

diabetes today


HEALTH NEWS AND INFORMATION

Your game plan

You are the most important member of your health care team. That means you must work closely with the others on your team and clearly understand the things you need to do to stay healthy. Your game plan will include:

- Monitoring your blood sugar.
- Eating healthfully.
- Taking your medicines correctly.
- Exercising.
- Telling your teammates about potential problems.

If you have questions about your treatment, talk to your doctor.



MANAGING DIABETES IT TAKES A team

Finding the right doctor for you

If you're searching for a doctor to manage your diabetes, the American Diabetes Association suggests asking questions such as these:

- Do you have special diabetes training?
- Which type of diabetes do you treat most often?
- What tests will you do during regular office visits?
- Who will respond if I have needs when you are out of the office?
- Do you refer patients to other diabetes care professionals?
- Do you accept my insurance plan?



HAVING THE RIGHT PEOPLE ON your side can make it easier to manage diabetes. Each member of your diabetes team offers specific skills.

An **endocrinologist** specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of diabetes and other diseases of the endocrine (glandular) system.

Nurse educators teach you daily diabetes management, such as how to check your blood sugar and take your medicine.

A **dietitian** helps you learn how to eat appropriately, taking into account factors such as your desired weight, health goals and lifestyle.

Annual visits to an **eye doctor** familiar with diabetic eye disease can help spot potential eye problems early.



For provider information, call the Physician Referral Line at **1-800-447-1098**.

Nerve damage or poor blood flow in your legs can cause simple sores to become serious problems. Visiting a **podiatrist**, who treats the foot and lower leg, may help you avoid these health issues.

Diabetes can affect you mentally as well as physically. **Mental health therapists** can help you deal with the emotional aspects of the disease.

An **exercise physiologist** can design an exercise program that offers specific health benefits suited to your needs.

Source: American Diabetes Association





HEALTHY facts

WORK STRESS LINKED TO DIABETES

People who feel constant stress at work may develop a cluster of risk factors (known as the metabolic syndrome) that raises the risk for type 2 diabetes. Symptoms include abdominal obesity, insulin resistance, high blood pressure, high blood fats and low levels of the good kind of cholesterol.

—British Medical Journal

DISEASE SNIFFER TO AID DIAGNOSIS

A breath-sniffing device being developed at the University at Buffalo could make it easier for your doctor to diagnose diabetes. The small sensor “smells” chemicals in your breath that indicate the presence of the disease. Similar sensors now in use require elaborate testing equipment that isn’t available in most clinical settings, the researchers say.

—University at Buffalo

THE filter factor

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO REDUCE RISK OF KIDNEY FAILURE

HEALTHY KIDNEYS FILTER WASTE products from the blood. But this process can break down for people who have diabetes.

That’s because high blood sugar forces the kidneys to work overtime. This damages the kidneys, and they begin to shut down. Signs that this is happening include fluid buildup in feet and ankles, sleep loss, poor appetite, upset stomach, weakness, and difficulty concentrating. These symptoms may not appear until kidney disease is well-advanced.

Not everyone who has diabetes will develop kidney failure, but anyone who has diabetes should take these pre-

cautions, the American Diabetes Association says:

■ Keep your diabetes and blood

pressure under control. Practice healthful habits. Lose weight if you need to. Eat less salt. Avoid alcohol and tobacco. Exercise regularly.

■ Ask your doctor to test your blood and urine for kidney disease. Your doctor can prescribe medicines that help slow the disease.

■ You may need a change in diet. Some doctors recommend a low-protein diet, since protein seems to increase how hard the kidneys must work. Don’t try a low-protein diet without a doctor’s permission, however.

If your kidneys fail, you will need to have your blood filtered

by a process called dialysis, or you will need to have a kidney transplant.

Swelling in the feet and ankles is one possible sign of kidney trouble.

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GIZMOS & gadgets

TIPS FOR BUYING DIABETES SUPPLIES

IF YOU'VE BEEN DIAGNOSED with diabetes, managing the disease may seem a little overwhelming. Part of the solution is learning what medical gadgets to buy and how to use them.

