Managing Diabetes for Whole-Body Wellness

When blood sugar stays consistently high, it damages your blood vessels and nerves over time. Because your blood vessels feed every organ in your body, this damage reduces oxygen and nutrient delivery everywhere. As a result, critical organs like your kidneys and eyes gradually stop working as well as they should.

Diabetes and Eye Health

Diabetes can affect more than blood sugar. Over time, high blood sugar can hurt blood vessels in the eyes, heart, kidneys, and nerves. Eye changes may happen before you notice blurry vision.

What could happen: Diabetes can damage the back of the eye and may cause blurry vision, dark spots, floaters, or vision loss if not treated early.

Prevention is key: Protecting your vision starts with getting a diabetic retinal or dilated eye exam every year so that any changes can be found and treated early. Keeping your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol within healthy ranges can also help reduce the risk of diabetes-related eye damage. If you notice any changes in your vision, such as blurriness, floaters, or dark spots, contact your provider right away.

Don't wait for blurry vision: Get a yearly diabetic eye exam, even if your vision seems fine. USFHP beneficiaries may save on eye exams, glasses, frames, lens enhancements, and LASIK surgery through participating providers.



Your Vision Benefit

Beneficiaries may save through the GVS Discount Vision Plan at participating providers. The nationwide network includes 95,000+ optometrists and ophthalmologists.

Visit **www.gvsmd.com** or call 1-866-265-4626. Beneficiaries can visit network providers as often as they like.

If a beneficiary is not already established with GVS, they can search for a provider **HERE** or call customer service at the phone number mentioned above. Be sure to present your GVS Membership ID card at your appointment.

Diabetes and Kidney Health



Benefits Available to You

Take advantage of your USFHP benefits with **$0-cost preventive care and in-network laboratory services**, helping you stay on top of your health without out-of-pocket costs.

Save on a variety of health and wellness products, integrative health care services, and other wellness-related discounts through Choices by WholeHealth Living®. For details, call **800-274-7526.**

You don't have to manage diabetes alone: The CHRISTUS Health Care Management team offers personalized support, education, care coordination, medication management assistance, and goal-setting to help you take control of your diabetes and improve your health. This benefit is available to you at no cost. To learn more or enroll, call **800-446-1730, Option 2.**

Early stage kidney disease may not have signs and symptoms, and that is why it is important to see your doctor for screenings. The earlier things are caught, the better!

What could happen: Diabetes can damage the kidneys over time, making it harder for them to filter waste and excess fluid from the blood. If left untreated, kidney damage can lead to reduced kidney function, and even kidney failure.

Prevention is key: If you have diabetes, try to keep your blood sugar between 80 and 130 mg/dL before meals and below 180 mg/dL one to two hours after eating. Have your A1c checked at least twice a year, and work with your doctor to keep your blood pressure below 140/90 and your cholesterol within the recommended range.

In addition, stay physically active, eat plenty of fruits and vegetables while limiting foods high in sodium, and take all medications exactly as prescribed by your doctor.

Don't wait: Ask your provider about yearly kidney screenings and keep your blood sugar and blood pressure in a healthy range to help protect your kidneys. USFHP preventive care and many laboratory services are available at no cost in-network, making it easier to stay on top of your kidney health.

Note: This information is for education only and does not replace medical advice. Talk with your doctor about what is right for you.

Diabetes and Wound Care

If you have diabetes, taking care of your feet is important. Small cuts, blisters, or sores can turn into bigger problems if they are not treated early. Checking your feet every day can help you catch problems before they get worse.

Don't wait: Regular foot exams can help catch issues early before they become more serious. If you have diabetes, tell your provider about any foot pain, numbness, tingling, or wounds that do not heal. Early treatment can help prevent complications and keep you moving comfortably.

What could happen: Diabetes can cause nerve damage that reduces feeling in the feet, making it harder to notice injuries. Even a small cut, blister, or sore can become infected and may lead to slow-healing wounds if left untreated.

Prevention is key: Check your feet every day for cuts, redness, swelling, blisters, or other changes. Wash and dry your feet thoroughly, especially between the toes, and keep your skin moisturized. Always wear properly fitting shoes and socks to help prevent injuries. Managing your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol can also help protect your foot health.



Need Help Finding Care?

Find care before small problems become big ones. Regular visits with your provider can help protect your eye, kidney, and foot health. Use our Provider Directory to find in-network primary care providers and specialists who can help you stay on top of your diabetes care.

Visit **christushealthplan.org/find-a-provider** or call **800-678-7347 (TTY 711)** for help finding care.

Have a Health Question?

Our 24/7 Nurse Advice Line is available anytime, day or night. Talk with a registered nurse who can answer health questions, help you understand symptoms, and guide you to the right level of care. Whether it's after hours, on a weekend, or during a holiday, support is just a phone call away.

Call **800-455-9355** to speak with a nurse. If you are having a medical emergency, please call 911.

Your health is our priority, and we are here to support you every step of the way.