



Where Do I Begin?



**Living With
Type 2 Diabetes**

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START TODAY

Diabetes is a journey. There's a lot to learn, but you don't have to do it alone. The American Diabetes Association® is ready to help you every step of the way.

Get started today! Sign up to receive our free Living With Type 2 Diabetes program. Throughout the next year, get:

- 6 digital, printable journeys that cover emotional health, nutrition, physical fitness, and tips on managing your diabetes
- A monthly e-newsletter with tips, stories, and more resources
- 6 free issues of our award winning *Diabetes Forecast*® magazine
- Invitation to ADA's Ask the Experts Q&A series, accessible by phone or online
- Access to our online community and local events

3 WAYS TO SIGN UP TODAY!

- Visit diabetes.org/living
- Call 1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383)
- Email AskADA@diabetes.org

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START HERE: Living With Type 2 Diabetes

You have type 2 diabetes. And yes, it's a big deal. But you know what? It's also something you can deal with. And the American Diabetes Association is here to help.

When people first find out that they have diabetes, they are often sad, mad, scared, or feel guilty. All of these feelings are normal. After all, you probably don't feel sick, or any different than you felt before you were told you have diabetes. And yet it is very important to take this disease seriously.

Some people who learn they have diabetes worry that it means their life is over, or that they won't be able to do everything they used to do. Neither of those things is true. What is true is that you may need to change some things about your daily routine. It's not your fault that you got diabetes, but it is your job to take care of yourself.

Luckily, there's a lot that you can do to keep yourself healthy. This booklet will give you the first steps for taking control of your diabetes.

WHAT IS TYPE 2 DIABETES?

When you eat, your food is broken down into a sugar called glucose. Glucose gives your body the energy it needs to work. But to use glucose as energy, your body needs insulin.

When you have type 2 diabetes, your body does not make enough insulin or use it well, or sometimes both. Since your body's cells can't use the glucose from your food as energy, the glucose stays in your blood, where it can cause serious problems.

There is no cure for diabetes, but it can be managed. Balancing the food you eat with exercise and medicine (if prescribed) can help keep your blood glucose (also called blood sugar) in a healthy range. Many people with diabetes live long and healthy lives.

 **TIP** You can ask your doctor for a referral to a diabetes education program recognized by the American Diabetes Association. Find a program near you at diabetes.org/findaprogram or call **1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383)**.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR DIABETES

Your diabetes care team will help you, but day-to-day diabetes care is up to you. That care includes:

- Choosing what, how much, and when to eat
- Being physically active
- Checking your blood glucose (blood sugar) (if your doctor prescribes it)
- Taking medicine (if your doctor prescribes it)
- Going to your appointments
- Learning all you can about diabetes



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Who's on My Diabetes Care Team?

Your diabetes care team may include your doctor, nurse, dietitian, pharmacist, diabetes educator and any other health care provider working to help you care for your diabetes. Other specialists, such as an endocrinologist, ophthalmologist or podiatrist, may become involved as needed, too. And remember, you and your family and friends are the most important members of your diabetes care team.

Choosing What, How Much, and When to Eat

In the past, diets for people with diabetes were very restrictive. Things are different now. There isn't a one-size-fits-all diabetes diet.

While you may need to make some changes in what and how much you eat, you have flexibility in deciding what's on the menu. With a little planning, you can still include your favorite foods.

Create your plate

Trying to figure out how you're supposed to eat now that you have diabetes? A good place to begin is the Plate Method. You don't need any special tools and don't need to do any counting. Focus on filling your plate with more nonstarchy vegetables and less starchy foods and high fat processed meats. It really works. Find out how to use the Plate Method on the next page!

Weight loss

If you are overweight or obese, your provider or diabetes care team may suggest you try to lose some weight.

Losing weight can improve your blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol levels. You don't have to lose a lot of weight to start seeing results. Losing just 10-15 pounds can make a difference. The key to losing weight in a healthy way is by making small changes that you can maintain long term. Avoid crash diets, and above all, follow the guidance of your provider or dietitian to create a meal plan that will work for you.

There are many types of weight loss plans to choose from. Even using the Plate Method for meal planning can help with weight loss. If you're having trouble losing weight, talk with your doctor or a registered dietitian. The American Diabetes Association's Living With Type 2 Diabetes program includes more information about weight loss.



What does "healthy eating" really mean?

