

## Chapter 14. The 6 Stages of Diabetes Control & Reversal



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### The 6 Stages

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This diabetes wellness program will guide you from a state of no blood glucose control and sick cells to complete glucose control while reducing your cells' insulin resistance and inflammation to repair your sick cells – as you move from Stage 1 to Stage 6. However, it is your choice to stop at any stage if you are happy with your health at that point. Hopefully, you will progress through as far as you possibly can in order to optimize your health. As you continue through each stage of this wellness program, your body will reduce its insulin resistance, oxidation, inflammation, and toxicity as it detoxifies and rebalances itself biochemically, hormonally, and spiritually. Your degree of success will depend strongly on how much you really want to modify your behavior after several decades of poor eating habits and a sedentary lifestyle. It will be imperative that you develop and maintain a positive attitude because **behavior modification** is the most difficult challenge that you will face during this journey. Also, you must maintain an open mind to these new ideas about health and nutrition. After all, your current ideas about health and nutrition aren't working that well.



The previous chapters reviewed the eight “living” elements of diabetes control and reversal; and, now, it is time to put some structure around these eight elements. The following six stages provide a defined structure, a set of metrics, and a systematic approach for utilizing the eight “living” elements – in order to track, manage, control and reverse your diabetes. Being able to track and measure what stage you are in and knowing what you need to do to move forward will provide the necessary motivation to continue on your journey to better health.

If you find that you need structure and guidance in your planning, work with an experienced wellness coach that understands diabetes.

The six stages are as follows:

- Stage 1 No Blood Glucose (BG) Control
- Stage 2 BG Control with Drugs
- Stage 3 BG Control with Reduced Drugs
- Stage 4 BG Control without Drugs
- Stage 5 BG & HbA1C Control (without Drugs)
- Stage 6 BG & HbA1C Tighter Control (without Drugs)

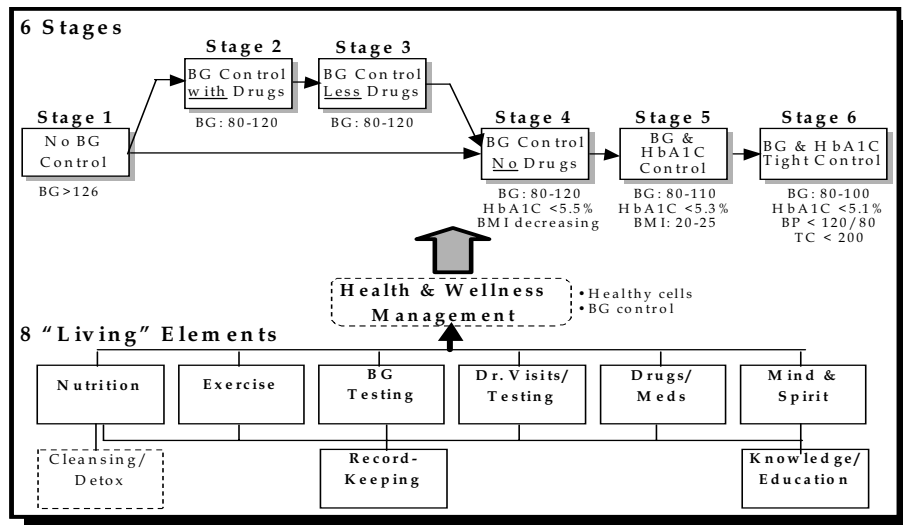


Figure 13. The Diabetes Control & Reversal Model

The six stages, depicted in the diagram above, are based upon the following targets/ranges to evaluate your blood glucose control and progress:

- Average fasting BG level: 80 to 120 mg/dl; Optimum: less than 100 mg/dl.
- Postprandial BG level: less than 130 mg/dl; Optimum: less than 120 mg/dl.
- Hemoglobin A1C of 4.2 to 5.5%; Optimum: less than 5.1%.

### Timeline and Expectations

Because of the many factors that affect your blood glucose control, it is difficult to define the exact number of days/weeks that it will take to progress from Stage 1 to Stage 6. But, as you progress through each stage, you will obtain enough data to estimate how long it will take to reach the final stage. As depicted in the following chart, increasing the number of super meals, the frequency of exercise, and the amount of testing will decrease the recovery time, especially from Stage 1 to Stage 4. In general, it will take more time to get from Stage 1 to Stage 4 than from Stage 4 to Stage 6 because it will take more time for the body to repair the cells and reduce the insulin resistance/inflammation during the early stages. Once the body has started to heal, it accelerates the timeline for the remaining stages. Additional health problems (besides the diabetes) and any additional drugs you are taking will increase the amount of recovery time, especially from Stage 1 to Stage 4.

