

# Aging Healthfully Newsletter

November/December 2021



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## November is National Diabetes Month

It is estimated that more than 122 million Americans are living with either prediabetes or type 2 diabetes right now ([National Diabetes Statistics Report, 2020](#)).



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### Diabetes Facts

- More than one-third of adults in the U.S. have prediabetes.
- 21.4% of people that have type 2 diabetes do not know they have it.
- More than 24 million older adults aged 65 and older have prediabetes.
- In 2019, diabetes was the seventh [leading cause of death](#) in the United States.
- The U.S. has the highest prevalence of diabetes among developed nations.
- [Medical costs](#) and lost work/wages for people with diagnosed diabetes total \$327 billion each year.
- Medical costs for people with diabetes are 2X as high as for people who do not have diabetes.



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### **Risk Factors for Type 2 Diabetes:**

- **Overweight** – being overweight, particularly carrying extra weight in the midsection increases risk of diabetes.
- **Physical Inactivity** – not regularly exercising increases risk.
- **Family History** – having a parent or sibling that has type 2 diabetes increases your chances of developing the disease.
- **Race/Ethnic Background** – while not fully understood, African-Americans, Hispanics, Asian-Americans, and Native Americans have a higher risk.
- **Age** – individuals older than 45 years have a higher risk of developing the disease.
- **Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS)** – women with PCOS have a higher risk.
- **Gestational Diabetes** – if you had gestational diabetes during pregnancy, then you are more likely to get type 2 diabetes later in life.



It is never too late to adopt a healthy lifestyle through diet and exercise, which can help prevent or better manage type 2 diabetes!

Click [here](#) for more information on Type 2 Diabetes.

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### **Ways to Improve Blood Sugar Control in Type 2 Diabetics:**

- **Eat a variety of healthy foods** like fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy products (without added sugars), complex



carbohydrates, lean sources of protein, and heart-healthy fats rather than saturated fats.

- **Choose more non-starchy vegetables** than starchy at meals or snacks, which are low in carbohydrates.
  - Examples: green beans, spinach, tomatoes, asparagus, broccoli.
- **Include a lean source of protein with all meals and snacks.** This will help slow down the digestion and absorption of carbohydrates/sugars and improve blood sugar control.
  - Example: pair a small banana with a tablespoon of nut butter for a snack.
- **Avoid skipping meals** or “saving up” to have one or two large meals rather than three medium to large-sized meals.
- **Read food labels** for serving size, total carbohydrates, and sugars. Use portion control to make sure you don’t overdo it.
- Check out the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans handout on ways to cut down on added sugars.
- **Daily physical activity** is one of the best ways to help regulate blood sugars, especially if we “over do it” at a meal or snack. It can also lower your risk for heart disease, which is a commonly seen in diabetics.
- **Maintain or obtain a healthy body weight for your age.**
- **Oral medications and/or insulin injections** may still be required even after making changes to your diet and exercise regimen. It is important to take medications as your physician/pharmacist prescribes you to.

**Feeling overwhelmed with the holiday season fast approaching?**

Click [here](#) for a diabetes-friendly guide to a Healthy Thanksgiving Plate!



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Click [here](#) to test your Diabetes and Food Knowledge!

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## Bring Awareness to World Diabetes Day!



world diabetes day

14 November

- **Plan a group themed physical activity** – walking, chair yoga, bowling with plastic bowling balls and pins, or dance.
- **Offer free blood glucose screenings.**
- **Provide information** related to healthy eating for diabetes and diabetes prevention.
- **Hold a “Learn About Diabetes” session** and invite a nurse, certified diabetes educator, or registered dietitian to present or be available to ask questions.
- **Hold a mini “Diabetes Health Fair”** and partner with local hospitals and diabetes clinics/staff to offer information on diet, medications, and lifestyle factors that help manage diabetes.

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**December – Healthy Holiday Habits**

The holidays are in full swing and that means lots of food and sweet treat temptations everywhere you look. Not to worry, you can still enjoy the holiday season without overdoing it!



### **Stick to Your Normal Routines and Do Not Skip Meals**

- Skipping meals to “save up” for one or two large holiday meals is not the best strategy – stick to your usual eating habits and routines - your body will thank you.

### **Balance Your Plate During the Holiday Season – Holiday Meals are Often Very High in Carbohydrates**

- Carbohydrates are not “bad” for you, but it is easy to eat more than your body needs.
- Choose better [sources of carbohydrates](#) that are high in fiber or take longer to digest (e.g. whole grains, beans, vegetables, most fruits, etc.) and make sure to include lean sources of protein.
- Makeover your traditional holiday meals with a few ingredient/food swaps or modifications – Click [here](#) for ideas.

### **Practice [Portion Control](#)**

- Pick your favorite dessert and sides and have smaller portions of them than you normally would.
- Avoid trying “a little of everything” as this often leaves you feeling miserable and is not good for your blood sugars.

### **Fill up on Fiber from Fruits, Vegetables, and Whole Grains**

- Look for products with at least 2.5gm of fiber/serving on the food label and aim for 25-30gm/day.
- A “*Good Source*” of fiber has 2.5gm-4gm of fiber/serving.
- An “*Excellent Source*” of fiber has 5gm of fiber or more/serving.
- Remember to start slowly when adding more fiber into your diet as well as increasing your fluid intake to help prevent constipation/diarrhea.

### **Do Not Forget to [Exercise](#)**

- Physical activities like walking, dancing, yoga, biking, or tai chi can help support both mental and emotional health by:
  - Improving your sleep
  - Reducing feelings of stress and depression
  - Increasing your energy level
  - Improving your overall emotional well-being and mood

**Click below for an additional**  
**[5 Healthy Eating Tips for the Holidays](#)**

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**As the weather starts to turn colder, comforting foods like soups and stews are a great way to incorporate extra vegetables and warm you up. Check out the two recipes below!**



Click [here](#) for a fall-inspired Chili recipe.

Click [here](#) for a quick and easy Tomato Basil Soup recipe.

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*\*Translated versions of the newsletter may not be posted on the site right away.  
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