

Glycohemoglobin A1c (HbA1c)

The Glycohemoglobin A1c or HbA1c test is an important test for those suffering from diabetes. This test monitors a diabetic's blood sugar (glucose) over time. Hemoglobin is a substance within red blood cells that carries oxygen throughout your body. When hemoglobin is made, a portion of it will contain glucose and the amount of this "glycohemoglobin" is directly related to the level of glucose in the blood at that time. The glycohemoglobin A1c test can determine the average amount of sugar in the blood over a period of time – usually about the last 3 months.

What should I do with my results?

It is always recommended that you meet with a doctor to determine what your laboratory test results mean to you. Your doctor will review all of your test results and, combined with your health history, will be able to provide an accurate picture of your health status.

If any of your results were abnormal or out-of-range: Abnormal results could indicate that your diabetes is not being controlled and you may be at risk for complications. Keeping A1c levels close to normal is a key part of diabetes care. The American Diabetic Association recommends that diabetics keep their A1c levels at less than 7%. As with any abnormal results, it's important that you discuss their implications with your physician.

If your results were within normal range: Because your test results give a measure of how well your diabetes is being controlled, they can provide important information for your physician. Talk with your doctor about your results and how you can use them to better manage your diabetes.