



Six Tips for Managing Your Diabetes

Research shows that enjoying nutritious foods is our first line of defense against disease. Simple lifestyle changes can help you develop a healthier and happier life, too, like these six tips:

- 1 Start slowly.** Adopt one or two new lifestyle changes at a time (such as eating healthier foods or walking more often); as you become comfortable with your new routine, take time to applaud your achievements! When you're ready, your healthcare provider can help you develop next steps.
- 2 Set specific goals and write them down.** For example, instead of a vague "I'll eat better," tell yourself "I'll switch from cookies to fruit for dessert," and instead of "I'll exercise more," say "I'll walk briskly for 30 minutes, three times a week." Writing down concrete goals makes them more real in your mind, and can help you reach them more easily.
- 3 Schedule your meals.** Eating at the same time each day helps keep your blood sugar level. It helps control your appetite, too, so you'll be less likely to overeat or choose unhealthy foods because they're convenient. As you plan your mealtimes, talk with your healthcare provider about how and when to take your medication with your foods.
- 4 Sleep for seven to nine hours each night.** Continued lack of sleep has been linked to a variety of health issues including diabetes and heart disease. If you find yourself tossing and turning instead of snoozing, give yourself a nighttime routine to follow. Make your bedroom your sanctuary by unplugging yourself from electronics, such as cell phone, computer and TV. Temperature and light can also affect your sleep: most people sleep more soundly in a dark, slightly cool room.
- 5 Soothe your stress.** Too much stress can elevate your blood pressure and blood sugar levels, so it's important to find ways to decompress when you're feeling overwhelmed, tense or fatigued. Taking a quiet walk, meditating, or practicing yoga are just a few ways to calm your mind and body.
- 6 Share your new healthy lifestyle with friends and family.** Everyone – with or without diabetes – benefits from eating lots of colorful and nourishing foods, exercising, getting enough sleep and enjoying life, and it's even better when you have the love and support of others. Together, you can develop habits that will keep you all healthy now and in the future.

What changes can you make? Discuss them with your healthcare provider, write them down, then check on your progress each week.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

