



# diabetes today

HEALTH NEWS AND INFORMATION

## Are you at risk?

Your risk for gestational diabetes increases if you: ■ Have had the disease before. ■ Are Hispanic, African American, American Indian or a Pacific Islander. ■ Are overweight. ■ Are related to anyone who has, or has had, diabetes. ■ Are older than 25. ■ Have had a very large baby or a stillbirth. ■ Have a history of abnormal glucose (blood sugar) tolerance.

If you have two or more risk factors, you're at high risk for the disease.

Source: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

## TAKING CARE OF YOU AND YOUR baby



## What about baby?

Most women with gestational diabetes give birth to healthy babies.

Sometimes, though, untreated or poorly controlled gestational diabetes can cause problems for a newborn.

For example:

**Macrosomia.** The baby's body is larger than normal.

**Hypoglycemia.** The baby's blood sugar is too low.

**Jaundice.** The baby's skin turns yellowish.

**Respiratory distress syndrome.** The baby has difficulty breathing.

Although these conditions can be serious, they generally are treatable.

Source: National Institutes of Health



SOMETIMES DURING PREGNANCY, there is a change in the way the body regulates blood glucose (sugar)—a condition known as gestational diabetes.

Gestational diabetes is one of the most common health problems for pregnant women, according to the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

Gestational diabetes develops when your body doesn't make enough insulin—a hormone that moves glucose out of the bloodstream and into cells.

Without enough insulin, glucose builds up in your bloodstream. If this process is not controlled, you and your baby may have serious health problems before, during and after the birth.

Testing for gestational diabetes by your doctor usually occurs 24 to 28 weeks into your pregnancy. If you have this condition, you will need to: ■ Learn how to test your blood sugar level. ■ Follow a diet that

Gestational diabetes is a common health problem for pregnant women.

helps control blood sugar. ■ Get regular, moderate physical activity. ■ Pay close attention to your weight, and gain only a healthful amount. ■ Keep daily records of your diet, physical activity and glucose levels. ■ Take medicines, such as insulin, as prescribed. ■ Have your blood pressure checked as your doctor recommends.



# HEALTHY facts

## MORE EXERCISE, PLEASE!

Less than 40 percent of people who have diabetes get enough exercise, according to a survey of more than 23,000 U.S. adults. To prevent or delay type 2 diabetes, get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity daily. To manage diabetes, get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 90 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity per week.

—*Diabetes Care, Volume 30, No. 2*

## GOOD NEWS FOR MANY MEN

Three drugs commonly used to treat erectile dysfunction are safe and effective for men with diabetes.

In eight studies of men with diabetes, those taking Cialis, Levitra and Viagra were compared to men taking a placebo. Men who took one of the three drugs showed improvements on all measures of erectile dysfunction.

—*Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2007, Issue 1*

# diabetestoday

DIABETES TODAY is published as a health improvement service for members of COMMUNITY HEALTH PLAN'S Community Connections program, 137 N. Belt Highway, St. Joseph, MO 64506, 800-990-9247, [www.mychp.com](http://www.mychp.com).

Linda Bahrke  
Plan Administrator

James J. McMillen,  
MD, FACP, CMD  
Medical Director

Amy Owens  
Marketing/Communications

Information in DIABETES TODAY comes from a wide range of medical experts. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your health care provider.

Models may be used in photos and illustrations.  
Copyright © 2007 Coffey Communications, Inc.

DBN20583p

# seeing CLEARLY

## EYE EXAMS ARE ESSENTIAL

YOUR EYES ARE LITERALLY YOUR windows on the world. But that expansive vision is threatened by diabetes. And that's a good reason to have your eyes tested regularly.

Eye diseases occur more often among people who have type 1 or type 2 diabetes than they do in the general population. But treatment may halt or slow development of eye diseases that can harm your sight, such as cataracts, diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma.

Even if your sight seems fine, you still could be in the beginning

stages of an eye disease. That's why you should have a complete eye examination if: ■ You've had type 1 diabetes for five or more years. ■ You have type 2 diabetes. ■ You're going through puberty and have diabetes. ■ You're pregnant or plan to become pregnant and have diabetes.

After your initial examination, have your eyes dilated and examined once a year.

Signs of vision changes include trouble reading, blurred vision and seeing flashing lights, dark spots, or rings around lights. Report symptoms to your eye doctor right away.

To help protect your sight, keep your blood glucose levels as close to normal as possible and have your blood pressure checked by

a health professional at least four times a year.

