



diabetes today

HEALTH NEWS AND INFORMATION

Resources for you

We offer support

As part of Community Health Plan's health improvement initiative, we are pleased to announce that the Diabetes Connections disease management program is now provided locally through our St. Joseph office. We believe it's important for you to speak with someone who understands your local health care system and can help you navigate through it.

Your care partner is there for you when you need encouragement, support or information about your condition.

As another extension of our service, we offer *Diabetes Today*, a quarterly health newsletter that keeps you informed of the issues that matter to you and your health.

24-hour nurse line

If you have a question about your condition after hours, we offer a 24-hour nurse line through Community Health Line. Our registered nurses have the experience it takes to provide quality health information.

This local service is free and confidential and is offered 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Just call **(816) 271-4000** or **1-800-455-2476**.

Questions? Need help?

Call **(816) 271-4000**
or **1-800-455-2476**.



Visit www.mychp.com.

Click on "Health Improvement."



alert

BEWARE OF RISING BLOOD SUGAR

IF YOUR DOCTOR SAYS YOU have pre-diabetes, pay attention.

Pre-diabetes means your blood sugar is higher than normal, even if it's not high enough to be diabetes. Unfortunately, pre-diabetes raises your risk for heart disease and stroke and often leads to type 2 diabetes.

Here's what you can do:

Know your risk. Have your doctor check you for pre-diabetes if you're 45 or older and overweight, or if you're younger and overweight with risk factors, such as:

- A family history of diabetes.
- Abnormal cholesterol and triglycerides.
- A history of diabetes during pregnancy or giving birth to a baby

Regular exercise and weight loss help lower the risk of diabetes.

weighing more than 9 pounds.

- High blood pressure.
- Being American Indian, African American, Hispanic, Asian American or Pacific Islander.

Exercise and lose weight. This can help lower the risk of ending up with diabetes.

Specifically, cut back on calories and fat and try walking a total of about 30 minutes a day five days a week.

Source: American Diabetes Association

HEALTHY facts

LEARN ONLINE ABOUT DIABETES

To find out more about diabetes, visit the Diabetes Learning Center for the Recently Diagnosed. Go to www.diabetes.org. In the search box, type "diabetes learning center." Click on the first option.



—American Diabetes Association

DIABETES A GROWING EPIDEMIC, SAYS DIABETES ASSOCIATION

Nearly 21 million Americans have diabetes, up from 18 million in 2003, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports. The new numbers highlight the growing diabetes epidemic in the United States, according to the American Diabetes Association. Weight loss and regular exercise could help prevent or slow the development of diabetes.

—American Diabetes Association



diabetestoday

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LOOK OUT FOR vision loss

DIABETES CAN STEAL EYESIGHT.

But you may prevent vision loss from retinopathy and other eye diseases if you keep your blood sugar under control and have your eyes examined regularly by an eye doctor.

Retinopathy damages blood vessels in the retina, the part of the eye that converts images into electrical signals for the brain to interpret.

According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA), nearly all people who have type 1 diabetes—and most who have type 2—will eventually have what's called non-proliferative retinopathy.

This type of retinopathy usually has little or no effect on your vision. Even so, your eye doctor should check your eyes frequently because it could progress to proliferative retinopathy. This more severe, often symptomless disorder can cause

blindness. If non-proliferative retinopathy is found in time, however, treatment may save your sight.

The ADA recommends that:

- People with type 1 diabetes have a dilated eye examination every year, beginning five years after their diabetes is diagnosed.

If you have diabetes, your eye doctor should check your eyes frequently.

- Pregnant women with type 1 diabetes have a thorough eye exam in the first three months of pregnancy and close follow-up throughout pregnancy.

- People with type 2 diabetes have a dilated eye exam shortly after their diabetes diagnosis and every year after that.

you're the boss

TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT DIABETES COMPLICATIONS

THERE ARE LOTS OF TIMES WHEN it pays to take charge, but perhaps none is more important than when you have diabetes.

