



POSITIVE OUTLOOK

Health and Wellness Information for Members

Summer 2013



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Diabetes

Diabetes is a disease where there is too much sugar in your blood. There is no cure, but you can control it. There are two kinds of diabetes. Type 1 happens mainly in children. Type 2 can happen at any time in your life. Most people have Type 2.

This disease affects many areas of your body. It can cause problems with your heart, kidneys, liver, nerves, and eyes. HIV medications (meds) can make it harder to control diabetes. Some common problems are:

- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Vision loss
- Loss of arms or legs
- Kidney failure

Causes

When you eat, your body turns food into glucose. Glucose is a type of sugar. Insulin uses the glucose from your blood to feed your muscles, liver and fat. People with diabetes have high blood sugar because the insulin is no longer able to help the glucose leave the blood.

Some people are at a higher risk for this disease:

- Blacks
- Latino/as
- Native Americans
- Pacific Islanders
- People who are overweight or obese



Treatment

You can prevent and treat diabetes with diet and exercise. You may also need to take pills to manage your blood sugar. If the pills do not work, you may need insulin treatment. You inject insulin into the fat under your skin.

Your doctor will order an A1C test two or more times a year. The A1C test checks how your blood sugar levels have been over the last few months. It shows how well your diabetes is controlled. Your doctor will know what A1C number is good for you.

Your doctor may ask you to keep track of your blood sugar. You will test your blood with a blood glucose meter 2 or 3 times a day or more. You should write your numbers down and share with your doctor at every visit. There are websites to help you track your blood sugar numbers:

Sugar stats: sugarstats.com/

American Diabetes Association: 247.diabetes.org/

Default.aspx?loc=diabetes-247



P.O. Box 46160
Los Angeles, CA 90046

Member Services
Mon - Fri, 8:00am to 8:00pm
Tel (800) 263-0067
TTY/TDD: 711

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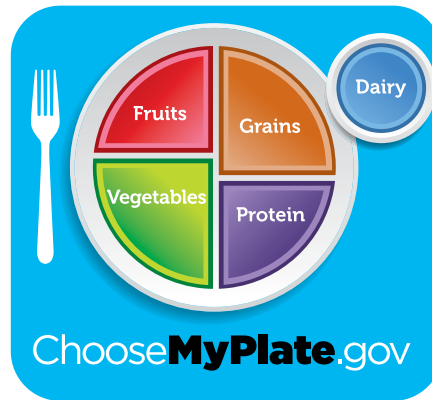
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The Plate Method for a Healthy Diet

One way to get to or keep a healthy weight is to eat fresh veggies and foods with fiber. The Plate Method helps keep your meals healthy.

- Fill half (50%) of your plate with fresh veggies. Carrots, tomatoes, green beans, cucumbers, squash, broccoli, spinach and greens are good choices.
- Fill one quarter (25%) of your plate with lean protein. Meats with the fat cut off, chicken with no skin, fish, nuts, low-fat cheese, eggs or tofu are all healthy proteins.
- Fill one quarter (25%) of your plate with a starch. Whole grains, rice, potatoes, corn, pasta or tortillas are starchy foods.

Try to eat foods that are steamed, broiled or baked. Fried foods have a lot of fat and can be bad for your heart. Limit how many sweets you eat and sodas you drink. Sweets can be harmful to people with diabetes.



Stay Fit!

You should get at least 30 minutes of exercise most days of the week. People with diabetes have special needs when it comes to fitness. Things to keep in mind are:

- Check your blood sugar before and after you are active.
- Check your feet for sores or blisters each day. Always wear shoes with good support and clean socks.
- Drink water before, while and after you are active.

