



ILLINOIS  
**HEALTH  
CONNECT**  
Your Home For Healthcare™

## ILLINOIS HEALTH CONNECT CLIENT NEWSLETTER

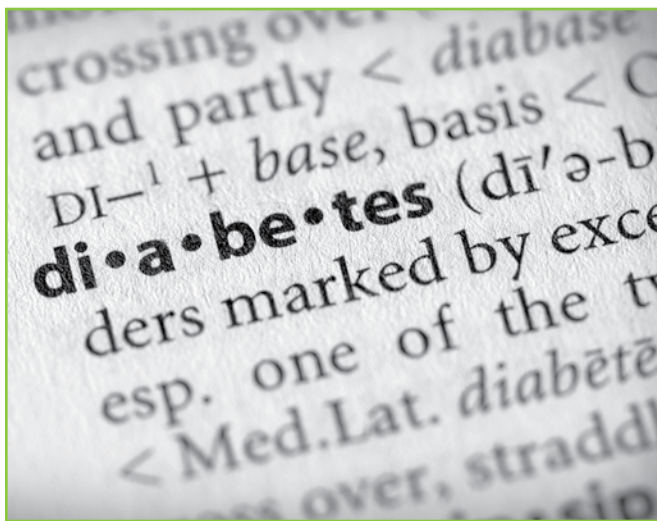
Volume 5, Issue 1

### **DIABETES MANAGEMENT: ABCs HELP, BUT “U” CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE**

Managing your diabetes will help you feel your best and live a healthy life. Understanding diabetes is an important first step to treating your diabetes.

Blood glucose, also called blood sugar, is an important source of energy for your body. Glucose comes from two sources: the food you eat and your liver. When you have diabetes, you have too much glucose in your blood. Too much glucose can lead to serious health problems.

To regulate the amount of glucose in your blood, your pancreas makes insulin, which turns glucose into the energy you need. But if you have diabetes, your body cannot make enough insulin, or is not able to use the insulin it makes properly.



It is important to know the **ABC’s of diabetes**.<sup>1</sup> The **“A”** in ABC stands for the **A1C test**. This blood test tells you how well you controlled your blood sugar over the past three months. If your A1C is seven or less, you are doing a great job managing your diabetes. Talk to your Primary Care Provider (PCP) to see what target is right for you. Try to meet this target by eating healthy, exercising, and taking your diabetes medicine as prescribed. When your doctor asks you to get your A1C test, be sure to go and get it done.

The **“B”** stands for **blood pressure**. Try to keep your blood pressure under 130/80. A diet low in fat and salt can help lower blood pressure; but sometimes diet is not enough. Your doctor may prescribe medicine that can lower your blood pressure. It is important that you take your blood pressure medicine every day exactly how your doctor prescribes it. If you miss a dose, call your PCP or pharmacist for instructions.

The **“C”** stands for **cholesterol**. Having high cholesterol increases your risk of stroke, coronary artery disease, and heart attack. There are two kinds of cholesterol in the body, LDL which is the bad cholesterol, and HDL cholesterol, which is the good cholesterol. LDL cholesterol sticks to your blood vessels and makes it harder for your heart to pump blood. The HDL cholesterol helps remove cholesterol from your blood vessels. For diabetics, the LDL goal is less than 100; while the

*continued on page 2*

1375 E. Woodfield Rd.

Schaumburg, IL 60173-5418

1-877-912-1999

[www.illinoishealthconnect.com](http://www.illinoishealthconnect.com)

continued from page 1

HDL goal for men is more than 40, and more than 50 for women. You can reduce your LDL by eating healthy, fiber-rich foods. Eating grilled or baked foods is a better choice than fried. Eating high-fiber foods, such as oatmeal or whole wheat bread, also helps lower LDL levels.


There is even a more important letter in the alphabet than A, B, or C that will control your diabetes. That letter is “U.” You are the one who can best manage your diabetes with the help of your healthcare team. You can do this by:

- Taking your medications every day, no matter how you feel. Call your provider if you have any side effects to the medicine you are taking or if you are too sick to take them.
- Eating a low-fat, fiber rich diet. Talk to your PCP at your medical home to help you develop a meal plan, if you do not have one.
- If you drink alcohol, do not drink more than two alcoholic beverages a day. Drink alcohol with food, and avoid sugary drinks, like daiquiris and margaritas. Alcohol can interfere with your diabetes medicine. Talk to your PCP about whether drinking alcohol is safe for you.
- Get moving 30-60 minutes a day. Walking is a great way to do this. Be sure to wear comfortable shoes that do not pinch your feet. Before starting any exercise program, talk to your provider about what exercise would be best for you.
- Ask for support if you feel down or overwhelmed. Talking to a support group, friend, or clergy member about your concerns can help you stay motivated and reduce stress.



- Check your blood sugar as often as your PCP wants you to. Writing these numbers down in a notebook will help you keep track of your blood sugar throughout the day.
- Check your skin for sores or blisters. Call your PCP about any sores that do not go away.
- Call your PCP if you have changes in eyesight, or experience numbness in your hands or feet.

Diabetes is a serious disease. With proper diet, exercise, medication, and help from your medical home, you can manage it. Remember that “U” are the most important part of this. Get started today.

