



## What should I do?

Check that you are taking all these steps to care for your health and get the best from your medicines.

- Ask your doctor about checks of your blood sugar, kidneys, cholesterol, blood pressure, eyes and feet.
- Ask your doctor about a care plan.
- Know how to take your medicines properly – at the right time and in the right dose.
- Keep taking your medicines regularly. Don't stop without first discussing it with your doctor.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist about possible side effects from your medicines and what to do if they occur, and
- Tell your doctor regularly about all the medicines you are taking. This includes medicines purchased from health food shops, supermarkets and pharmacies.

Take this brochure and speak to your doctor about your diabetes and caring for your health.

## Veterans' MATES

[www.dva.gov.au/health/veteransmates](http://www.dva.gov.au/health/veteransmates)

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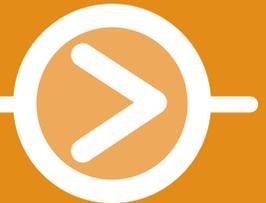


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## Veterans' MATES

Caring for your health if you have diabetes

Get the best from your medicines





# diabetes

## Diabetes and your health

Diabetes can cause damage to your kidneys, heart, feet and eyes. You can help to reduce this damage by continually monitoring your health with regular tests and checks.

Which test or check?	How often?
A blood pressure check.	At least every 3 months
A blood test called HbA1c, which measures how well your sugar levels were controlled over the past 10 to 12 weeks.	At least every 6 months
A foot check which tells if diabetes is causing damage to the nerves and blood supply of your feet.	At least twice a year
A test for protein in the urine that tells if diabetes is affecting your kidneys.	At least once a year <i>(more often if any problems found)</i>
A blood test to measure your cholesterol level.	At least once a year
An eye check to tell if diabetes is causing problems with your eyesight.	At least once every 2 years

You may need to have these tests more often depending on your diabetes, other medical conditions and medicines. You should discuss this with your doctor. If you have problems between tests, see your doctor straight away.



# medicines

## Medicines and your health

Medicines for diabetes can prevent or reduce problems by:

- lowering your blood sugar
- keeping your kidneys healthy
- lowering your cholesterol
- lowering your blood pressure
- lowering your risk of heart disease, and
- preventing damage to your eyes and feet.

Many people with diabetes need more than one medicine to reduce their risk of health problems.



# tips

## Healthy choices

Lifestyle choices can help your health. Discuss with your doctor:

- quitting smoking
- eating a balanced and nutritious diet
- maintaining a healthy body weight
- limiting salt and alcohol intake
- ensuring adequate fluid intake
- taking part in regular physical activity

Take this brochure and speak to your doctor about how you can best care for your health if you have diabetes.

