

Have a New Diagnosis of Type 2 Diabetes? 4 Simple Tips to Manage Your Diabetes

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If you or a loved one is diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes, take heart: it is a manageable condition. Although there is no cure for Type 2 Diabetes, there are many ways to manage it. People living with Type 2 Diabetes have a reduced ability to use insulin, which is called insulin resistance.

This leaves high levels of glucose in the bloodstream, which may cause long-term damage to vital organs. Keeping your blood glucose level within the right range is the first step to a healthy quality of life.

What can you do to live longer and better despite having Type 2 Diabetes?

The answer is by actively managing your diabetes. Read on to learn how you can manage your diabetes with these four simple tips!

Choose a high-quality diet

You are what you eat, and what you eat affects your blood glucose level. Choosing the right diet helps to manage your diabetes and your body weight. This goes beyond selecting just what to eat; the quantity you eat is just as important. Ask your doctor to refer you for a consultation with a dietitian. The dietitian will work with you to formulate a healthy eating plan that manages your body weight and blood glucose. In addition, this plan can reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases, such as having high blood pressure and high lipid levels. A healthy eating plan consists of foods that constitute a balanced meal, but are low in fat and calories. Additionally, here are a few family-friendly meal ideas I suggest!

Engage in physical activity

Do you know that engaging in physical activity—something as simple as walking, gardening or standing—for extended periods reduces your blood glucose? Engaging in exercise benefits your health in many ways. It improves your blood glucose control, reduces your exposure to

cardiovascular disease risk, and keeps your body weight in check. Research findings show that people living with diabetes who walk a minimum of two hours a week were less likely to die of heart disease. Furthermore, those who walked or exercised for four hours a week reduced their risk of heart disease even more. Be sure to talk to your doctor before starting any exercise program! Your healthcare provider will assess your heart health and recommend appropriate activities.

Self-test your blood glucose regularly

The goal of diabetes management is to keep your blood glucose level within a specified range. This range differs from person to person. Many factors affect this number, such as your age, weight, overall health, type of diabetes, severity of diabetes, pregnancy status, other medical conditions, and the presence of diabetes complications. The American Diabetes Association (ADA) recommends daily self-monitoring of blood glucose for people with Type 2 Diabetes, especially those that use insulin or oral agents for treatment. Self-testing blood glucose every day is an essential part of managing your diabetes and averting diabetes complications. You can perform your self-tests using a home glucose meter. The goal of self-testing is to understand how things like diet, stress, exercise, illness, and medications affect your blood glucose levels. Understanding this will help you make the necessary adjustments to keep your blood glucose levels within a healthy range.

(Editor's note: read what the Caretalk community of clinicians, patients, and more has to say about managing their blood glucose levels!)

Share your experiences with others

Sharing your knowledge, as well as learning from other people with diabetes, can help you manage your diabetes. There are many diabetes forums, online groups, and health communities such as Caretalk you can join to learn about the successes and setbacks of other individuals living with diabetes.

Managing your diabetes is an achievable goal that will ultimately enhance your long-term quality of life. Yes, you might find this challenging at first, but with determination, perseverance and implementing the above four tips, the process will become more comfortable and routine with time.

References

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