



## LIVING WELL WITH DIABETES

Anderson County Health Department

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### A1C - Your Blood Sugar 3 Month Average

What happens to white delivery trucks on snowy, slushy roads in the winter? Yep. They get dirty. Something pretty similar happens to red blood cells in your body when your sugar is high. Sugar molecules stick to their skins the same way slush and mud and ice stick to the side of the delivery trucks. (As a complete side note: a red blood cell is a delivery truck too; its sole function is the delivery of gases to various parts of the body.)

The A1C test measures the amount of mud and slush on the red blood cell and reports it as a percentage. This percentage, in turn, gives us a picture of the blood sugar environment the cell lived in during its dLife. As red blood cells live for three months on average, an A1C gives us a window into your average blood sugar for the last three months.

#### Green light A1C score



The target for A1C, the green light, is between 6.0% and 6.9%. These numbers are commonly expressed simply as 6.0 and 6.9, without the "%" sign. If your A1C falls into this zone, you're considered to be in control. For perspective, these numbers can be converted into "meter" numbers, called estimated average glucose – eAG for short. The green light eAG range is 126 mg/dL to 151 mg/dL. But what if your numbers are higher than target? Or lower than target? When are you actually in danger?

#### Yellow light A1C score



If the light turns yellow as you approach the intersection, you need to either speed up or stop. Whichever is safe under the circumstances, right? If your A1C is between 7.0 and 8.9 you'll be classified as "out of control." But how much danger are you in? Frankly, it depends on how close you are to either end of the spectrum. Yellow light A1Cs are higher than is strictly healthy, but pose no *immediate* harm. However, the higher you are in this range, the closer you are to a red light; and we'll talk about just how serious that can be in a minute.

I should point out that there are some special cases. If you're a very young type 1, a yellow light A1C score may be considered in target for you until you get older. Similarly, if you're an elderly type 2, your doctor may choose to "green

light" you in the yellow zone.

You're also in yellow light territory if you use insulin or pills called sulfonylureas and your A1C is **below** six. Numbers in the low fives and below are considered non-diabetic, so at first glance they might seem like an attractive place to be. The better controlled, the better, right? Uh. Wrong. Sorry.

The simple fact of the matter is that if you have an A1C below six, it means you're having low blood sugars, and lows are every bit as dangerous as highs. If too much medication is forcing you below 6.0, you're staring at a yellow light. Put on the brakes.

#### Red light A1C score



An A1C score above 9.0 is considered "critical" high. Red light. Danger. But why? At an A1C of 9.0 (eAG 212 mg/dL, 11.78 mmol/l) your blood sugar is high enough to begin the slow process of destroying your kidneys and your eyes; to light the fire of neuropathy. It's cytotoxic, meaning lethal to cells. Or, as one dialysis nurse I know likes to say: "It's incompatible with human life."

You shouldn't panic if your A1C is this high. Most people are above 9.0 when they're diagnosed. But it's a red light. Stop. In this case, back up and go the other direction. A high A1C for brand-new diabetes is just a problem that needs to be fixed. Often minor changes in lifestyle and/or some meds will whip it into shape in no time. On the other hand, if you've been lower than 9.0 for a long time, and have now crossed the red-light Rubicon, it tells us your diabetes has advanced beyond your therapy. This is no fault of your own. It's what diabetes does. It changes. It advances. No guilt. But you do need to stay one step ahead of it. You'll need a change of therapy.

#### Summary

- ⇒ The A1C green light score is between 6.0% and 6.9%.
- ⇒ The A1C yellow light score is between 7.0% and 8.9% on the high end, or below 5.9% on the low end.
- ⇒ The A1C red light score is more than 9.0%

Reprinted from:

[http://www.dlife.com/diabetes/blood\\_sugar\\_management/testing/wil\\_dubois/a1c](http://www.dlife.com/diabetes/blood_sugar_management/testing/wil_dubois/a1c)



# ANDERSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

ANDERSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
1180 GLENSBORO ROAD  
LAWRENCEBURG, KY 40342

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE  
DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP PLEASE  
CONTACT:

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THE ANDERSON COUNTY DIABETES SUPPORT  
GROUP WILL MEET

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7 AT 7:00PM

IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM OF THE  
ANDERSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

Postmaster, please deliver to:

## Important Dates in November

### American Diabetes Month

- 6 - Daylight Saving Time Ends (*Fall Back*)
- 7 - Diabetes Support Group Meeting
- 8 - Election Day
- 11 - Veterans Day (Health Dept. CLOSED)
- 24 - Thanksgiving Day (Health Dept. CLOSED)
- 25 - Holiday (Health Dept. CLOSED)



## Recipe of the Month

### Sweet Potato Biscuits

18 servings

#### Ingredients

- cooking spray
- 2 ½ cups sifted all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsp brown sugar substitute
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp granulated sugar
- ¼ cup canola oil
- ¾ cup + 2 tbsp cultured non-fat buttermilk
- ¾ cup mashed cooked sweet potato

#### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Lightly spray a non-stick baking sheet

with cooking spray (or line with parchment paper).

2. In a large bowl, combine flour, brown sugar, baking powder, baking soda, nutmeg, salt, and sugar.
3. In a large measuring cup, combine oil, buttermilk, and mashed sweet potato.
4. Add to the dry ingredients and mix until just combined. (The dough will be quite dry).
5. Transfer dough to a floured work surface. Knead a few times and pat to 1 inch thickness rectangle about 8" x 5".
6. Dip a sharp knife in flour, then cut the dough into thirds lengthwise. Then cut each long strip into 6 equal pieces, making 18 squares in all.
7. Transfer biscuits to prepared baking sheet.
8. Bake about 12 to 13 minutes, until tops are golden and firm to the touch. Serve warm.

#### Nutrition Facts

Calories: 104 Carbs: 16g Sodium: 204mg Protein: 2g  
Total Fat: 3g Sat. Fat: 0.4g Fiber: 1g

#### Dietary Exchanges

Starch: 1 Fat: 1/2

