

DAYTON CHEST MEDICINE

PULMONARY AND AEROSPACE MEDICINE FAA CERTIFIED AVIATION MEDICAL EXAMINERS

FAA Requirements for Non-Insulin Requiring Diabetes and Pre-Diabetes

For practical purposes, the FAA's distinction between "pre-diabetes" and "diabetes" is based on your hemoglobin A1c (Hgb A1c) level. This is a lab value that reflects how well your blood glucose level is controlled. If your physician is concerned about diabetes and your Hgb A1c is less than, or equal to 6.4, you are usually considered to have pre-diabetes. If your physician is concerned about diabetes and your Hgb A1c is greater than 6.4, you are considered to have diabetes. Regardless of your Hgb A1c, the only diabetes medication you can be taking and still be considered to have "pre-diabetes" is metformin OR liraglutide OR semaglutide OR tirzepatide. You can only be taking ONE of these medications.

Pre-Diabetes – if you meet all the following the criteria, your AME can issue a Class 1, 2 or 3 medical certificate.

1. You are being controlled with diet and exercise alone or in conjunction with one of the medications listed above. If you are being treated with a medication, you must have been on it for at least 14 days.
2. Your fasting blood sugar (FBS) is less than 126 mg/dl.
3. Your Hemoglobin A1c (Hgb A1c) is 6.4 mg/dl or less. This test must have been performed within the previous 90 days.
4. If an oral glucose tolerance test was performed (it is not required), the glucose value at 2 hrs must be less than 200 mg/dl.
5. You have suffered no hypoglycemic (low blood sugar) events within the last 12 months.
6. Your physician supplies you with a letter stating that you have no symptoms associated with diabetes and are stable on your current treatment program.

Diabetes – if you do not meet all the above criteria, the FAA considers you to have diabetes.

1. The initial FAA medical certificate after a diagnosis of diabetes must be issued by the FAA meaning that your AME will defer to the FAA and you will not leave his/her office with your medical certificate. This applies to Class 1, 2 and 3 medical certificates.
2. Your medications must align with the FAA's "Acceptable Combinations of Diabetes Medications."
3. Prior to your initial medical certificate (after a new diagnosis of diabetes), the following must occur:
 - a. You must be on your medications for a minimum of 14-60 days (depending on the medication).
 - b. Your Hgb A1c must be less than 9.0
 - c. Your doctor must fill out the "Diabetes Status Report" showing that your diabetes is in good control.
4. When the FAA issues your initial "post-diagnosis" medical certificate, it will be accompanied by a "Special Issuance" (SI) that outlines the yearly requirements for renewing your medical certificate. From that point on, assuming you meet those requirements, your AME can issue subsequent medical certificates and you do not have to deal directly with the FAA.