

Managing Diabetes

Finding out you have diabetes is not the end of the world. Many people with diabetes lead active, full and long lives.

Being aware of what makes your blood sugar rise and fall, and finding out easy ways to maintain your blood sugar within the target range is extremely important.

There are several practical steps you can take to successfully manage your diabetes. Very often a few simple lifestyle changes can make all the difference.

Watch what you eat

What you eat, how much you eat and when you eat all affect blood sugar. You should try to eat at a regular time daily, and steer clear of “empty calories”.

Avoiding fatty, heavy foods, and switching to a simple healthy diet, can help you to lose weight, and maintain a healthy weight, which in turn will help keep your blood sugar levels in control.

Exercise regularly

Not only will exercise help insulin to work better which will improve your diabetes control, it can help you to control your weight. Furthermore it can help lower your blood pressure, reduce your risk of heart disease and reduce stress.

There are many great ways to exercise:

-  walking
-  swimming
-  playing golf
-  bowling

The list is endless.

Small changes every day, such as getting up to change the TV station instead of using the remote, parking further away from work and then walking and taking the stairs instead of the lift, can all help.

Being physically active helps you feel better physically and mentally.

Remember, exercise and diabetes control are inseparable.

Join a Diabetes Support Group

When you have diabetes, one of the most positive things you can do is join a support group.

Research shows that people with diabetes who take an active role in the management of their diabetes especially through social support will do better than those who don't.

If you cannot find a service in your area, you should try calling your local doctor, hospital or health centre, which will often have links to diabetes health professionals and Support Groups.



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Maintain a safe weight

Being overweight is a significant risk factor for people with diabetes. Losing weight and keeping it off can be really challenging.

However, it is important to know that losing even a relatively small amount of weight can make a real improvement in reducing risks.

That's why, if you are overweight it's important to begin a weight loss program as soon as possible. There are all types of people who can help you find ways to decrease calories but still consume the foods you enjoy.

Dieticians, weight-loss specialists and some doctors can all suggest strategies to help you change old habits for new ones.

Body Mass Index is a good starting point to finding how much you should weigh.

10 steps to a Healthy Lifestyle

-  Eat healthily (low fat, high fibre and suitable carbohydrate intake).
-  Exercise regularly, 30 minutes or more at least 3 - 4 times weekly.
-  Measure your blood glucose levels regularly.
-  See your doctor at regular intervals.
-  Only drink alcohol in moderation.
-  Do not smoke.
-  Have your blood pressure and cholesterol checked and treated if high.
-  Join support groups if you think they will help you.
-  If you are too heavy, lose weight.
-  Maintain a positive 'stay well' attitude.

