



mercy care

LIVING WELL WITH DIABETES

Fall/Winter 2020

3 healthy habits that help fight diabetes

If you have diabetes, the lifestyle choices you make every day really matter.

When you add them up, they may help you feel better. They may even lower your risk for future health problems from diabetes.

Three habits that can make a big difference:

1. **Follow a meal plan.** Work with a dietitian to come up with an eating plan that works for you. What's right for you might vary, but in general, try to:
 - Choose whole foods like fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains
 - Limit added sugars, refined grains and processed foods

- Replace high-fat foods like beef and butter with healthier fats like olive oil and fish

2. **Find a fitness move that's fun.** Take a brisk walk. Work out to a fitness video. Play a sport. Being active most days helps you manage your blood sugar and weight.

3. **Take it easy.** Too much stress can make blood sugar harder to control. When you're feeling frazzled, try a soothing activity, like listening to music or taking a bath. Find time for hobbies and other things you enjoy.

Sources: *American Diabetes Association (www.diabetes.org); National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (www.niddk.nih.gov)*

It's not too late!

Flu shots are especially important this year. People at high risk for getting very sick from COVID-19 should get one as soon as possible. If you haven't had yours yet, don't wait.

Source: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov)*

Did you know that you may be able to get Lifeline cell service plus a smartphone at no cost to you? Go to www.MercyCareAZ.org or call Member Services at **1-800-624-3879 (TTY: 711)** and ask about the Assurance Wireless Lifeline program.



Take steps to head off kidney disease

Staying on top of your health can help you feel better if you have diabetes. Down the road, it may even help you avoid kidney trouble.

You need healthy kidneys to get rid of wastes and extra fluids from your blood.

Over time, high blood sugar from diabetes can harm the kidneys. Many people with diabetes also have high blood pressure, which can hurt the kidneys too.

Protect your future

You can lower your chances of getting kidney disease. Here's how:

- Meet your blood sugar and blood pressure goals. Ask your doctor what your goals should be and

what changes might help you meet them.

- See your doctor for checkups and tests. These can help catch kidney disease early, when treatment may stop it from getting worse.
- Take any medicines your doctor orders for you.
- Cut back on salt (sodium). It can boost blood pressure. Ask your doctor if you should limit how much protein you eat too.
- Don't use alcohol or tobacco. Ask your doctor for help if you need to quit.

Sources: American Diabetes Association (www.diabetes.org); National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (www.niddk.nih.gov)

Caregivers: Seek the help you deserve

Need support? Ask your loved one's care manager about services that may be open to you.

4 ways to take charge

If you have a chronic condition, take it step by step:

1. Learn all you can about it.
2. Work with your doctor on a care plan.
3. Take your medications.
4. Aim for healthy habits.

Source: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (www.ahrq.gov)

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