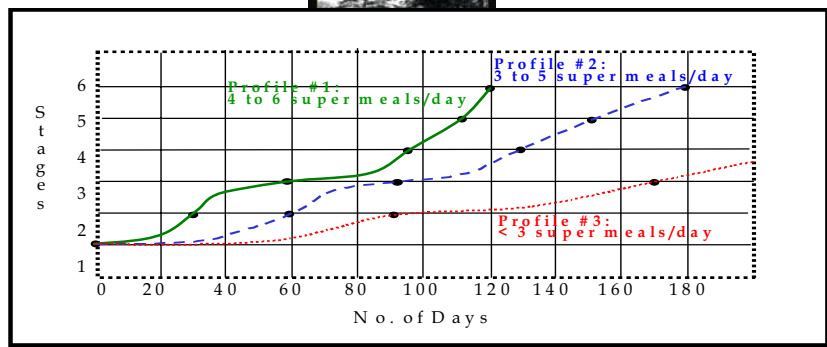


Figure 14. Timeline from Stage 1 to Stage 6.

As you progress through each stage of the wellness program, your body will repair and rebalance itself, while preventing further damage and complications. It is imperative that you wean your body off as many drugs as possible. How long it will take will vary from person to person, but the degree of your success will depend primarily upon your health state and drive to overcome the odds. Once you see how your body responds to the changes to nutrition, exercise, and testing, it will be easier to estimate your personal recovery timeline.

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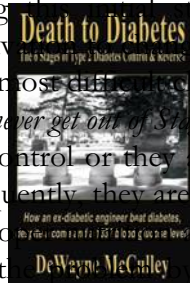
### Stage 1 No BG Control

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This is the stage where most diabetics usually find themselves in the beginning, with **excess insulin production** and an average fasting blood glucose (BG) level that is greater than 126 mg/dl or an oral glucose tolerance reading of at least 200 mg/dl.

The biggest challenge that you face at the beginning is the range of emotions from shock to denial, anger, and frustration. Once you face the reality that you have a *disease* of excess *insulin* (not a *sugar* problem), this becomes the first step to recovery. Remember – you cannot solve this health problem unless you accept the fact that you have a serious disease that needs your full attention. Whether you get your insulin/glucose under control and in the normal range is largely dependent on how you handle your emotions during this initial stage. The second biggest challenge is acquiring the motivation to change your behavior – changing human behavior is one of the most difficult challenges to overcome. As a result, some Type 2 diabetics *never get out of Stage 1* because they are unable to get their emotions under control or they are unable (or unwilling) to change their behavior. Consequently, they are unable to get their insulin/glucose under control with proper nutrition, exercise, and testing. Unfortunately, this leads them to try to fix the problem by taking diabetic drugs, but they still do not make the changes that need to be made to their nutrition, exercise, and testing. In the meantime, the disease continues to, slowly and without detection, cause deterioration of the small blood vessels that feed the kidneys, eyes, heart, feet, and brain. This deterioration is a microvascular disease and is part of an accelerated biological aging process. You may even feel good and look good on the outside, but inside your body is silently “rusting away”.

Some diabetics are fortunate to get their blood glucose under control with minimal changes to nutrition, exercise and testing, but they usually relax thinking the disease has gone into remission. So, instead of making additional changes to nutrition, exercise, and testing to reduce the insulin and eradicate the disease, they underestimate the disease and end up regressing to a state of higher insulin/glucose levels within several years.



Other diabetics rely heavily on the drugs to temporarily control their blood glucose levels but not their *insulin* levels. Unfortunately, the excess insulin increases the toxic load within the body, requiring additional energy to get through the day. And as a result, these diabetics end up missing a major opportunity to actually eradicate the disease before it takes a stronghold in their bodies.

**Caution:** If your doctor has diagnosed you as “marginally diabetic” or “pre-diabetic”, your doctor has noticed a high blood glucose reading in your most recent blood tests. You should heed this warning from your doctor who is trying to save you from a life of torment and serious health complications that diabetes brings with it. Instead, make the changes to your nutrition and exercise regimen to prevent the disease from progressing to a more serious state in your body. Specifically, read the information in chapters 1 and 4 to prevent yourself from progressing from pre-diabetic to full-blown diabetes.

