

# HbA1c is the Gold Standard for Managing Diabetes

*LabFinder CEO Dr. Robert Segal Advises Patients Follow Blood-Test Schedule; Offers Tips.*

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, September 14, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A simple [blood test](#) to determine a person's average blood sugar level during the past several months remains the gold standard for diagnosing diabetes or a prediabetes condition, managing Type 2 diabetes to reduce risk of long-term complications, and providing physicians and patients important feedback information, according to Robert Segal MD, co-founder and CEO of [LabFinder](#).

The test, called [hemoglobin A1c or HbA1c](#), measures the percentage of red blood cells containing hemoglobin coated with glucose (sugar). Considered normal is a number below 5.7 percent. A level of 5.7-6.4 percent is defined as a prediabetic condition. Anything at or above 6.5 percent is labeled diabetes. Patients undergoing HbA1c sampling do not need to fast prior to their blood draw.



Dr. Robert Segal, Cardiologist and Co-Founder of LabFinder

"For proper control of the disease, patients with diagnosed diabetes should undergo an HbA1c evaluation every three to six months depending on the stability of their glucose control. But many patients fail to follow appropriate testing schedules, oftentimes because they lack a process for readily scheduling appointments at nearby medical laboratories that adhere to nationally certified HbA1c testing methods and can provide quick access to accurate testing results," says Dr. Segal.

He also cites patient misperception of what the HbA1c testing findings actually mean and calls for health providers to provide better patient education on interpreting testing data.

Experts agree. In a 2021 article appearing in Current Medical Research and Opinion (<https://rb.gy/wj6ln>), authors indicate a "large proportion of the [more than 112,500] type 2 diabetes patients [studied] were not tested per guideline recommendations [of the American



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Diabetes Association]. They also found that “the relationship between A1c testing frequency and glycemic (blood sugar) control was inconsistent.”

A study published in a 2021 issue of the journal Cureus (<https://rb.gy/oyl1r>) reports a majority of 100 adult survey respondents who have diabetes mellitus were unable to “correlate [their] correct average blood glucose for [achieving or maintaining] an HbA1c level of 7 percent... Ninety percent of those with HbA1c [results] equal to or

greater than 8 percent perceived their control to be better than it actually was, and 97 percent of those with HbA1c [levels under] 8 percent perceived their control worse than it actually was.”

The Cureus article authors add, “Because the HbA1c test is such a fundamental tool for the practitioner, understanding how the patient experiences this result is critical to a transparent practitioner/patient interaction.”

Making access to medical tests and personal health information quick, simple, and understandable while reducing patient anxiety and frustration is why Dr. Segal developed LabFinder. Labfinder serves as an online scheduling platform for all patient laboratory and radiology appointments. It connects patients, doctors and lab and radiology centers for a seamless medical experience; offers timely test scheduling; and serves as one central repository for users’ to receive their test results without waiting. Most importantly, test results are released simultaneously to patient and clinician and are often available in as little as 24 hours or less, giving both the physician and the patient earlier opportunity to review and evaluate findings and develop a treatment plan.

The prevalence of diabetes is reaching epidemic proportions in the United States. A statistics report issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2020 (<https://rb.gy/qx52y>) estimated more than 34 million people of all ages – 10.5 percent of the American population – had diabetes – a number likely higher today. Of those 18 years of age or older, more than seven million were unaware of, or did not report, having the disease.

Diabetes can lead to disabling or life-threatening complications, among them nerve, eye, kidney, and foot damage; bone and joint disorders; and cardiovascular disease, says Dr. Segal, who is a renowned cardiologist. “That is why it is so important for patients with diabetes to undergo regular testing to help them control their disease.”

Dr. Segal is hopeful that technological advancements in the reliability and accuracy of point-of-care HbA1c testing outside the medical laboratory – finger-stick sampling in the doctor’s office, for example -- and at-home test equipment will eventually increase patient adherence to testing schedules, while offering both patients and physicians quicker diagnosis of disease conditions

and earlier initiation of therapy.

He also advises that patients not simply rely on HbA1c data, which offer only an historical, weighted blood-sugar (glycemic) average, but to undergo continuous glucose monitoring to determine blood-sugar concentrations in real time. In fact, some health professionals consider continuous glucose monitoring to be more effective than HbA1c for disease management. "Know as well that other disorders, such as kidney or liver disease, severe anemia and hyperglycemia, can skew HbA1c results," Dr. Segal states.

Meanwhile, he offers these tips for lowering one's HbA1c score:

- Above everything, follow your advised testing schedule and do not skip prescribed medications.
- Cut back on food portions. Consuming more than the body needs only increases blood-sugar levels.
- Avoid foods with too many starchy carbohydrates.
- Maintain a body weight appropriate to one's height and age. If you are too heavy, losing 5 percent to 10 percent of body fat is a manageable goal.
- Exercise regularly, including aerobic activities and, if possible, resistance workouts. Exercise requires muscles to remove sugar from the bloodstream to generate energy.

Bio: Robert Segal MD, board-certified in cardiovascular disease, echocardiography, and nuclear cardiology. He is founder of Manhattan Cardiology and Medical Offices of Manhattan, and Co-Founder of LabFinder. <https://www.labfinder.com/>

About: LabFinder is a consumer-facing platform that transforms the patient experience through seamless lab & radiology testing, guiding patients to conveniently located testing centers, handling appointment bookings, offering telehealth services, and allowing patients to review their test results all in one place. LabFinder supports patients through their care journey from booking to billing—reducing expenses, hurdles, and frustrations. [www.labfinder.com](http://www.labfinder.com).

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