

Living Well

New perspectives on diabetes self-care

Nutrition & Exercise: **Food and physical activity matter**

Everybody needs food for energy. But some food can be a problem if you have type 2 diabetes. You may not make enough insulin to turn food into energy. Or your body might not use insulin the way it should.

What you eat affects your blood sugar

Bad food choices can make it hard to keep your blood sugar at a healthy level.

- Eating too much can make your blood sugar rise and make you sick
 - Later on you may have problems with your heart, eyes, feet, or kidneys
- If you don't eat enough, or take too much diabetes medicine, your blood sugar could drop too low, which is also bad for you



Get with the program!

Eating right and exercising are good ways to help control your blood sugar.

Ask your dietitian how:

- Food affects your blood sugar and blood fat levels
- Meals should be planned
- Food labels can help you make good choices
- You should eat if you get sick
- To plan for eating in restaurants and special occasions
- To find useful cookbooks



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Stick with your plan

- Eat about the same amount of food at the same time every day
- Do not skip meals
- Take your medicines at the same time every day
- Be active at about the same time every day

You can find out more about healthy choices at www.mypyramid.gov



Let's get active!

Like your meal plan, your plan for physical activity should be made just for your health and the way you live. Regular activities can be as simple as walking or working around the house. Choose activities that you like and that are safe.

Regular physical activity can:

- Make your insulin work better
- Lower your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol
- Help you lose weight
- Lessen stress
- Lower your risk for heart disease and stroke

You should try to do these 3 kinds of physical activity:

- Raise your heart and breathing rate
- Increase muscle and bone strength
- Stretch joints and muscles to keep them flexible

Set your own pace

Try to exercise for 30 minutes at least 5 days a week. Start slowly and work up to your goal:

- Start with something you can do on your own
- Take things a step at a time—start with 10 minutes and add more time
- Be active before work and during the day
- Warm up and stretch before and cool down afterward
- Wear comfortable clothes and shoes that fit

Talk with your doctor to find out what type of activities are good for you.

This newsletter is provided as part of your health care benefits. It does not contain all the information that you may need to know about this topic, and it cannot be used to diagnose your condition or illness or serve as a substitute for medical treatment. Be sure to discuss any questions you may have with your doctor.

This material has been developed by GlaxoSmithKline.

