



## LIVINGSTON COUNTY HEALTH CENTER

*"Your Local Link to Public Health"*

800 Adam Drive in Chillicothe MO 64601

[www.livcohealth.com](http://www.livcohealth.com)

660-646-5506

# Living With Diabetes

## It's Not Easy, But It's Worth It

You may have heard people say they have "a touch of diabetes" or that their "sugar is a little high." These words suggest that diabetes is not a serious disease. That is not correct. Diabetes is serious, but you can learn to manage it.

Anita Perry, RN, CDE, IBCLC

Source: NIDDK, NCBDE

Diabetes occurs when the body cannot produce enough insulin or cannot respond appropriately to insulin. Insulin is a hormone that the body needs to absorb and use glucose (sugar) as fuel for the body's cells. Without a properly functioning insulin signaling system, blood glucose levels become elevated and other metabolic abnormalities occur, leading to the development of serious, disabling complications.

Taking care of yourself and your diabetes can help you feel good today and in the future. When your blood sugar (glucose) is close to normal, you are likely to:

- have more energy
- be less tired and thirsty
- need to pass urine less often
- heal better
- have fewer skin or bladder infections

You will also have less chance of having health problems caused by diabetes such as:

- heart attack or stroke

- eye problems that can lead to trouble seeing or going blind
- pain, tingling, or numbness in your hands and feet, also called nerve damage
- kidney problems that can cause your kidneys to stop working
- teeth and gum problems

People who are at high risk for type 2 diabetes or the complications of diabetes can lower their risk by more than half if they make healthy changes. This can be accomplished by making healthy food choices, staying at a healthy weight, moving more every day, and taking their medicine even when they feel good. It's a lot to do. It's not easy, but it's worth it!

To find out more information about managing your diabetes or to set up an appointment with a Certified Diabetes Educator, call the Livingston County Health Center at 660-646-5506 or visit our website at [www.livcohealthcenter.com](http://www.livcohealthcenter.com)

Sources: ADA and CDC



## We Can Help...

### Individual Diabetes Counseling By Appointment

Call 646-5506 to  
Schedule.

### Bi-Monthly Blood Draw Clinics

Last Wednesday of  
Odd Months Walk-In  
7 a.m. to 10 a.m.

- CBC/CHEM Profile \$30
- Hemoglobin A1C \$10

### Blood Sugar Testing By Appointment

Fasting Glucose Available  
by Appointment for a  
small fee of \$5.00.

# SODA:

## WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

Americans drink 13 to 15 billion gallons of carbonated beverages a year — an average of 15 ounces a day.

People who consume the sugary drinks regularly drink 1 to 2 cans a day, which puts them at a 26% greater risk of developing diabetes than people who rarely drink regular soda pop.

One out of two American adults has either diabetes or prediabetes. People who drink sugar beverages have a higher risk of diabetes than those who don't, but why?

Recently, researchers in Sweden looked to see if sugars cause insulin resistance, which leads to diabetes. Insulin is like a "key" that allows blood sugar to enter cells after you eat. As you become insulin resistant, some of the insulin "keys" don't work.

At first, your pancreas compensates by making more and more insulin. When it can no longer produce enough insulin to keep up, blood sugar levels climb and you've got diabetes.

The Swiss study reported an increase in insulin resistance in the liver in people who got 80 grams of fructose a day for three weeks. That's about what you'd get in four 12 oz. cans of Coke.

Other note-worthy studies have clearly shown that drinking just one soda a day increases your risk of diabetes by 22%.

Researchers at Harvard have found that those who drank at least one sugary soft drink a day, including fruit punch (as opposed to actual fruit juice) were at about twice the risk for developing adult onset, or type 2, diabetes as those who drank soda pop and other sweetened beverages less often than once a month.

Other great reasons to limit soda include: empty calories, tooth decay, increased risk of obesity, decreased water consumption, increased consumption of ingredients you can't pronounce, and so on.

So, there's your scientific evidence as to "why" sweetened beverages really can be bad for your health. I ask you,... is it worth it?