First, decide what you'll need, and then consider what you might want, says Larry Deeb, M.D., American Diabetes Association president.

One must-have is a good **blood glucose meter**. "There are a plethora of choices, and most of them are pretty good," Dr. Deeb says.

When evaluating different models, be sure you know what your health plan will cover.

Then consider the time each requires to do a test. Some take five seconds; others take nearly a minute. Ask how large a blood sample is needed and if the unit can accurately analyze blood taken from a finger, forearm or other location.

Ask your doctor if he or she has a sample monitor you can try, Dr. Deeb suggests.

Lancets are spring-loaded devices that prick the skin to get blood for testing. Usually they're part of a kit to monitor glucose.

Other gadgets are less important, but might make diabetes control easier, Dr. Deeb says. For example, if you have trouble controlling your blood pressure, consider getting a portable **blood pressure monitor**.

Similarly, proper foot care can be crucial for older people with type 2 diabetes. It may make sense to get a good **pedicure kit**.

And for people on the go, a **travel kit** designed to keep insulin and testing supplies cool could be convenient.

No matter what gadgets you choose to buy, these devices are constantly improving. If you're using something 2 years old, you may like a newer model better.



For more information, visit www.mychp.com, click on "Health Improvement," then select "Community Connections." Click on "View the American Diabetes Association Resource Guide."

You can choose a way to take insulin that's most convenient for you

There are many ways to take insulin. Work with your doctor to find the right system for you.

Syringes. For more than 80 years, millions of people with diabetes have taken insulin by injection. Today's small syringes have fine points and special coatings to make the injections as easy as possible.

Insulin pens. They look like pens, except there's a needle on one end and a prefilled insulin cartridge inside. Many people find insulin pens more convenient than syringes.

Insulin pumps. About the size of a pager, the pump delivers insulin through a flexible tube to a needle inserted just under the skin. The pump is

programmed to deliver specific insulin doses at specific times.

Inhaled insulin. An inhaler that delivers powdered insulin to the lungs has received government approval.

Pills and patches. Specially coated insulin pills and a skin patch are under study.

Source: American Diabetes Association



EXERCISE: STAY ON track

EXERCISE IS A GREAT TOOL TO help people with diabetes stay healthy. Check with your doctor before you start an exercise program, and follow these tips:

■ The time of day you exercise is important. Consider your schedule, mealtimes and diabetes medications. Ask your health care team to help you set a convenient time.

■ If you use insulin, find out if you should change your dosage.

■ Check your blood glucose before you start. If it's below 100, have a small snack. If your blood glucose

is above 300, or over 250 when you have ketones in your urine, hold off on exercising. It could make your numbers go even higher.

■ If you have eye problems, avoid lifting weights. This activity could make the problems worse.

■ Swimming may be better than walking if you have nerve damage in your feet. If you do walk, wear socks and shoes that fit well.

■ Drink plenty of fluids when you exercise. Carry food or glucose tablets in case your blood glucose drops too low.

Check with your doctor before you begin your exercise program.

you stick with the program. You can also set exercise and glucose goals and record your progress.

Source: National Institutes of Health

■ Check your blood glucose after you exercise. This will show you how exercise affects your blood glucose and help

HEALTHY recipe

Tangy cucumbers

This garden-fresh cucumber salad is a cinch to put together.

Ingredients

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cider vinegar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped fresh parsley
- 4 green onions, chopped
- 3 medium cucumbers

Instructions

1. Stir first four ingredients in a bowl to make a marinade. Cover and refrigerate until cool.
 2. Peel cucumbers if desired. Cut into halves lengthwise and scrape out seeds with a spoon.
 3. Cut cucumbers crosswise into half-moon slices.
 4. Add cucumbers to marinade. Cover and refrigerate for an hour.
 5. Drain and serve.
- Makes four 1-cup servings.

Nutrition facts (per serving)	
Calories 79	Calories from fat 0
Percent Daily Value*	
Total fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 6mg	trace
Carbohydrate 20g	7%
Protein 1g	
Percent of calories from fat 0	

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet.
Source: American Heart Association