Diabetes

Diabetes is a disease where there is too much sugar in the blood. A person who has diabetes will have it for life. There is no cure for diabetes, but it can be controlled. Type 1 diabetes happens mainly in children. Type 2 diabetes can happen at any time in your life. Most people have Type 2.

People with HIV are more likely to have diabetes and can have more problems with diabetes. HIV meds can make diabetes hard to control.

Diabetes can hurt many parts of your body if it is not controlled. It can cause problems with your heart, kidneys, liver, nerves, and eyes. Some common problems are:

Heart attack	Stroke
Loss of sight	Loss of limbs
Kidney failure	Sexual problems

Causes

Diabetes is caused by problems with insulin. Insulin is made in the pancreas. It controls the amount of sugar in your blood.

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 no longer is able to help the glucose leave the blood.

How to Manage Diabetes

You can use a blood glucose monitor to test for sugar in your blood. This lets you know if your diabetes is under control. Your doctor will tell you how often to test your blood and what your numbers should be. If your doctor asks you to check your blood glucose readings with a glucose meter, it is very important to write down the readings and bring it to your doctor's visit.

Treatment

Diet and exercise are not enough for some people to control their diabetes. You may need to take medications to manage your blood sugar. These can:

- Keep your liver from making too much glucose.
- Help your pancreas to make more insulin.
- Make your insulin work better.

If the diabetes meds do not work, you may need insulin treatment. You inject insulin into the fat under your skin.

Insulin has gotten easier to take. Insulin pens can replace vials and needles. You are more likely to get the right amount of insulin with the pens**.**

Diet

One way to get to or keep a healthy weight is to eat vegetables and foods with fiber. There are many ways to keep your meals healthy.

- Fill half of your plate with fresh vegetables. Carrots, tomatoes, green beans, cucumbers, squash, broccoli, spinach and greens are good vegetables to eat.
- Fill one quarter 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.

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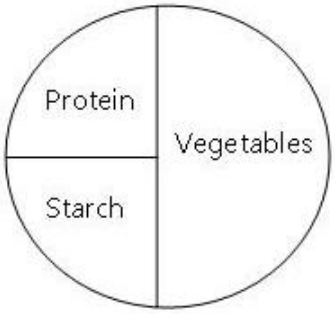
- Fill one quarter of your plate with a starch. Whole grains, rice, potatoes, corn, pasta or tortillas are starchy foods.

Plate

Try to eat foods that are steamed, broiled or baked. Fried foods have a lot of fat and can hurt your heart. Limit how many sweets you eat and sodas you drink.



Sweets can be harmful to people with diabetes.

Exercise

Exercise is the key to keep diabetes under control. The insulin in your blood works better when your body is in motion.

You should get at least 30 minutes of exercise most days. This can be done 10 minutes at a time. Exercise should make you take deeper breaths and your heart beat faster. You can

- Walk for 10 minutes after every meal.
- Swim, bike, hike, garden, clean house, dance, do yoga or stretch.
- Start with small goals and build up.

People with diabetes have special needs when it comes to exercise. Things to keep in mind are:

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

Things to Know

Never share blood glucose monitors or insulin pens with other people.

Have your eyes checked every year. Check your feet every day for sores.

For more information

Contact your Registered Nurse Care Manager, or call PHP Nurse Advice Line at: (800) 797-1717.

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