- ✓ Eating a variety of foods, including vegetables, whole grains, fruits, low-fat or non-fat dairy foods, healthy fats, and lean meats or meat substitutes
- ✓ Paying attention to portion sizes
- ✓ Trying not to eat too much of one type of food
- ✓ Spacing your meals evenly throughout the day
- ✓ Not skipping meals

CREATE YOUR PLATE

- 1 Imagine drawing a line across the middle of a 9-inch plate. Then draw another line from the top to the middle. You will have three sections on your plate.
- 2 Fill the largest section with nonstarchy vegetables.
- 3 In one of the smaller sections, put starchy foods, such as noodles, rice, corn, beans, and potatoes.
- 4 The other small section is for protein foods, such as fish, chicken, eggs, tofu, and lean meat.
- 5 Fruit, milk or yogurt can be included as your meal plan allows.
- 6 Choose healthy fats in small amounts. For cooking, use oils. For salads, nuts, seeds, avocados, and vinaigrettes are healthy choices.
- 7 To complete your meal, add a low-calorie drink like water, unsweetened tea, or coffee.

Water

Coffee

Unsweetened Tea

Nonstarchy Vegetables

- fresh, frozen, or canned
- artichoke
- asparagus
- beets
- bok choy
- broccoli
- cabbage
- carrots
- cauliflower
- cucumber
- eggplant
- green beans
- greens
- kale
- leeks

More Nonstarchy Vegetables

- lettuce
- mushrooms
- okra
- onion
- parsley
- peppers
- radishes
- salsa
- sauerkraut
- spinach
- summer squash
- swiss chard
- tomatoes
- turnips
- vegetable juice
- zucchini



Fruit

- fresh, frozen, or canned in juice or light syrup
- peach, pineapple, banana, apple, pear, mango, grapes, berries, melon, papaya, apricot, orange, grapefruit

Dairy

- fat-free, skim or 1% milk
- low-fat or non-fat yogurt
- plain soy milk

Grains and Starchy Vegetables

- whole grain breads, where “whole” is the first ingredient such as whole wheat, whole oats, etc.
- whole grain, high fiber cereal
- cooked cereal, such as oatmeal, grits, hominy, or cream of wheat
- brown rice, whole grain pasta, barley, whole grain tortillas and whole grain naan
- cooked beans and peas, such as pinto beans or black-eyed peas
- potatoes, green peas, corn, lima beans, sweet potatoes, winter squash
- whole grain crackers and fat-free popcorn

Protein

- chicken or turkey (without the skin)
- fish, such as tuna, salmon, cod, or catfish
- other seafood, such as shrimp, clams, oysters, crab, or mussels
- lean beef and pork, such as loin cuts
- tofu, eggs, lower-fat cheese

Getting Active

Being active is another part of living healthy and managing diabetes. Any type of physical activity you do helps lower your blood glucose.

Other benefits of physical activity include:

- Having more energy
- Relieving stress
- Keeping your joints flexible
- Lowering your risk for heart disease and stroke
- Feeling great

Talk to your doctor if you have questions about which activities are right for you.

PHYSICAL FITNESS includes five types of activities, and all are important for managing diabetes and good health.

- 1. Lifestyle** (activities of daily living, such as walking up the stairs or yard work)
- 2. Aerobic** (cardio, such as walking or swimming)
- 3. Strength training** (working muscles)
- 4. Balance** (preventing falls)
- 5. Flexibility** (stretching)



Aerobic activity

Aerobic activity makes your heart and bones strong, relieves stress, helps your insulin work better and improves blood flow. For most people, it's best to aim for a total of 30 minutes of exercise a day, at least 5 days a week.

If you haven't been very active recently, that can seem like a lot. But start slowly and add minutes as you get stronger. You can start out with 5 or 10 minutes a day and work up to more time each week. You can also split up your activity for the day: For example, take a quick 10-minute walk before or after each meal instead of 30 minutes all at once. Remember, some activity is always better than none.

Being active throughout the day

Reducing the amount of time spent sitting or being still is important for everyone. Set your alarm to get up and stretch or walk around the house or office at least every 30 minutes throughout the day.

Here are some ways to be more active throughout the day:

- Walk instead of drive
- Get off the bus a stop early and walk the rest of the way
- Work in the garden, rake leaves or wash the car
- Play actively with kids
- Walk around while talking on the phone
- Park at the far end of the lot and walk

"I don't feel so alone when I'm walking with fellow Red Striders. There's a feeling of unity when we walk together."
Learn more at stepout.diabetes.org



Checking Blood Glucose

Your provider may want you to start checking your blood glucose at home. If this is the case, you will need to get a small machine called a blood glucose meter. Meters are available in drug stores.

Ask your provider or another member of your diabetes care team to help you select a meter that works best for you and is covered by your insurance. They will also be able to show you how to use your meter.



Why is it important?

Before you had diabetes, no matter what you ate or how active you were, your blood glucose automatically stayed within a normal range. With diabetes, this is no longer true.

Checking your blood glucose is one way you can know how food, activity and medicine affect your blood glucose. It can help you make decisions about what to do next.