Prevention Points

Prevention is key to a healthy life. Be sure to:

- ✓ Stay in touch with your doctor and nurse care manager
- ✓ Get labs to check your viral load and CD4 count often
- ✓ Take your HIV medications daily
- ✓ Talk to your doctor about an Advance Directive (Five Wishes Guide)
- ✓ Get a glaucoma test for your eyes
- ✓ Talk to your doctor about tests to check for colon, prostate and rectal cancer
- ✓ Get an anal pap test each year
- ✓ Get a pap test of the cervix (women only)
- ✓ Ask for routine STD screening
- ✓ Work out 30 to 60 minutes, 5 days a week
- ✓ Eat 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables daily
- ✓ Practice safer sex
- ✓ Stop smoking
- ✓ Limit alcohol use
- ✓ Stop illegal drug use
- ✓ See friends and be social for mental health and well-being



High Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a waxy fat the body makes to help build cells and make hormones. The liver makes this waxy fat from sugars and fats. Most comes from animal products. These are things like meats, egg yolks, shrimp and dairy. When there is too much fat in your blood, it can build up inside blood vessels. High cholesterol can put you at risk for heart attack or stroke.

Prevent and Treat High Cholesterol

Many factors put you at risk for this problem. Things like diabetes or family history cannot be controlled.

Some risk factors under your control are:

- Limit how much alcohol you drink
- Be more active
- Eat less meat, sugar and saturated fat. This is fat that is firm at room temp, such as butter or cheese.
- Keep your blood pressure under control
- Do not smoke
- Eat more fiber. Fruit and veggies have fiber. Fiber absorbs fats in your blood.
- Manage stress in healthy ways

You may need to take other meds to bring your levels down. Statins and fibrates are common treatments. Certain HIV meds raise the amount of statins in the body. Tell your doctor all the meds you take at each visit.

High triglycerides (more than 150 mg/dL) plus high LDL levels makes heart disease more likely. Your doctor will order a blood test when you start HIV treatment. You may be tested every three or four months to look for changes. Some HIV meds can raise the level of fats in the blood.



What Do My Numbers Mean?

Cholesterol is carried in the blood attached to proteins. The two types of proteins are LDL (the bad kind) and HDL (the good kind).

HDL helps remove fat from the body. High HDL levels lower your chances of heart disease. HDL levels should be more than 50 mg/dL in men and 60 mg/dL in women.

LDL carries fat to other parts of the body. The higher your LDL levels, the greater your risk of heart disease. LDL levels should be lower than 100 mg/dL.

Triglycerides are another type of fat found in your blood. They are made from the extra food you eat but do not use right away. They are stored in our fat cells and released for energy between meals.

Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis (TB) is a major health issue for people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). TB bacteria most often attack the lungs. It can affect other parts of the body as well. It spreads when a person who has TB sneezes or coughs. Someone must breathe in the bacteria to get TB. You cannot get TB from:

- A handshake
- Sharing food
- Toilet seats or bed linens

TB can live inside the body for a long time and not cause any problems. This is called **latent TB** infection. TB becomes active when a person has a weak immune system. This is called **TB disease**. A person with TB disease can infect other people. TB disease can be deadly if it is not found and treated.

TB and HIV

TB and HIV are closely linked. The risk of health problems goes up when PLWHA also have TB:

- You are more likely to have TB disease
- TB makes it hard for your immune system to fight HIV
- TB often lives outside the lungs. It can live inside your bones, lymph nodes or other organs.
- TB is the most common cause of death for people with AIDS around the world

Get Tested!

You should be tested for TB once a year. There are two types of TB tests: a skin test and a blood test. Most people have the skin test. A nurse will inject fluid under the skin on your arm. A small bubble will appear on your forearm.

You must return to the clinic in 2-3 days for the nurse to read the skin test. A nurse will measure the bubble on your arm with a ruler. A negative test means you were most likely not exposed to the TB bacteria. A positive test means you were exposed to TB or received the TB vaccine in the past. If you test positive, your doctor will send you for a chest x-ray. This will help them know if you have TB disease.

If You Test Positive for TB

Your doctor has treatments for both types of TB. You are less likely to get TB disease when you treat latent TB. You are less likely to spread TB to others when you treat TB disease. Be sure to follow your doctor's orders and take your HIV and TB meds on time each day.

For more on TB, go to: www.cdc.gov/TB



The Hospital How-To Guide

Health problems or a sudden crisis can lead to a stay in the hospital or skilled nursing facility (SNF). You may only be there a few days, even for very severe problems. Doctors may expect you to finish much of your treatment from home.

