

# Control Your Diabetes

## It's Worth the Time

### Part 2. Diet & Exercise



#### **To control your diabetes, take the time to: Eat a Healthy Diet.**

The food that is healthy for people with diabetes is healthy for everybody. You can make some changes that will be healthy for you and everyone in your family.

**1. Eat regular meals.** Your body needs energy all day long. Try to eat three meals every day. Don't skip meals to try to lose weight. You will get too hungry, and you might eat too much for the next meal. Instead you should eat smaller meals more often.

**2. Eat a high fiber diet.** Eat plenty of high fiber foods. High fiber foods include:

- Fruits and vegetables. Try to eat at least five servings a day.
- Foods made from grain. Choose brown rice instead of white rice. Choose corn tortillas instead of flour tortillas.
- Dry beans, peas or lentils.

**3. Cut down on fat.**

- Drink 1% or skim milk.
- Eat chicken (remove skin), fish or lean red meat. Keep your servings small.
- Instead of using lard, use liquid oils like corn oil, olive oil and canola. Try to use only a little bit of oil.
- Instead of frying, try to cook your foods by boiling, or baking them in the oven or microwave.

**4. Eat less sugar.**

- If you drink regular soda, switch to diet soda.
- Cut down on sweets. Try to have them only once or twice a week.

**5. Eat less salt.**

- Use spices instead of salt to give your food flavor.
- Most of the salt we eat comes from processed food. Look at the label to find out how much salt or "**sodium**" it has.
- Stay away from high-salt snacks like potato chips.

**6. If you drink alcohol:**

- Alcohol has a lot of calories so it can make it harder to lose weight.
- Women should drink no more than 1 drink a day. Men should drink no more than 2 drinks a day.
- If you take diabetes medication or insulin, alcohol can cause a low blood glucose.
- Eat a meal or snack when you drink alcohol.

You will want to learn more about how to eat healthy. A dietitian can help you come up with a meal plan that works for you.

#### **To control your diabetes, take the time to: Exercise.**

Exercise helps to lower your blood glucose. There are lots of other reasons to exercise:

- Exercise helps with weight loss or weight control.
- Exercise is good for your heart.
- Exercise helps lower your blood pressure and cholesterol.
- Exercise makes you stronger.
- Exercise makes you feel good.



Here are some tips to help you get started:

- Find an exercise you like.
- Start slowly. Work up to 30 minutes most days of the week.
- Ask someone to exercise with you.
- Make exercise a part

of your life. It might help to exercise at the same time every day.

If you take diabetes pills or insulin, you can have a low blood glucose when you exercise. Always carry some form of sugar with you. You can learn more about exercise and diabetes from your healthcare team.

#### **A word about weight loss:**

Most people who have Type 2 diabetes are overweight. You can lose weight by eating a healthy diet and exercising. If you lose weight, your blood glucose levels will go down. Your blood pressure and cholesterol should also go down. You do not have to lose a lot of weight to be healthier. If you lose weight, you may not need pills or insulin to control your diabetes. If you are taking pills or insulin already, you might not need as much.

**To live a healthy life with diabetes,** it is very important to eat a healthy diet and exercise.

Remember to:

- Eat regular meals.
- Eat plenty of high fiber foods.
- Cut down on fat
- Eat less sugar and salt.
- Exercise 30 minutes at least most days of the week.

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