## Staying Well... Preparation is Key

### Get A Flu Shot

For people with diabetes, the flu can be more than aches or pains. It can mean longer illness, hospitalization, even death.

In fact, people with diabetes are almost three times more likely to die from influenza or pneumonia.

Diabetics should get a flu vaccination every year as soon as it becomes available.

### If You Do Get Sick...

Be careful taking over-the-counter (OTC) medications. Be sure to read the label.

Stay away from traditional high sugar cough drops and liquid cold & cough medicines.

These drugs tend to be high in sugar. Look for the words "sugar-free" when purchasing OTC medications.

Source: WebMD



# EXERCISE

## DEFINITELY PART OF YOUR GAME PLAN

Regular activity is a key part of managing diabetes along with proper meal planning, taking medications as prescribed, and stress management.

Sometimes the recommendation to increase physical activity to improve diabetes can be daunting.

It can be hard to fit more activity into your schedule. You may even try to convince yourself it isn't that important as long as you watch your numbers.

The thing is, it really IS THAT IMPORTANT to your diabetes care.

When you're active, cells become more sensitive to insulin so it can work more efficiently. Your cells also remove glucose from the blood using a mechanism totally separate from insulin during exercise.

When you use your muscles, they need to get energy from glucose. If your muscles use blood sugar for energy, then obviously, the level of sugar in your blood drops.

So, being active consistently can lower blood glucose and improve your A1C. When you lower your A1C, you may be able to take fewer pills or less insulin.

Physical activity is also important for your overall well being, and can help with many other health conditions, like depression/anxiety and hypertension.

If you've never exercised before, you can find ways to add physical activity to your day.

Choose one or two things you'd like to try to get started. Then set a realistic, achievable plan to make it happen.

You'll get benefits, even if your activities aren't strenuous. Once activity is part of your routine, you'll wonder how you ever did without it!

Remember to start slowly and add activity time and intensity gradually. Begin with 10 minutes twice a day, or one slow walk around your block.

Keep track of your activity. Writing it down may help keep you on target. Think about what works best for you. Try a notebook, calendar, cell phone app or online activity tracker to log and record progress.

It may be helpful to meet with others who are also trying to be active. Think about joining a group for exercise or general support. Or find a walking buddy. Then work together to reach your goals.

Check your blood sugar before and after the activity, especially when you are adding activity or increasing the intensity. And, yes, always ask your health care provider's advice before beginning any type of physical activity program.

Source: American Diabetes Association



## DIABETES SIMPLIFIED

Diabetes is one of the leading causes of disability and death in the United States. It can cause blindness, nerve damage, kidney disease, and other health problems if it's not controlled. One in 10 Americans have diabetes — that's more than 30 million people. And another 84 million adults in the United States are at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Many forms of diabetes exist. The 3 common types of DM are:

- Type 2 diabetes, which results from a combination of resistance to the action of insulin and insufficient insulin production
- Type 1 diabetes, which results when the body loses its ability to produce insulin
- Gestational diabetes, a common complication of pregnancy. Gestational diabetes can lead to complications in mother and child and substantially increases the likelihood of cesarean section delivery. Gestational diabetes is also a risk factor for the mother and, later in life, the child's subsequent development of type 2 diabetes after the affected pregnancy.

Living with diabetes can be challenging to manage every day. You are the most important member of your diabetes care team, but you don't have to manage your diabetes alone. Seek support from health care professionals, your family, friends, and community to manage your diabetes.







## Tracking How Well Your Care Plan is Working

Blood sugar monitoring is the main tool you have to check your diabetes control. Using a self blood glucose monitor and logging your results is vital. The result tells you your blood sugar level at any one time.

Blood sugar targets/results are very individual, but the American Diabetes Association suggests the following targets for most non-pregnant adults with diabetes. More or less strict goals may be more appropriate for each individual.

- A1C: 6.5-7%
- Before meal testing/first morning testing: 80-130 mg/dl
- 1-2 hours after beginning of the meal: Less than 180 mg/dl

You should talk to your doctor or diabetes specialist about whether you should be checking your blood glucose and how often. Anyone newly diagnosed with diabetes, and/or who are making changes in medication, activity levels or weight gain or loss should be testing their blood sugars on a regular basis at least until the blood sugar levels have stabilized.