Sources: American Diabetes Association; U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

To speak with a disease management nurse, call **816-271-7862.**





# YOUR 4-POINT PLAN

## MANAGING YOUR DIABETES

BEING IN CONTROL: THAT'S WHAT diabetes management is all about. And being in control will be a lot easier if you have a plan.

Try this four-point plan from the National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse. It includes the basic steps you'll need to keep in mind each day.

**1. Stick to your meal plan.** A dietitian can help you devise meals that are healthy and include foods you enjoy.

Following the meal plan will help keep your blood sugar levels under control. As an added bonus, eating healthfully can help you:

- Reach and maintain a healthy weight.

- Control blood pressure and cholesterol levels.
- Prevent heart and

blood vessel disease.

**2. Get some exercise.** It's a good idea to get your doctor's OK before you begin an exercise program. Start slowly, and gradually increase to at least 30 minutes of exercise on most days of the week. The extra activity can help you manage your weight, give you more energy, lower your blood sugar level, and keep your heart and lungs healthy.

**3. Take your medicine.** Whether you use pills, insulin or other diabetes medications, always take them just as your doctor says. If you are sick or if your medication is causing side effects, let your doctor know. Don't stop taking your medicine without talking to your doctor first.

**4. Check your blood sugar.** Eating well, exercising and taking medications can all help you reach your target blood sugar level. But the only way to know if these steps are working is to monitor your blood sugar.

Your doctor will let you know how often you need to do this at home. You might need to check it once a day or several times a day. Common times to check include before and after meals and before bedtime.

Visit [www.mydhp.com](http://www.mydhp.com) for help keeping track of your action plan.

## Make daily records part of your diabetes plan

Keeping up with a little paperwork will go a long way in helping you manage your diabetes. So keep a daily record of pertinent information. Your record might include details such as:

- The diabetes medications you took, how much you took and when you

- took them.
- What your blood sugar levels were when you checked them and whether they were especially low or high.
- How you felt that day.
- What you ate and whether you ate more or less than usual.
- Whether you were sick.
- What kinds of exer-

cise you did and how long you did it.

- Whether there were ketones in your urine.

Keeping track of this information can help your doctor know whether your diabetes management plan is working and if your meal plan or medications need any changes.

Source: National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse

Community Health Plan  
137 N. Belt Highway  
St. Joseph, MO 64506

Presorted Standard  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Tacoma, WA  
Permit No. 1066



# take care WHEN YOU ARE SICK

IT'S ALWAYS IMPORTANT TO manage your diabetes. But you'll want to be especially diligent on those days when you're also dealing with another illness, such as a cold or the flu.

Here's why: The stress from being sick causes a release of hormones that can raise blood sugar levels and hamper the effects of insulin, according to the American Diabetes Association (ADA).

If you and your doctor make a sick-day plan in advance, you'll be better prepared for when you're feeling under the weather, says the ADA. The plan should include:

- When to call your health team. For example, you might need to call if you don't start to improve after a few days or if you have high glucose readings or moderate to large amounts of urine ketones.

- How often to check blood sugar and ketones. It's important to check them more often than usual.



- What medicines to take. You'll need to keep taking your diabetes medicines. You may also need temporary insulin (if you have type 2 diabetes) or extra insulin.

- What to eat. If possible, you should try to continue your normal meal plan, says the ADA. Drink plenty of liquids to prevent dehydration. Foods like gelatin, soups, crackers and applesauce may be easy on your stomach.

Call our 24-hour nurse  
line at **800-455-2476**  
for advice anytime.

## HEALTHY recipe Stuffed peppers

### Ingredients

- 4 large green bell peppers
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 onions, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium zucchini, diced
- 4 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 2 cups cooked brown rice
- ½ cup grated low-fat cheddar cheese
- 2 cups no-salt-added tomato juice

### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Rinse peppers, cut off tops and remove seeds. Save the tops.
3. Put oil in a large skillet and heat over medium heat. Then sauté the onions, garlic, zucchini and tomatoes until the zucchini is tender-crisp.
4. In a bowl, combine rice and cheese. Add to mixture in skillet and gently mix.
5. Put tomato juice in a casserole dish.
6. Stuff peppers with rice mixture and replace the pepper tops.
7. Put peppers in the casserole dish and bake in the oven for 30 minutes. Makes four servings.

### Nutrition facts (per serving)

Calories 294	Calories from fat 86
Percent Daily Value*	
Total fat 9.5g	7%
Cholesterol 3mg	1%
Sodium 120mg	5%
Carbohydrate 46g	7%
Protein 10g	
Percent of calories from fat 29	

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