Your discharge (release) from a hospital or SNF stay may leave you confused about what to do next. You can have many pages of complex advice and new meds to take. Here are 4 things you can do to avoid problems when you leave a hospital or SNF.

1. Know Your Meds

Many of the problems around your discharge may have to do with changes in your meds. Your doctors need to know all the meds you take to make sure they mix well with your new treatments. Keep a list of all your current meds and carry it with you in your wallet, backpack or purse. Ask your doctor questions about all new meds:

- What is it?
- Why do I need to take it?
- How should I take it? Food or no food? Crush or take whole?
- How long will I need to take these meds?

You may have side effects from a new treatment. Talk to your doctor before you stop any med you are prescribed. A simple change may get rid of side effects.

2. Watch for Warning Signs

Warning signs tell you there might be a problem with your treatment. These let you know if you are in danger or you are not healing as you should be. Be sure to ask your doctor what signs to look out for. **Write down the signs before you go home.** Tell someone or call your doctor right away if you think there is a problem with your treatment.



3. See your Doctor

Your regular doctor needs to know when you have been in a hospital or SNF. The hospital may not tell your regular doctor about your stay with them. Arrange to visit your doctor the week after you come home. Tell them the reason for your stay and any new meds you were prescribed. Let your RN Care Team Manager (RNCTM) know where you have been and the reason for your stay. They can help manage your care after you go home.

4. Keep Good Records

You are in charge of your health. A good health record helps you keep track of your doctor visits, lab results, meds and hospital stays. It will give you and your doctor a “whole picture” view of your health over time. Write these down in a notebook or journal. Update the record when there are changes to your health or healthcare. Positive Healthcare gives you Passport To Health journals that are small enough to carry with you.

You are more likely to heal well at home when you follow the hospital how-to guide. It is helpful to work with your nurse care manager (RNCTM). The RNCTM can help you get the services you need as you go from home to hospital and hospital to home.



Your Health Home Team

When you visit your healthcare center, you will find each person in the Health Home (clinic) has a different job to do. A person's role depends on how many years of school and training they have. Each one will help you in a different way. They are all part of your Health Home and treatment team.

- **Physician (MD or DO):** the MD or DO is a doctor. They have the highest level of training. A doctor will find the cause of your health problems and prescribe meds or other treatments.
- **Physician Assistant (PA):** the PA is not a doctor. They have many years of training and can do many things a doctor can do. They can examine you and prescribe meds. A doctor must review the work of a PA on a regular basis.
- **Nurse Practitioner (NP):** the NP is the highest level of nurse. They work with all types of patient care. They can prescribe meds if needed.
- **Registered Nurse (RN):** the RN helps the doctor or PA with your care. They will give shots, do tests, clean and bandage wounds, give advice, work with you on health goals and follow-up after your visit.
- **Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN):** the LVN helps prepare you for your doctor visit. They will take your weight, blood pressure and pulse. They may take blood if you need tests. They may give you vaccines or other simple treatments.
- **Social Worker (MSW):** the MSW helps connect you with support services in your area. They can refer you to groups that help you build your social support system.
- **Pharmacist (PharmD):** the PharmD makes sure your care is safe and is right for you. He or she works with your Health Home team as an expert in:
 - o how meds work
 - o how they should be taken
 - o side effects to watch out for
 - o how new meds will mix with your other meds
- **RN Care Team Manager (RNCTM):** the RNCTM, or nurse care manager, works with your Health Home Team to help you make a plan for your health. He or she makes sure all your health and social needs are met.

Your visits will go smoothly when you know the role of each person at your Health Home (clinic). They work as a team to bring you the best healthcare for your needs.

The Brown Bag Visit

One part of living with HIV is the need to take meds each day to keep the virus under control. People often have more than one health issue. This can create a large number of pills to take each day. The average Positive Healthcare member is prescribed 7 meds by their doctors. A few members take up to 30 daily meds.

