

WebMD®

# diabetes

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## PANTRY MAKEOVER

What to toss,  
what to stock,  
and what  
to make

**ALSO**

**KIDS & TYPE 1**  
**EYE HEALTH**  
**EATING-OUT**  
**TIPS**

SPRING 2015  
WIC: 912141



# Spring 2015 CONTENTS



## CLEAN SWEEP

It's time to give your pantry a makeover. Here's a guide for what to toss, what to stock, and what to freeze, plus three recipes that put your new supplies to good use

*Cover: photography by Leigh Beisch;  
food styling by Dan Becker; prop styling  
by Glenn Jenkins*



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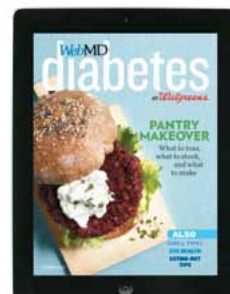
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## Walgreens is excited to announce our new relationship with WebMD!

Walgreens, your trusted retailer for all your diabetes product and health and wellness needs, now brings you trusted, expert information from WebMD to help people with diabetes live happy, healthy lives.

With this quarterly magazine, also available on tablet devices and in doctors' office waiting rooms nationwide, our readers and customers can now access the highest-quality and most informative content about managing diabetes and overall health and wellness. We want to empower you to take better care of yourself and manage your condition. In this easy-to-navigate magazine, you will find nutrition, fitness, weight loss, and diabetes care and management information straight from WebMD's experts.

**Look for the next issue in June** at your local Walgreens pharmacy and in the iTunes App Store and Google Play.

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## CARB CONTROL

You know diet is a key part of diabetes care, but what kind of diet? A recent study found that a low-carb, low-calorie diet of about 1,400 calories per day helped control blood sugar better than a low-fat diet with the same number of calories. The low-carb diet, which contained less than 50 grams of carbohydrates per day, also helped raise good cholesterol while lowering bad cholesterol and some other risks for heart disease. After six months, more people on the low-carb diet were able to cut down on medications compared with those on the low-fat diet.

Source: *Diabetes Care*

# 3 IN 10

## NUMBER OF AMERICANS WITH DIABETES

who don't know they have it

Source: *Annals of Internal Medicine*

## GUIDING LIGHT

One day you may be able to check your blood sugar with a laser beam. Engineers at Princeton University created a laser device that monitors blood sugar as accurately as conventional glucose monitors. When you point the laser at the palm of your hand, it goes through your skin painlessly, and sugar molecules absorb the light. The device calculates exactly how much light is absorbed. The higher your blood sugar, the more light you absorb. Next, researchers want to create a portable version of this gadget.

Source: Princeton University

# 45

## NUMBER OF CALORIES

a woman who is 5 feet, 5 inches and weighs 150 pounds burns doing Zumba for five minutes. The more you weigh, the more you burn.

Source: Health Status Calorie Calculator



## FRIEND REQUESTS

You might gain better control of diabetes with a little help from your friends. In a study of more than 75,000 people with diabetes, those who received group diabetes education, as opposed to individual counseling, were less likely to end up in the hospital or ER for severely low or high blood sugar. They were also less likely to develop diabetes-related foot ulcers and skin infections, and more likely to be up to date on screenings and how to take appropriate medications.

Source: *Canadian Journal of Public Health*





## ASK YOUR DOCTOR

When and how often do you want me to check my blood sugar?

Can you make sure I'm using my glucometer correctly? Show the doctor how you check your blood sugar to make sure you're doing it right.

What can I do to keep my diabetes from getting worse?

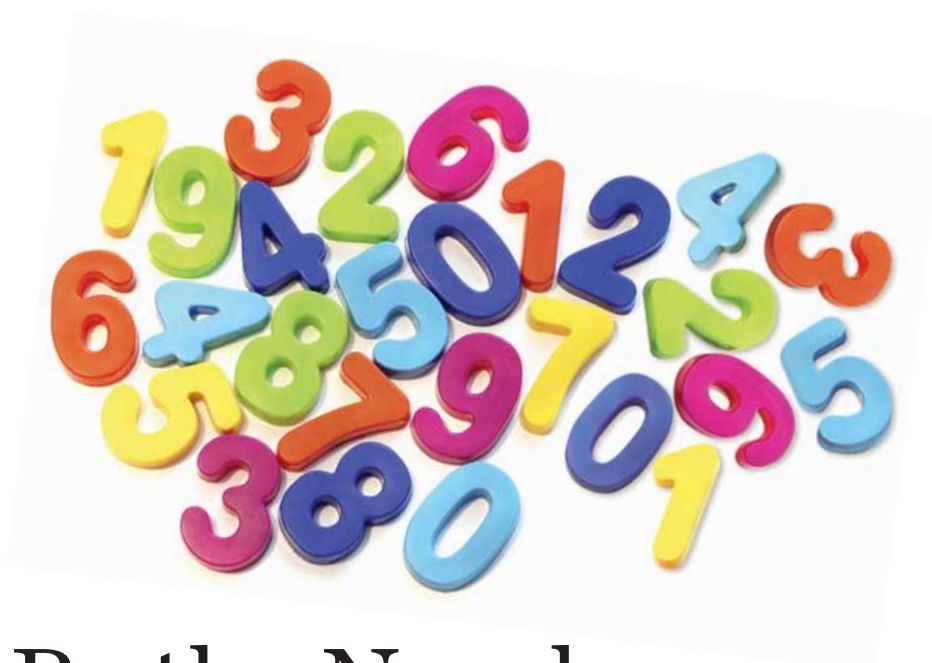
What's your view on insulin? Some doctors treat insulin as a last resort; others see it as a way to help all patients with type 2 diabetes.

