

Common terms

Hemoglobin A1c

A lab test that measures one's average blood glucose level over the previous 3 months.

Beta cell

The cells (located in the pancreas) that make insulin.

Blood glucose/blood sugar level (BG/BS)

The level of glucose/sugar in one's blood. Blood glucose levels are measured in milligrams per deciliter, or mg/dL.

Blood glucose meter (glucometer, meter)

The machine people with diabetes use to check blood glucose levels.

Body mass index (BMI)

A measurement that determines body fat amount by comparing height to weight.

Carbohydrate

The macronutrient in food that provides energy and causes blood glucose levels to rise.

Carbohydrate counting

One method of meal planning that people with diabetes may follow.

Hyperglycemia

When blood glucose levels are elevated above normal limits.

Hypoglycemia

When blood glucose levels fall below normal limits. A blood glucose reading less than 70 mg/dL is considered hypoglycemic.

Insulin

The hormone made by the beta cells in the pancreas. Insulin allows the body to use glucose for energy.

Ketone

A chemical produced when the body breaks down fat for energy instead of carbohydrate. Ketones are formed when there is a shortage of insulin.

Lancet

The needle used to poke the skin to generate a sample of blood for blood glucose monitoring.

Nephrologist

A doctor who specializes in caring for the kidneys.

Neurologist

A physician who specializes in neurology.

Pancreas

The organ that makes insulin.

Podiatrist

A doctor who specializes in foot care.

Sugar alcohols

Artificial sweeteners that may cause a small rise in blood glucose levels.