It can be hard to keep track of all your meds. **You need to know:**

- What they treat
- How to take (with or without food)
- When to take
(once a day, every 12 hours)
- If they need to be refilled

Your doctor and nurse care manager can help you manage your meds. Bring all the meds you are prescribed to your doctor visits in a brown paper bag. Be sure to include all the herbs and vitamins you take.

Your healthcare team will see if there are any meds you do not need. They will make sure you take all the meds you need. They will check that all your meds mix well together. Make your next trip to the doctor a Brown Bag Visit.

Hookahs and Your Health

Hookahs are pipes that filter flavored tobacco (shisha) smoke through a water bowl. They have hoses that come up from the bowl to allow 2 or more people to share the pipe. Hookahs come from the Middle East and South Asian cultures.

Hookah bars and lounges often offer coffee, tea, or food as well as pipes and shisha. It is a very social custom to smoke shisha with a group of friends.

Some think that the smoke from hookahs is less harmful than the smoke from cigarettes since it is filtered through water. **Hookahs are not safer than other types of tobacco.** They carry the same risk of cancers, heart disease and other health problems.

- Smoking a hookah for one hour is like smoking 100-200 cigarettes
- People hold the smoke in their mouths and lungs a longer time
- Smoke from the charcoal used to keep shisha lit has many toxins and heavy metals
- Second-hand smoke in hookah bars causes problems for non-smokers

Talk to your doctor if you need help to quit tobacco use of any kind. The Quit for Life program can help you for free.

Join online: www.quitnow.net/ahf • Call: 1-855-252-4871

Think About Joining a Trial!

New drug trials and treatment studies start all the time. These help create better treatment for all people living with HIV/AIDS. There are many types of clinical trials. One may be perfect for you. Your doctor may ask you to join a trial. Think about it!

For more info call:

California: (323) 913-1033



Special Needs

We know many of our members have special needs that make it hard to communicate with their healthcare team or Health Plan. Tell the doctor, nurse care manager or other member of your health home team if English is the not language you speak. We can call an interpreter who speaks your language. If you are deaf, hard-of-hearing or have other special needs, we can arrange a service to help us communicate with you. For your health, it is vital that you and your doctor or healthcare team understand each other. These services are free to you.



A Message from Your Health Plan

Your Contact Information

Positive Healthcare Partners cares about you and your health. We need to know if you moved or got a new phone number in the past year. Please call Member Services to update your record.

Member Services

Monday-Friday 8:00am-8:00pm
California: (800) 263-0067 TTY/TTD: 711

Medication Therapy Management Program (MTMP)

As part of Positive Healthcare California, you are enrolled in the MTMP. This Program helps people who take many prescribed meds. The Program lowers the chance of mistakes and reactions with your meds.

Your health care team will be in touch with you and your doctor. They will explain the drugs that you take. Your doctor will know of safety issues with your meds. Any other health issues will also be handled. Your RNCTM will contact you to make an action plan for your meds. An action plan with your nurse care manager will help with any problems you may have. The action plan will let you know just how and when to take your meds.

Compliance Hotline

Help us look out for Medi-Cal fraud and abuse. For example, if your Explanation of Benefits lists charges that are wrong, call Member Services. Call our Compliance Hotline if you suspect possible fraud or abuse.

Compliance Hotline: (800) AIDS-HIV • (800) 243-7448

We want to hear from you!

The Client Advisory Committee is a great way to tell us what you think about your Health Plan! We welcome all Positive Healthcare members and AHF Healthcare Center clients. You can share your questions, concerns and comments with our Health Plan leaders. We use your concerns to make your Plan better. Come to the next meeting to find out what Positive Healthcare can do for you!

California - Los Angeles

Tues, July 30, 2013 6:00pm – 8:00pm

Tues, Sept 24, 2013 6:00pm - 8:00pm

6255 W. Sunset Blvd, 21st Floor

To RSVP, **call Santiago at (800) 243-2101**

Food and drinks will be served.

Questions?

Contact Your RN Care Team Manager

Mon-Fri, 8:30am-5:30pm

Tel: (800) 474-1434

Urgent After-Hours Nurse Advice Line

Mon-Fri, 5:30pm-8:30am and 24 hours on Weekends

Tel: (800) 797-1717