

Diabetes Prevention

Useful Tips to Fight Diabetes

Preventing Type 2 diabetes is all about knowing your risk for the disease and taking actions to lower it. If you have been diagnosed with pre-diabetes, consider it a warning to make some changes. Lifestyle measures like healthy eating and exercise can reduce diabetes risk by nearly 60 percent. That's more than any medication can do!



Know your risk factors.

11 factors have been identified to assess a person's risk of getting diabetes: Overweight, 45 years of age or older, family history of diabetes, high-risk ethnicity, lack of physical activity, history of gestational diabetes, delivering a baby weighing more than 9 pounds, high blood pressure, high triglycerides, low HDL cholesterol and history of heart disease. Come and consult us if any of these risk factors apply to you.



Know the risk factors you can change.

Some risk factors for diabetes such as your age, genes, medical history and ethnicity, cannot be changed. Other risk factors—like your weight, physical activity, blood pressure and cholesterol levels are manageable.

Exercise regularly. Physical activity has many benefits, including helping with weight loss and lifting mood. If you have never exercised before, check with your doctor first. Think of ways to add physical activity to your daily routine—use the stairs instead of the elevator, take a walk instead of watching TV—even dancing counts. Aim for at least 30 minutes of planned physical activity 5 days a week, combining aerobic exercise with strength training (lifting weights).



Manage your weight. This is the most important thing you can do to lower diabetes risk. The key to losing weight is to consume fewer calories each day than you burn off. Reduce calories and fat in your meals by downsizing portions; eating slower; choosing low-fat foods; replacing starches like bread, cake and pasta with fruits and vegetables; drinking water instead of high-calorie beverages; and cutting out sweets.

Limit alcohol. Even if you eat healthy, you may be drinking on the pounds by consuming too much alcohol. Alcohol can raise blood pressure and triglycerides while lowering HDL, the good cholesterol.



Raise HDL cholesterol. Aim for levels of high-density lipoprotein (HDL, or good, cholesterol) of 40 or higher. The same measures that lower triglycerides will raise HDL. In addition, follow the principles of the Mediterranean diet, which has lots of vegetables, fruit, whole grains, legumes and olive oil instead of butter or margarine. Consider medication if lifestyle changes do not raise HDL to recommended levels.

Execute a plan.

Devise a plan to lower it. *Step 1:* Pick just one area to change. Maybe you decide to lower your triglycerides by eating more foods rich in omega 3s. Build on each new commitment. *Step 2:* Share your goals with your doctor, a family member or friend to help keep you accountable. *Step 3:* Seek help and support from health care professionals experienced in diabetes prevention. *Step 4:* Celebrate your successes, and keep going.



Take Action Now!

Lower your triglycerides. Aim for a level of 200 or lower. Reduce triglycerides by losing weight if you are overweight, stopping smoking, exercising regularly, and limiting alcohol and saturated fats. Do include foods that are high in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon, tuna, walnuts, ground flaxseed, and canola and soybean oils.