and pharmacies. By keeping track of your numbers on your own, you will be able to better manage your health.

Target Numbers

It is recommended that individuals keep these critical health numbers within the following ranges:

Critical Health Marker	Recommended Range	More Information
Blood Cholesterol	Diabetes	Blood Pressure

<p>The amount of sugar (glucose) in the blood</p>	<p>HbA1c (glycosylated hemoglobin) less than 6%</p> <p>Diabetes</p> <p>HbA1c (glycosylated hemoglobin) less than 7%</p> <p>Pre-meal glucose – 70 to 130 mg/dl</p> <p>Post-meal peak glucose - <180 mg</p>	<p>amount of glycosylated hemoglobin (HbA1c) in your blood. An HbA1c test gives you a picture of your average blood sugar control for the past 2 to 3 months and provides you with a better idea of how well your diabetes treatment plan is working.</p> <p>Your healthcare provider will advise you if these ranges are too strict for your condition.</p>
<p>Blood pressure The force of blood against the arteries when the heart beats and rests</p>	<p>Less than 130/80 mm Hg</p>	<p>Blood pressure is typically measured by a device that uses the height of a column of mercury (Hg) to reflect the circulating systolic and diastolic pressures. Systolic pressure (top number) is the peak pressure in the arteries, and diastolic pressure (bottom number) is the lowest pressure.</p> <p>Get more information about high blood pressure.</p>
<p>Blood cholesterol A waxy substance produced by the liver</p>	<p>A total cholesterol score of less than 180 mg/dL is considered optimal.</p>	<p>Because cholesterol is unable to dissolve in the blood, it has to be transported to and from the cells by carriers called lipoproteins. Low-density lipoprotein (or LDL) cholesterol, is known as "bad" cholesterol; high-density lipoprotein (or HDL) cholesterol, is known as "good" cholesterol.</p>

		cholesterol.
Body weight	A body mass index (BMI) of 18.6-24.9 Waistline smaller than 35 inches for women and 40 inches for men	A person's ideal body weight varies by gender, age, height, and frame. Your body mass index (BMI) and waist circumference provide good indicators of whether you are at a healthy weight. Use our BMI calculator tool . Get more information about weight management .

If your critical numbers are not at the target level, work with your health care provider to develop a plan to reach these goals.

Tracking Tools

The American Heart Association has a variety of tools available to help you track these critical health numbers including:

- [Glucose Tracker](#)
- [Blood Pressure Tracker](#)