By taking charge of your blood sugar levels, you may prevent or slow the progression of many diabetes complications, such as kidney disease, nerve damage and eye problems. You'll also be likely to feel better and have more energy.

The aim of tight blood sugar control is to keep your blood sugar levels as close to normal as possible. Your doctor can help you set specific goals and, along with your

health care team, show you how to reach them.

In general, tight control requires you to pay close attention to your diet and exercise and carefully monitor your blood glucose levels. If you take insulin, you must also change the amount you take and when.

There are two options for getting that insulin: a pump or multiple injections. The pump continuously delivers insulin and gives you the

ability to release more insulin when needed, such as before a meal.

With injection therapy, you take at least three daily insulin shots. Usually, it's short-acting insulin before each meal and intermediate- or long-acting insulin at bedtime.

Testing your blood sugar levels several times a day will help you know how much insulin to take and when. But you'll need to consider what you plan to eat and how active you will be.

If you don't take insulin, you may not have to check your blood sugar as often. Your eating and exercise habits will be key. Tight control takes work. But in many cases, it can lead to big rewards.

Diabetes Connections can help you stay in control. Visit www.mychp.com.



Study: Tight control of blood sugar lowers risk of heart attack, stroke

Carefully keeping your blood sugar levels under control may lower your risk of having a cardiovascular event, such as a heart attack or stroke.

That's the finding of a study involving more than 1,000 people with type 1 diabetes originally enrolled in the Diabetes Control and Complications Trial years ago.

The study compared diabetes treatment at the time with intensive treatment aimed at keeping A1C levels near normal. A1C levels show long-term trends in blood sugar control.

In 17 years of follow-up, researchers found that those who received intensive treatment had less than half the number of cardiovascular

events than those who were treated conventionally.

"The take-home message is that good glucose control should be started as early as possible to delay or prevent serious diabetes-related complications," said Alan D. Cherrington, Ph.D., past president of the American Diabetes Association.

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YOU KNOW EXERCISE IS GOOD for you—good for your heart, your bones, even your frame of mind.

But sometimes your heart just isn't in it, and dragging your tired bones off the couch is more than your mind can bear.

So how do you get motivated to move? Tufts University experts have some advice for beginners:

- Go slow. Don't try to do too many exercises during your session or work out too long at first.
- Make exercise a regular appointment. Schedule, prepare and plan your workouts.
- Set realistic goals.
- Keep a daily log of workouts.

If you've been working out for some time and are finding it hard to stick with your program:

Find someone to work out with—a family member, friend or co-worker.

- Make some changes—exercise at a different time, try a different sport or join an exercise class.
- Find someone to work out with. A family member, friend or co-worker can help keep you on track.
- Distract yourself during the workout. Put on some good music or watch television while you sweat.
- If you let your workouts slide—even for a couple weeks or a month—it's not too late to start over again.

Find health answers online

Through Community Health Plan's (CHP) Web site, www.mychp.com, you have access to health improvement information. Just click on "Health Improvement" on the left side of the home page to learn about:

- Wellness Connections.
- Community Connections.
- CARE program.
- Care Partners.
- Community Health Line (24-hour nurse line).
- *My CHP Connection*.
- Immunizations.
- Mental health screenings.

Services for members

As a CHP member, you will have access to MyCHP Service, an online tool that provides eligibility information, claims information, referral status and more. Through MyCHP Service, you will be able to order member identification cards, change your primary care provider and search the provider directory, among other things.

To access MyCHP Service, visit www.mychp.com and click on the MyCHP Service icon in the left navigation bar. You will be prompted to enter your username and password. Your username will be your member number. The first time you log on to MyCHP Service, your password will be "Password1," and the system will prompt you to change your password. Please remember your new password for logging on in the future.

Log on today and look through MyCHP Service to see all it has to offer.

Health information

Visit www.mychp.com and click on "Health Improvement."

MyCHP Service

Visit www.mychp.com and click on "MyCHP Service" for online access to your information.

