

LIVING HEALTHIER WITH DIABETES



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Controlling bad eating habits is a good way to start the year

By Alissa Boyne
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The holiday season is coming to an end, but you don't have to wait until New Year's Day to resolve to get your eating habits under control. One of the most important steps in regulating your blood sugar throughout the holidays is planning ahead. Being prepared can aid in your diabetes care during the remainder of the holiday season and throughout the new year.

Tips for Winning the Battle of the Bulge

- Eat one dessert in moderation at any holiday or special dinner.
- Use a sugar substitute when baking your favorite dessert.
- Share a dessert with someone else.
- When eating out, ask for a to-go box before the meal arrives at your table, then save the extra serving for another meal.
- Use a smaller plate; it will look full with less food.
- Avoid dips and sauces on those healthy vegetables.
- Park farther away when shopping to walk off calories.
- Avoid the escalator; take the stairs.



Next, take a look at the remainder of your holiday schedule. Will you be visiting family for meals? Make it an opportunity to add your favorite healthy dish to the menu. Watching the Rose Bowl with friends? Know that there will be food temptations and plan accordingly. It may help to write down and keep close to you what you will and will not allow yourself to eat, or the serving sizes you want to choose.

If you've already indulged in Granny's holiday pound cake and are now making your New Year's resolution to eat healthier in '06, using one of the new sugar/sweetener blends or a sugar substitute in recipes may help get you back on track. On page 2 of this newsletter is a list of well-known sugar substitutes approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The American Diabetes Association (ADA) is supportive of using these sweeteners as part of a healthy diet. Also visit the ADA web site at www.diabetes.org for their daily recipes and health tips.

Winter shouldn't prevent exercise

As the temperatures plummet, it's tempting to remain in the warmth of our homes and only venture out for the essentials. But staying indoors reading or watching television can go hand-in-hand with overeating, making maintaining a healthy lifestyle a challenge.

If the cold temperatures deter you from outdoor exercise, there are many activities that can be performed indoors.

Brisk walking inside a school or shopping center is a great substitute for walking outdoors. Following along with an aerobics class on television is another indoor alternative. For those unable to walk for long periods of time, swimming or chair exercises are options.

Whatever method you choose, your goal should be 30-45 minutes of moderate

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An annual kidney test is preventive medicine

By Alissa Boyne
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The kidneys help keep your system in check, ridding the bloodstream of wastes and toxins, keeping an important balance of electrolytes such as sodium, potassium and calcium, and helping regulate blood pressure. Nephropathy (nef-rop-a-thee) is a complication of diabetes and high blood pressure that causes the kidneys to lose their ability to work properly.

Nephropathy occurs when clusters of blood vessels in the kidney (called glomeruli) thicken and fail to properly filter waste, causing a buildup of protein. If left undetected, it can lead to kidney failure.

There are few symptoms at the onset of diabetic nephropathy. It is not until later stages that patients exhibit symptoms, which can include swelling around the eyes, frequent hiccups, swelling in the legs and ankles (from water retention), nausea and vomiting, a frothy look to the urine, or less urine than normal.

Proper control of both blood glucose levels and blood pressure can help patients with diabetes avoid this problem. Ask your health care provider about performing an annual **microalbumin screen** to assess your risk of developing diabetic nephropathy.

Winter exercise (continued from page 1)

aerobic activity three to five days a week. And always keep these tips in mind as you exercise:

- Talk with your health care provider BEFORE starting any exercise program.
- Monitor blood glucose levels before and after exercising.
- If you are on the rapid- or fast-acting insulin type and don't reduce your insulin dose, have a pre-exercise snack or drink: 10-15 grams of carbohydrate for every 30 minutes of activity.
- Properly fitted exercise shoes are essential.
- Include both warming-up and cooling-down exercises in your workout; stretch to enhance flexibility and prevent injury.
- Keep plenty of water on hand to prevent dehydration.
- If you are exercising for a long period of time, be sure to increase your carbohydrate intake accordingly.
- STOP exercising if you feel faint or experience pain or a pronounced shortness of breath.

Sugar substitutes

Saccharin (Sweet N Low®, Sugar Twin®): Can be used in hot or cold foods. Despite early concerns over the use of large quantities of saccharin, studies have shown it to be safe when used in normal quantities.

Aspartame (NutraSweet®, Equal®): Not ideal for baking, as high temperatures can decrease its sweetness.

Acesulfame potassium (Sweet One®, Swiss Sweet®, Sunett®): May be used in hot or cold foods.

Sucralose (Splenda®): May be used in hot or cold foods.

Don't neglect your feet!

By Leslie Allen
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In all the busyness this time of year, there are many things to keep people up and on the go. Whether doing last-minute shopping, cooking, cleaning or decorating, people are on their feet more during the holiday season. Because of this, it is especially important to take even better care of your feet than normal to prevent blisters or other problems. Use the following checklist to ensure your feet are properly taken care of during the holidays and all through the year.

1. **Check your feet every day.** If you have trouble seeing, use a mirror to look at the bottoms of your feet. You may have serious foot problems yet feel no pain. Check your feet for red spots, sores, swelling and/or infected toenails.
2. **Wash your feet every day.** Make sure the water temperature is warm, not hot. Be sure and test it before putting your feet in, and use a thermometer if necessary (90-95°F). Be sure to dry your feet well, especially between the toes.
3. **Moisturize to keep the feet from getting cracked,** but *do not* moisturize between the toes.
4. **Trim your toenails** and keep them neat and clean.
5. **Wear properly fitted shoes,** and socks of "breathable" cotton without elastic bands.
6. **Gently break in new shoes.** If you received new shoes as a holiday gift, consider wearing them just one or two hours a day instead of the entire day, to avoid blisters.



Be sweet to your feet by making these tips a part of your daily routine. Learn more about diabetic foot care at:

http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/complications_feet