

# NOVEMBER | NATIONAL DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH



**1 in 11**  
Americans has  
diabetes today.



Every **23 seconds**,  
someone in the  
U.S. is diagnosed  
with diabetes.



**86 million**  
Americans are at  
risk for diabetes.



Diabetes causes  
more deaths than  
AIDS and breast  
cancer combined.

## RISK FACTORS FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES

There are many factors that increase your risk for diabetes. To find out about your risk, note each item on this list that applies to you.

- I am 45 years of age or older.
- The At-Risk Weight Chart shows my current weight puts me at risk.
- I have a parent, brother, or sister with diabetes.
- My family background is African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, Asian American or Pacific Islander.
- I have had diabetes while I was pregnant (this is called gestational diabetes) or I gave birth to a baby weighing 9 pounds or more.
- I have been told that my blood glucose (blood sugar) levels are higher than normal.
- My blood pressure is 140/90 or higher, or I have been told that I have high blood pressure.
- My cholesterol (lipid) levels are not normal. My HDL cholesterol (“good” cholesterol) is less than 35 or my triglyceride level is higher than 250.
- I am fairly inactive. I am physically active less than three times a week.
- I have been told that I have polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)[External NIH Link](#).
- The skin around my neck or in my armpits appears dirty no matter how much I scrub it. The skin appears dark, thick and velvety. This is called acanthosis nigricans.
- I have been told that I have blood vessel problems affecting my heart, brain, or legs.

If you have any of the items above, be sure to talk with your health care team about your risk for diabetes and whether you should be tested.

## PREVENTION OF TYPE 2 DIABETES

When you take steps to prevent diabetes, you will also lower your risk for possible complications of diabetes such as heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, blindness, nerve damage, and other health problems.

### SET A WEIGHT LOSS GOAL

Plan to set a weight loss goal: The key to preventing diabetes is to lose weight by eating healthy foods that are lower in fat and calories and being physically active. Set a goal that you can achieve. A good goal is to lose at least 5 to 10 percent (10 to 20 pounds if you weigh 200 pounds) of your current weight. A 5 to 7 percent weight loss was shown to have a big impact on lowering the risk of diabetes.

# HELPFUL TIPS FOR WEIGHT LOSS

## HEALTHY EATING

Eating well to maintain a healthy weight is one of the most important things you can do to lower your risk for type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

It can seem hard to make healthy food choices, particularly if you are on a budget and short on time. But there are some simple steps you can take to help you and your family eat healthier. Choose 2 or 3 of these suggestions to start today. Then come back another day and try a few more.

### BUILD A HEALTHIER PLATE

- Use a grocery list when shopping for food to help you choose more fresh vegetables, fruits, and whole grains.
- Buy leaner meats (such as chicken, turkey and lean cuts of pork or beef such as sirloin or chuck roast) and lower fat dairy products (like low-fat or skim milk and yogurt).
- Buy whole grain breads and cereals.
- Save money by buying less soda, sweets and chips or other snack foods.
- Remember that special "dietetic" or "diabetic" foods often cost extra money and may not be much healthier than simply following the suggestions given here.

### SHOP SMART

- Set aside some time to plan your weekly meals. You might want to start with just a few days. It may seem like a hassle at first, but having a plan (and writing your grocery list with it in mind) can save you time, stress and a lot of extra trips to the store.
- Stock your pantry with plenty of healthy basics, including brown rice, whole grain pasta, crackers and cereals.
- Remember that fresh fruits and vegetables are usually healthier than canned or frozen, but it is better to have canned or frozen fruits or vegetables than none at all!
- When you run out, put the items on your grocery list so you'll always have them on hand.
- Shop only from your grocery list.
- Avoid aisles that contain foods high in calories but low in vitamins and minerals such as candy, cookies, chips and sodas. Also avoid buying items promoted at the front of the store, on the "end-cap" displays at the end of each aisle, or at the cash register. These foods are usually low in nutrition.

## MOVE MORE

The American Diabetes Association recommends Aerobic exercise and strength training.

### AEROBIC EXERCISE

Aerobic exercise helps your body use insulin better. It makes your heart and bones strong, relieves stress, improves blood circulation, and reduces your risk for heart disease by lowering blood glucose and blood pressure and improving cholesterol levels.

The American Diabetes Association 30 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous intensity aerobic exercise at least 5 days a week or a total of 150 minutes per week. Spread your activity out over at least 3 days during the week and try not to go more than 2 days in a row without exercising.

## FIND THE TIME

If your busy schedule doesn't allow you to exercise for a 30-minute period during the day, you have the option to break it up into bouts of 10 minutes or more. Research has shown that the health benefits are similar when you do this!

For example, you might take a brisk 10-minute walk after each meal. Or you could try doing 15 minutes of aerobics in the morning before work and another 15 minutes when you get home.

Below are some examples of aerobic activities:

- Brisk walking (outside or inside on a treadmill)
- Bicycling/Stationary cycling indoors
- Dancing
- Low-impact aerobics
- Swimming or water aerobics
- Playing tennis
- Stair climbing
- Jogging/Running
- Hiking
- Rowing
- Ice-skating or roller-skating
- Cross-country skiing

## STRENGTH TRAINING

Strength training (also called resistance training) makes your body more sensitive to insulin and can lower blood glucose. It helps to maintain and build strong muscles and bones, reducing your risk for osteoporosis and bone fractures.

The more muscle you have, the more calories you burn – even when your body is at rest. Preventing muscle loss by strength training is also the key to maintaining an independent lifestyle as you age.

Below are examples of strength training activities:

- Weight machines or free weights at the gym
- Using resistance bands
- Lifting light weights or objects like canned goods or water bottles at home
- Calisthenics or exercises that use your own body weight to work your muscles (examples are pushups, sit ups, squats, lunges, wall-sits and planks)
- Classes that involve strength training
- Other activities that build and keep muscle like heavy gardening

## REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS TO YOUR NEXT DOCTOR'S VISIT!

Information gathered from the American Diabetes Association website. For information visit:  
<http://www.diabetes.org/in-my-community/american-diabetes-month.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/>