It's Not Too Late to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes

Tips for Older Adults

Take Your First Step Today

Did you know that as you get older, you have a greater chance of getting type 2 diabetes? It's true. You have a greater chance of getting diabetes if you are age 45 or older, are overweight or obese, or have a family history of diabetes.

You can take steps to prevent or delay getting type 2 diabetes. If you are overweight, losing a modest amount of weight can help. A modest weight loss for a 200-pound person who wants to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes is about 10 to 14 pounds. Read this tip sheet to find out how.

Step 1: Eat well to help prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

Taking steps to lose weight can include eating smaller meal portions and choosing healthy foods. Here are a few tips to help you get started with both.

Choose healthy foods. Eat more fruits and vegetables and fewer high-fat foods to help with weight loss.

- Choose whole grain foods such as whole wheat bread, crackers, cereals, brown rice, oatmeal, and barley.
- Eat a mix of colorful fruits and vegetables.
- Choose fish, lean meat, and chicken and turkey without the skin.
- Eat foods that have been baked, broiled, or grilled instead of fried.
- Drink water instead of juice and regular soda.

Choose low-fat or skim milk, yogurt, and cheese.

NDEP National Diabetes Education Program

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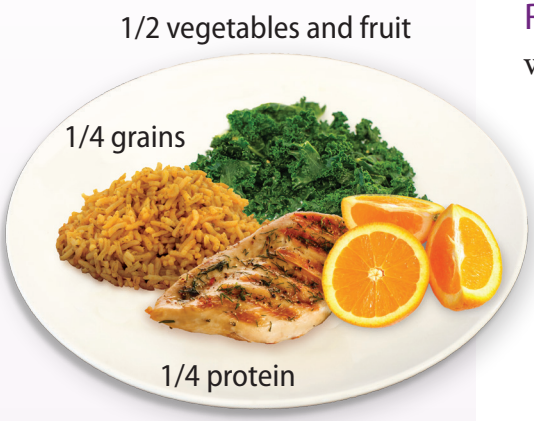

Reduce portion sizes and fill your plate like this.

Stretch after being active.

Go for a brisk walk.

Reduce portion sizes. Eat smaller amounts of food to help with weight loss.

- Fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetables. Fill one quarter with a lean protein, such as chicken or turkey without the skin or beans. Fill one quarter with a whole grain, such as brown rice or whole wheat pasta.
- Share your main dish when eating out or wrap half of it to go.
- Eat a small serving of dessert at the end of a healthy meal, but not every day. Sweets and desserts have a lot of fat and sugar.
- Eat small amounts of heart-healthy fats. Examples include nuts, seeds, and vegetable oils. For most nuts and seeds without the shell, a small amount would be 1 ounce or a small handful.

Step 2: Start now to get moving — and have fun.

Moving more and sitting less can help you lose weight or stay at a healthy weight. It also can also help you improve your strength and become more flexible. Ask your doctor how you can safely start to be more active.

Find ways to move more every day. Add more activity each day until you reach at least 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week.

- Get off the couch, turn on the music, and dance!
- Do not sit for long periods of time.
- Stretch and move around during commercial breaks.
- Walk around the house while you talk on the phone.
- Park your car farther away and walk if it is safe.

Brisk walking is a great way to be active. During a brisk walk, you walk faster than your normal pace. Here are some tips to get you started:

- Start with 10 minutes a day if you are not active.
- Walk slowly for a few minutes to warm up then increase your speed over time.
- Wear walking shoes that fit your feet and provide comfort and support.
- Walk in safe places. Some good places for brisk walking include indoor or outdoor walking paths, a shopping mall, and community centers.

Remember to warm up and stretch. Before you start any activity, warm up slowly. Shrug your shoulders, swing your arms or march in place for 3 to 5 minutes before. Stretch after you have been active when your muscles are warm. Do not bounce or stretch so far that it hurts.

Step 3: Get your friends and family involved.

Making lifestyle changes can be easier with help from your loved ones.

- Offer fruit instead of cookies and chips when your grandkids, friends, and family visit.
- Show the younger people in your life the dances you enjoy.
- Enjoy a walk with friends or family around a park, museum, or zoo.
- Go for a swim with a friend. Moving around in water is gentle on your joints.

Teach your kids or grandkids how to plant and take care of a garden.

Step 4: Make a plan.

Use this section to plan how you will eat healthy foods and move more. Think about what is important to your health and what changes you are willing and able to make. To get started, choose one goal to work on and decide what steps will help you reach your goal.

Take Your First Steps

What's my goal?
(Example: I want to see if I can walk for 30 minutes, 5 days of the week.)

How will I get started?
(Example: I will walk for 10 minutes after lunch.)

What do I need to get ready?
(Example: I will put my walking shoes where I can see them every day.)

What might get in the way of making this change?
(Example: If it is bad weather, I will walk at the mall.)

How will I reward myself for sticking with my plan?
(Example: If I stick with my plan this week, I will watch a movie.)

Step 5: Find out how insurance coverage can help you prevent type 2 diabetes.

Medicare. Medicare covers all or some of the costs of certain exams, tests, and check-ups for people who have a greater chance of getting diabetes. Medicare will also cover certain weight loss services and programs.

Other health insurance. Other plans may also cover the costs of certain exams, tests, check-ups, and diabetes prevention programs approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for people who have a greater chance of getting diabetes. Ask your doctor or insurance company what your plan covers.

Things to Remember:

- If you are overweight, set a goal to lose a small amount of weight to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.
- Make healthy food choices and find ways to reduce your portion sizes.
- Let your doctor or health care team know you want to find ways to be active each day. If you have trouble moving, ask about safe ways you can be more active.
- Find out what services your health insurance plan covers to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

www.ndep.nih.gov

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By joining a research study, people can help improve their health and the health of others. See www.clinicaltrials.gov and www.cdc.gov/diabetes/projects/index.htm.

To learn more:

National Diabetes Education Program
1-800-860-8747
TTY: 1-866-569-1162
www.ndep.nih.gov

Request a free copy of the *Your GAME PLAN to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes* booklet. It has charts to help you track the foods you eat and how much you move each day.

Diabetes HealthSense: An online library of resources for living well.
www.ndep.nih.gov/healthsense

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1-800-CDC-INFO
(1-800-232-4636)
www.cdc.gov/diabetes

National Diabetes Prevention Program
www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
1-800-MEDICARE
(1-800-633-4227)
www.medicare.gov

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases
1-800-860-8747
www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov

Weight-control Information Network (WIN)
1-877-946-4627
www.win.niddk.nih.gov

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