Source: Diabetes.org

# WEIGHT LOSS

## REALLY DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Weight loss is often recommended for people who have type 2 diabetes, but trying to lose weight while also managing the disease can be complicated.

Your health care provider may have specific instructions that go beyond the basic diabetes diet. They may also recommend that you work with a Registered Dietitian or Diabetes Educator to manage your medication and meal timing. If you are newly diagnosed, they can help you learn how to monitor your blood glucose levels.

Whether you have diabetes or not, successful weight loss happens when you decrease the number of calories in your diet. How many calories should you eat if you've been diagnosed with diabetes?

The National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse recommends the following caloric intake to achieve weight loss.

- 1,200 to 1,600 calories for a small or medium-sized woman
- 1,600 to 2,000 calories for a medium-sized or large man

Learn good calorie counting skills to make sure you're not going over limit.

Learn to limit or "count" carbohydrates at every meal. The American Diabetes Association and the American Dietetic Association recommend each meal contain between 30-45 grams of

carbohydrates.

Get familiar with the Nutrition Facts label to make sure you are eating the proper amount. Grams of carbs per serving is listed in the middle of every label.

Invest in measuring cups and a digital kitchen scale so you can measure the correct serving size of each food you eat.

By exercising good portion control, you'll make sure that you get all of the nutrients you need without going over your prescribed calorie count.

If you're on the go without your tools, keep these portion sizes in mind:

- 4 ounces of meat = size of your palm
- 1/2 cup pasta or rice = half a baseball
- 1 teaspoon of margarine or butter = one small dice

Meal planning is key for people with type 2 diabetes. Schedule small meals throughout the day to keep your blood sugar levels normal. Try not to go for more than 4 to 6 hours without eating.

Carry healthy snacks with you in case you can't get to your meal in time.

If you are taking medication, talk to your health care provider about timing meals and medication. Different medications

**Having trouble dealing with all the changes diabetes requires?**  
Call **646-5506** to set up an appointment with our **Certified Diabetes Educator**.

# The Stress of Diabetes

Stress plays a more direct role in the control of blood sugar than it does in any other disease.

**Stress can hamper diabetes care.** For instance, if you have so much on your mind you skip meals or forget to take medicines, it will affect your blood sugar level.

**People with diabetes should stay conscious of eating well and exercising regularly.** It's a good idea to check blood glucose levels more frequently when you're ill or under stress and to drink plenty of fluids as so you don't get dehydrated.

Once you've pinpointed your stressors and notice which ones send your blood sugar levels soaring, you'll need to devise some ways to chill out.

## Try These Six Steps to Controlling Your Stress

**1. Keep a positive attitude.** When things seem to be going wrong, it's easier to see the bad instead of the good.

Find something to appreciate in each important area of your life, such as your family, friends, work, and health. That perspective can help you get through tough times.

**2. Be kind to yourself.** Do you expect too much from yourself? It's OK to say "no" to things that you don't really want or need to do.

**3. Accept what you can't change.** Ask yourself these three questions:

- "Will this really be important two years from now?"
- "Do I have any control over these circumstances?"
- "Can I change my situation?"

If you can make things better, go for it. If not, is there a different way to handle it that would be better for you?

**4. Talk to someone.** You could confide in a trusted family member or close friend. There are also professionals who can help you find solutions. Ask your doctor for recommendations if you'd like to see a psychologist or counselor.

**5. Tap the power of activity.** Recharge on a hike, or do a relaxing mind-body activity like yoga or tai chi.

**6. Take time to unwind.** Practice muscle relaxation, deep breathing, meditation, or visualization. Your doctor may know of classes that teach these skills. You can also check for apps that do.

Life will always have challenges and setbacks, but you have the power to choose how you respond to it.

Source: WebMD



## Travel... Doesn't Have to Be A Challenge!

### Make A Plan

Travel can affect your diabetes control with changes in timing of meals, types of food consumed, and physical activity.

If you take insulin or other medications, you might need to adjust the dose or the time of day you take it. Plan ahead.

