

Head-to-Toe Health Tips for People with Diabetes

When a person is diagnosed with diabetes, it's normal for them to feel stressed and overwhelmed. There's a lot to learn. The good news is there are steps you can take to reduce the risk of diabetes-related issues. By adopting healthy lifestyle habits, you can see benefits in your daily life with diabetes. All [three types](#) can be managed (at least partially) through a healthy lifestyle. Eating right and getting enough daily physical activity can help you control diabetes and prevent diabetes-related illnesses.

Learn more about how nutrition and exercise can help manage diabetes.

What's the Best Exercise?

Not only does exercise help you maintain a healthy weight, but it also lowers cholesterol, strengthens bones, and improves mood. [Physical activity](#) is also important for improving circulation thereby reducing your risk of foot-related ailments and amputation. When deciding what exercise to implement into your life, start by thinking about what you love. If you love dogs, consider launching a dog-walking business. If you like hiking, try to get a few friends together to go on a weekly trek. No matter what you do, ensure you are moving, stretching, and sweating each day. You can even up the motivation factor by investing in a smartwatch or fitness tracker so you can track your progress, keep tabs on your vitals and engage in some healthy competition with others.

Avoiding Stress

If diabetes is causing you stress that is getting in the way of you reaching your fitness and nutrition goals, you'll need to find ways to mitigate that stress. Spending more time in the sun, avoiding negative people, and laughing more can all help reduce stress. Also, taking up a new hobby, using all your vacation days, and [deep breathing](#) are other ways you can alleviate tension.

One major cause of stress for many is clutter. If your home is full of unused, unwanted, or old items, take steps to declutter your house. If you have an abundance of paperwork, go through these documents and digitize what you'd like to keep. You can scan these documents, save them as PDFs, and then [merge PDF files](#) to create one (or several) larger files so you can easily locate this paperwork whenever you need to.

Importance of Nutrition

People living with diabetes have high [levels of glucose](#) (sugar) in their blood. The sugar in blood comes from food and is used by the body to produce energy. In order to turn blood glucose into energy, the pancreas produces insulin. Diabetic individuals do not produce enough insulin to convert glucose into energy. As a result, they may need to take insulin injections to convert glucose to energy. Because glucose comes from food, it is important that the food you are eating helps stabilize insulin levels. Not eating a healthy diet while having diabetes can result in kidney disease, cataracts, and heart complications.

In addition, poorly managed diabetes can cause nerve damage resulting in tingling, numbness, and pain. A lack of blood flow to your feet and lower legs can result in ulcers and infection. If you want to take care of your body both now and in the future, be sure you are eating the right foods.

What Foods *Should* You Eat?

Eating [three](#) regular meals a day plus healthy snacks can help to stabilize blood glucose levels. For maximum results, be sure these meals have a base of vegetables and protein. Leafy greens and broccoli are packed with nutrients that stabilize blood sugar and leave you feeling satiated. As for protein, consider eating fish, poultry, and eggs. Looking for plant-based proteins? Consider black beans, edamame, nuts, and tofu. There are countless online recipes specifically designed for people with diabetes.

To avoid the trans fats contained in oil and butter, consider grilling your meals using either an outdoor grill or a grill pan indoors. Grilling is a great way to make preparing diabetic-friendly meals fun. Flavor can easily be added using lemon, garlic, and herbs.

What Foods *Shouldn't* You Eat?

Avoid sugary foods such as juice, candy, and soda. Because carbohydrates are packed with sugars, try to avoid white bread, rice, pastries, and pasta. In addition, avoid foods that are high in saturated fat such as butter, cream, fatty meats, and fried foods. Eating a diet that is high in saturated fats has been shown to worsen insulin resistance. Avoiding alcohol is also an important component of diabetes management. Alcohol can inflame the pancreas and dehydrate the body leaving you feeling exhausted. Avoiding these types of foods will help you reach or maintain a healthy weight.

Diabetes doesn't have to define you. By eating healthy and getting enough exercise, you will be better able to manage your diabetes and regain control over your daily life.

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