Goals are what you want to achieve. They can provide direction on your journey to becoming a self-manager of your diabetes. The aim is to set goals that are important to you. You’ll also want to be sure you can achieve them. These two factors – importance and confidence – are essential as you go about achieving your goals.

Goals are sometimes so broad it may be hard to see whether you’re actually meeting them. Sometimes they’re too big to ever achieve. They also have to be measurable so you’ll know when you are making progress. When goals aren’t S.M.A.R.T., disappointment may result. That may make you want to give up.

Setting S.M.A.R.T. goals may be new to you. This handy set of five keys to great goal setting can help you take charge of your diabetes. You can start with what’s important to you. Be confident you can make changes that will help you toward your goals. Work with your diabetes care team to be sure the goals are S.M.A.R.T. They can help you in setting goals and then evaluating your progress in achieving them.

### Keys to S.M.A.R.T. Goals

| **Specific** | Identify the details of what you are going to do, why and how. This helps you focus your efforts and clearly define what you need to accomplish to succeed. |
| **Measurable** | Set criteria that will help you know you are making progress and when you have succeeded. |
| **Attainable** | Are the goals you are setting within reach if you plan wisely and allow the right time to carry out the plan? |
| **Realistic** | Set goals you are willing and able to work for that are do-able for you at this time. |
| **Timely** | Set a timeframe for the goal so you get your mind in motion to start working to reach the goal. |

continued on page 2
Here’s an example of a S.M.A.R.T. goal:
“I will start being active by walking 30 minutes during my lunch hour, Monday, Wednesday and Friday for the next two weeks, starting Monday.”

- **Specific:** “why”— to start being active; “what”— walking; “how”— during my lunch hour.
- **Measurable:** time of 30 minutes; frequency of three times a week.
- **Attainable:** able to achieve by working it into my lunch hour.
- **Realistic:** starting with three short episodes a week for two weeks.
- **Timely:** starting Monday, for two weeks.

Try it for yourself
Fill in the blanks after each of the following:

**Specific:** why, what and how? __________________________________________

**Measurable:** how much? __________________________________________

**Attainable:** can you do it? __________________________________________

**Realistic:** do-able? __________________________________________

**Timely:** by when? __________________________________________

Be SMART. Start with goals that can be achieved fairly soon and fairly easily. Work up to harder goals. Just keep focused on the end game: a long and healthy life.

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