Write the date, time and blood glucose number in a logbook so you can share it with your diabetes care team. Together with the team, you can use your logbook to make decisions about your diabetes care plan.

Talk with your doctor about how often and when you should check your blood glucose. Before a meal or 2 hours after a meal are common times to check blood glucose. Also talk with your provider about what your target numbers should be.

Medicines

Your provider may prescribe medicine to help get and keep your blood glucose in your target range. There are different types of diabetes medicines that work in different ways to lower blood glucose. Your doctor may prescribe more than one to help you get to your target range. Type 2 diabetes is a progressive disease, so as time goes on your body may need additional medications and/or insulin to keep your blood glucose in your target range.

If you are starting new medicines, ask your doctor, pharmacist or diabetes educator the following questions:

- How much medication do I take?
- How often should I take my medicine, and when?
- Should I take my medicine on an empty stomach or with food?
- What if I forget to take my medicine and remember later?
- What side effects could I have?
- What should I do if I have side effects?
- Will my diabetes medicine cause a problem with any of my other medicines?

If you think you are having side effects from your medicine, or have questions, call your provider or pharmacist. Don't stop taking it without talking with your provider first. Remember, your medicine will work best if you also make healthy changes to how you eat and stay active.



How Do You Feel?

When people are diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, they have many different emotions including:

- A sense of loss
- Anger
- Disbelief and not wanting to think about it
- Fear
- Shock
- Sadness
- Guilt

 **TIP** Ask your diabetes care team to help if your feelings are overwhelming you or affecting the way you take care of yourself. Your health care provider can suggest ways to help you cope with difficult feelings.

The thing to remember is that all of these feelings are completely normal and feelings come and go. Finding out that you have diabetes is a big deal. And even if you're doing great with it now, there may be moments where you feel down about what has happened.

It's a great idea to talk to family, friends, or your doctor about how you're feeling. Sometimes just putting your thoughts into words makes dealing with them easier. Other people may be able to help you see the positive side of things, or figure out ways to reduce the stress. Building a support network for yourself will be important.

Getting Support

Your family and friends can be a great source of support because they care about you. But they can't help you with diabetes unless they understand it. You can help them by telling them what you need from them.

Try some of these ideas:

- Ask them to learn about how diabetes affects your body and emotions.
- Invite them to attend your appointments or diabetes classes.
- Include them in your new healthy lifestyle.
- Share this booklet with them.
- Ask for help when you need it.

You want the people around you to know how to help, but it's also okay to tell them if you don't want their help.

Diabetes and Financial Assistance

Diabetes management can be a financial burden if you are uninsured or under insured. Here are some resources that can help.

If you are age 65 or older

Medicare. All American citizens age 65 or older, the disabled, and individuals with end-stage renal disease who purchase Medicare Part B coverage and/or Medicare managed care policies are eligible for the following:

- Blood glucose testing supplies
- Blood glucose monitors
- Blood glucose monitoring strips
- Lancets
- Spring loaded lancet devices
- Glucose control solution for calibrating meters

**Limitations apply. Get more details at diabetes.org/healthinsurance.*



IF YOU ARE UNINSURED AND/OR HAVE MONEY TROUBLES

If you're having trouble with payments for care, medications, or supplies, representatives at the American Diabetes Association's Center for Information can help connect you with resources that may be of assistance. Call **1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383)**.

GET TO KNOW US

Our Mission: To prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes.

Diabetes Education Programs

The American Diabetes Association can help you find local diabetes education programs that we recognize as meeting quality standards. These programs focus on your concerns about diabetes. They will also empower you with the knowledge and skills to manage it. You can find a program in your area at diabetes.org/findaprogram or by calling **1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383)**.

Have Questions About Diabetes? We Can Help.

Our trained representatives at the Center for Information (**1-800-DIABETES**) are your personal guides to information on diabetes. Call, chat, or email us and we'll help you find answers to your questions.

Diabetes Food Hub

Choosing what to eat is an important part of your day—especially if you are managing diabetes. Diabetes Food Hub is a FREE online resource that makes eating healthy easier for you with tasty recipes, tips from ADA's dietitians, an interactive meal planner, and grocery list maker. Explore diabetesfoodhub.org.

Protecting Your Rights

People with diabetes have rights that protect them against discrimination at work, at school, and elsewhere in their lives. We can help you understand your legal rights and help you take action to stop the discrimination. Call us to find out more or visit diabetes.org/discrimination.

Online Support Community

Visit our support community and you'll find a dedicated and passionate group that is here for you. You'll connect with people who understand that managing your diabetes can be a difficult and frustrating task. Our online community is a place to listen, learn, and share. Visit diabetes.org/NewType2.

 **American Diabetes Association®**
Living With Type 2 Diabetes

Sign up at diabetes.org/living