### Overall Planning

Planning will be the ultimate key to the success or failure of your journey. *If you fail to plan, then you are doomed to fail.* It is also imperative that you get rid of the so-called “diet mentality”. This program is *not* a diet. Despite all the TV infomercials, books and marketing gimmicks, diets just don’t work. The low-fat diets, the high carb diets, the high protein diets, and low cholesterol diets all failed and left us heavier, fatter and sicker people. Diets are too focused on restriction, deprivation, negativity, “falling off the wagon”, and special foods. With this program you cannot “fall off the wagon” because you will include the foods and events that would cause you to fall off the wagon in the first place!

But you must first (temporarily) stop eating “dead” food just because it tastes good! Would you consume arsenic because it taste good? Identify your weaknesses (e.g. cravings for pasta, bread, sweets) and develop a strategy to include them as part of your overall plan. If you ignore them they will only come back to bite you in the future.

For example, eating rice, ice cream and drinking bottled juice were three areas that I had to address. I initially addressed these areas by adding kidney beans to my rice (for the extra fiber) and eventually moving to organic brown rice; adding blueberries and walnuts to my ice cream (to provide protein and fiber), and adding grounded flaxseed to my bottled juice. Almost any so-called “unhealthy” food can be turned into a “healthier” food either by adding something or switching to a healthier alternative. Refer to Figure 16 in the Appendix for a list of favorite foods and their more nutritious alternatives to help you through your transition.

Events such as picnics, holidays, birthdays, reunions, funerals, graduations, weddings, and other celebrations tend to be our downfall. Instead of dreading them or ignoring them, embrace them and develop your own strategy so that you will be successful and not feel “bad” after the celebration. Feeling “bad” or disappointed is counter-productive and causes the release of stress hormones that are not healthy. During most celebrations, we are usually celebrating a happy (or sad) event. And, what do most people do when they are happy (or sad) and celebrating an event? They eat! Unfortunately, they usually eat too much of the wrong foods. So, how can you address this without putting a damper on all the fun or the event? There are so many ways to handle this – all you have to do is select one that fits.



For example, if you ensure that you eat a fiber-rich super meal the night before and a vegetable-based super meal for the breakfast the following morning, this will prevent excess insulin production and provide you with the sustenance that will reduce your capacity to overeat a lot of the sweets and other goodies at the celebratory event. Although this strategy may not prevent you from eating the sweets and other goodies, it will definitely reduce the amount you consume, which should make you feel happy the next day. Also, if you ensure that your next meal at home is full of fiber and other “live” foods, this will help your body get rid of the waste from the sweets and other goodies instead of them sitting in your gut rotting away. And, if you perform a cleansing/ detoxification of the colon and liver, this will ensure that the waste and its toxic byproducts don’t accumulate in the body.

By embracing these challenges instead of dreading them, you will be more successful and happier because you will realize that you cannot fail! No matter what happens, there is always a fallback plan of some kind to get you through any possible scenario – as long as you customize the plan to fit you. With this program, *there is no such thing as failure* – only opportunities to be even more successful than you had ever dreamed possible. Do not dread failure -- plan for it and be prepared to handle it.

Proactive planning, organization and consistency are the foundation of a solid diabetes wellness plan. Therefore, you should try to eat, exercise, and test at the same times every day. In order to acquire relevant and useful data to determine what changes to make, it is important that the data is being collected within some consistent boundaries. This also prevents the accidental introduction of other variables that may affect your data and corrective actions. Even with all of this planning and positive attitude, accept the fact that you will make mistakes. We all make mistakes, but it's how you respond to the mistakes you make that matters. As Oprah Winfrey once said: "All mistakes happen in our lives to teach us who we really are. . . and, how we respond to failure is what determines our real character."

**Note:** If you need help with planning, contact our wellness center to obtain health coaching and nutritional program.



### Nutrition

During the first stage, you will be making the most significant changes relative to what you're currently eating and drinking. Unfortunately, many diabetics only make a few changes because they don't want to give up their "favorite foods", even though those are the very foods that are killing them one day at a time.

If you have multiple health issues, during the early stages, it may be critical to **stop eating wheat and other conventional grain-based foods** for breakfast -- because of the gluten protein and embedded chemicals. It may also be necessary to temporarily **stop eating fruit**, and replace it with vegetables. Once your body has cleansed, detoxified and begun to heal, you can gradually re-introduce some organic grains such as oat, barley, and quinoa, or gluten-free foods, during Stage 4 or Stage 5.