Talk with your diabetes doctor before you go on a trip. Keep your diabetes meds and supplies with you, and check your blood sugar more frequently. Carry snacks or glucose tablets to treat hypoglycemia.

If you are traveling with others, make sure someone knows you have diabetes and can help you if needed. You can have a great trip, despite the challenges of diabetes.

Source: Diabetic Living



# Take Care of Your Feet!



People with diabetes can develop serious problems with their feet that can affect how easily they walk, and even lead to amputation.

Many of these serious problems can be prevented by taking good care of your feet and your health. Manage your diabetes, including keeping your blood pressure, blood sugar (glucose) and cholesterol at levels your health care provider recommends.

## How Diabetes Can Hurt Your Feet

Diabetes can harm your feet in a number of ways. It **reduces blood flow to certain areas of the body**, especially the **legs and feet**, which makes it harder for your body to heal injuries. Diabetes **nerve damage** may cause you to **no longer feel pain** in your feet, and you **may not realize you have a wound or injury** that needs treatment.

## Warning Signs

If you experience any of these symptoms, contact your health care provider or a podiatrist (foot doctor) **right away**.

- You may feel **pain in your legs or cramping in your buttocks, thighs, or calves** during physical activity.
- Your feet may **tingle, burn, or hurt**.
- You may **lose the sense of touch or not be able to feel heat or cold** very well.
- The **shape of your feet** may change over time. You may **lose hair on your toes, feet, and lower legs**.
- The **skin on your feet** may become **dry and cracked**. The **color and temperature** of your feet may change.
- Your **toenails** may turn **thick and yellow**.
- **Fungus infections** such as athlete's foot may **appear** between your toes. You may have **blisters, sores, ulcers, infected corns, and ingrown toenails**.

## Foot Care

- **Check your feet for sores and other injuries every day**. You may have **serious foot problems yet feel no pain**.
- **Always check between your toes and on the bottoms of your feet**.
- **Wash your feet every day**. Dry them with care, especially between the toes.
- **Trim your toenails** (as needed) after you've washed and dried your feet—the nails will be softer and safer to cut.
- **Wear shoes that fit right** and do not rub or pinch your feet, or cause blisters. **New shoes should be comfortable at the time you buy them**—don't expect them to stretch out. **Always wear socks or stockings with your shoes**. And never **walk barefoot or while wearing just socks**. Wear slippers inside your home.
- **Physical activity can help increase the circulation in your feet**. There are **many ways you can exercise your feet**, even during times you're not able to walk. **Ask your health care team about things you can do to exercise your feet and legs**.
- **Remember to have your doctor give you a comprehensive foot exam every time you visit** (at least four times a year).

## DIABETES & DENTAL HEALTH



Diabetes can affect your whole body, including your mouth. So you'll want to take special care of your teeth and gums.

It's also important to manage your blood sugar. Over time, increased levels of blood glucose can put you at risk for oral health problems.

### Watch out for:

- **Dry mouth**, which can lead to soreness, ulcers, infections, and tooth decay.
  - **Inflammation in your gums**.
  - **Thrush**. People with diabetes often take antibiotics to fight infections and are more likely to get this fungal infection of the mouth and tongue. The fungus thrives on the high levels of sugar in the saliva of people with uncontrolled diabetes.
- You can do a lot to avoid these problems, starting with the basics of taking good care of your mouth, teeth, and gums.

### Everyday Dental Care Tips

- **Keep your blood sugar as close to normal as possible**.
- If you have dry mouth, try a mouthwash without alcohol.
- **Brush your teeth after every meal**. Wait at least 30 minutes after eating before brushing to protect any tooth enamel that's been softened by acid in the food.
- **Use a toothbrush with soft bristles**.
- **Floss at least once a day**.
- **Rinse daily with an antiseptic mouthwash**.
- If you wear dentures, **remove them and clean them daily**. Do not sleep in them.
- If you smoke, **talk to your doctor about ways to quit**.
- **Get your teeth and gums cleaned and checked by your dentist twice a year**. Your dentist may recommend you do it more often, depending upon your condition.

Source: WebMD