If you do not know who your PCP is or would like help scheduling an appointment with your PCP, call Illinois Health Connect. We can help you! The toll-free number is 1-877-912-1999 (TTY: 1-866-565-8577). 

<sup>1</sup> National Diabetes Education Program (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)



*“You are the one who can best manage your disease with the help of your healthcare team.”*



## HOW TO ADD A NEWBORN TO YOUR MEDICAL CARD

If you have a baby, you will need to add your newborn to your medical card. This needs to be done so the baby can get All Kids medical benefits. There are several ways to add the newborn to your medical card.

You might be able to add your newborn to your medical card at the hospital when the baby is delivered. Not all hospitals provide this service. Ask the hospital if they can help you add your newborn to your medical card.

For clients who pay co-payments or a monthly premium, the All Kids Unit in Springfield handles your medical card. You should call the All Kids Switchboard at 1-866-255-5437 (TTY: 1-877-204-1012). All Kids will help you add your newborn to your medical card.

If you do not pay co-payments or monthly premiums, your Department of Human Services (DHS) local office/Family Community Resource Center (FCRC) handles your case. To locate your DHS office/FCRC, use the office locator on the DHS Web site. That address is [www.dhs.state.il.us](http://www.dhs.state.il.us). At your FCRC, your caseworker can assist you in person with adding the newborn to your medical card. If you don't know who your DHS caseworker is, call the DHS Helpline at 1-800-843-6154.

All Kids Application Agents (AKAA) can also help. Go to [www.allkids.com/akaa/search](http://www.allkids.com/akaa/search) to find an AKAA in your area.

A child born to a mother who has an eligible medical card at the time of birth will get medical benefits. The only information needed to add newborn to medical card is child's last name, date of birth and sex.

## IHC WEB SITE UPDATES!

Check out our redesigned Web site at [www.illinoishealthconnect.com](http://www.illinoishealthconnect.com).

To access client information, click on the "Clients" box in the middle of the home page. The Clients page allows you to view the IHC client education video, perform a "Who's My PCP?" search, and read the Healthy Habits page. Healthy Habits has valuable information about healthcare, nutrition and program updates.

Other options can be selected using the purple menu bar. You can learn about the IHC program and your medical home options, get important phone numbers, read the IHC Member Guide, and more! If you have questions, please call IHC at 1-877-912-1999 (TTY: 1-866-565-8577).

## YOUR MEDICAL CARD

In our last newsletter, we told you that HFS would start issuing durable medical cards to HFS clients in early 2012. HFS has decided to continue using paper medical cards. Stay tuned! You will receive more information if changes are made.

If the mother doesn't have an active medical card, additional information is needed. The mother will need to show proof of application for child's Social Security card and proof of income.

If you have more questions, call Illinois Health Connect at 1-877-912-1999 (TTY 1-866-565-8577). This call is free.





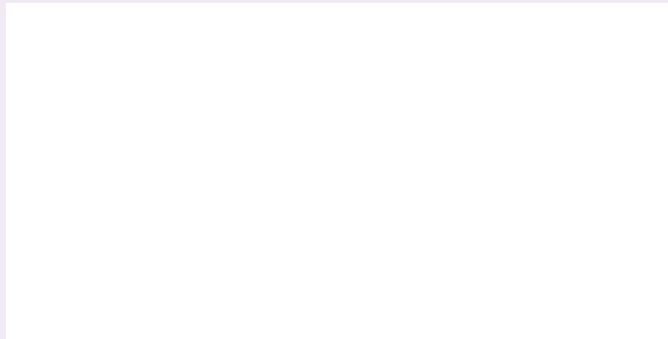
State of Illinois

Department of Healthcare and Family Services  
Pat Quinn, Governor  
Julie Hamos, Director



1375 E. Woodfield Road  
Suite 600  
Schaumburg, IL 60173-5418

PRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PITTSBURGH PA  
PERMIT NO.3004



## KNOW WHEN TO GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM

*Knowing when to go to the emergency room is important. You need to know these three things.*

### 1 Who is my Primary Care Provider (PCP)?

Your PCP is the doctor, nurse or other healthcare provider at your medical home. Your PCP takes care of you and your family and gets to know you well. Your PCP will answer your questions. You can call your PCP 24 hours a day.

### 2 What is a medical emergency?

A medical emergency is one that is life-threatening or one that will seriously affect your health if not treated right away. Examples of this would be chest pains, severe bleeding, poisoning or seizures. An emergency could be from an accident or a sudden illness. If you don't know if it is an emergency, call your PCP first.

### 3 Where can I get emergency care?

In an emergency you can use any hospital or emergency provider.

To find out who your PCP is, or to pick a new PCP, call Illinois Health Connect. The number is 1-877-912-1999 (TTY: 1-866-565-8577). This call is free. Illinois Health Connect can also tell you where you can get emergency care in your area.

If you can't reach your PCP, call the Illinois Nurse Helpline. The Nurse Helpline will tell you if you should go to the emergency room. The helpline is available from 7 p.m. to 8 a.m. on weekdays and 24 hours a day on the weekend. Call 1-877-912-1999 (TTY: 1-866-565-8577). This call is free.