Can you recommend a dietitian?



Read *Blood Glucose*, the No. 1 article in the Diabetes center at WebMD.com.

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# By the Numbers

What you need to know about monitoring blood sugar

BY SONYA COLLINS

If you were recently diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, you'll need to learn all about blood sugar testing.

**Why is self-testing important?** "Checking blood glucose is the only way to know for sure whether diabetes is under control," says Pilar Murphy, PharmD, an assistant professor at Samford University's McWhorter School of Pharmacy.

If you take insulin, your health care provider may ask you to check your blood sugar, also called blood glucose, once or more daily. If you manage the condition with diet and exercise, you will check your blood sugar regularly but maybe not every day.

**What does the number mean?** Your glucose meter measures the amount of sugar in a drop of your blood.

When you haven't eaten overnight, your blood sugar in the morning should be between 70 and 130. That's called fasting glucose or fasting blood sugar. About an hour or two after the start of a meal, your blood

sugar should be less than 180. That's called postprandial glucose.

These numbers show how food, exercise, stress, and sickness affect blood sugar. "It helps patients see, for example, if they eat a lot of bread, their sugar will go up," Murphy says.

**What if your sugar is too low or too high?** If your blood sugar is below 70, you should eat or drink 15 to 20 grams of simple carbohydrates, then check your sugar again in 15 minutes. (You can get 15 to 20 grams of simple carbohydrates from two tablespoons of raisins or a tablespoon of honey.) Repeat these steps until your blood sugar returns to normal.

If your sugar tests high on occasion, drink water to avoid dehydration. And if it's over 240, check your urine or blood for ketones with test strips available at the drugstore. This chemical circulates in your blood and urine when your body begins to break down fat for energy instead of sugar. Moderate to high levels of ketones in the blood can be poisonous.

REVIEWED BY BRUNILDA NAZARIO, MD, WEBMD LEAD MEDICAL EDITOR

# Parental Guidance

Is your child newly diagnosed? Here's a crash course to help you manage BY GINA SHAW

## ASK YOUR DOCTOR

How does my diabetes care team work?

What professionals will be caring for my child?

What do you consider good diabetes control for my child?

What are our goals for managing the disease?

When do I absolutely need to call a doctor right away? When should I take my child to the emergency room?

How do I reach someone for advice? What about after hours?



Read [How to Manage Your Kid's Type 1 Diabetes](#) at [WebMD.com](#).

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If your child has recently been diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, your whole family may be in shock. Now, you've entered a new world of blood glucose checks, hemoglobin A1c levels, insulin shots, and finger pokes.

"It will take a lot of education to learn how to manage the disease, but you can do it," reassures Bonita Franklin, MD, a pediatric endocrinologist at NYU Langone Medical Center. She outlines key points parents need to know.

**It's not your fault.** Many parents feel guilty and think, "Oh, I fed my child wrong," or "I gave type 1 to my child because it runs in my family." A genetic component does exist but it's complex, and doctors don't understand the environmental triggers very well either. If scientists don't know what to do to prevent this condition, parents certainly don't. Reassure your child that it's not his fault either.

**Your child can have a normal life.** He'll be able to go to school, play sports, get a job—everything you want for him.

**You can handle this.** You, your child, and the rest of the family will learn what you need to do, and your diabetes care team will provide backup for you.

**You need a "home team"** in addition to the diabetes care team at your medical center. This includes key close family members, friends, teachers, school nurses, babysitters, coaches, and camp counselors. Anyone who is closely involved in your child's life needs to be educated about diabetes and what your child needs. After you gain confidence about handling diabetes, you become an educator for the other people in your child's life.

**Do diabetes together.** Nutrition for a child with type 1 diabetes requires a lot of knowledge and self-control. Families who do best tend to be the ones in which everyone adopts the same diet.

**Encourage independence.** Older children—elementary school age and up—can begin to do some of their own diabetes regimen themselves, with monitoring.

REVIEWED BY BRUNILDA NAZARIO, MD, WEBMD LEAD MEDICAL EDITOR



## SHIFT CHANGE

Want to see big changes in your weight and blood sugar numbers?

### Listen to your hunger scale.

Before you eat anything, assess how you feel. Are you truly hungry? Then have a bite to eat. Do you feel satisfied or stuffed? Step away from the table.

### Fill up on fiber.

High-fiber foods keep your blood sugar steady and fill you up so you won't be as tempted by less healthy options.

**Take 10.** Stretch for 10 minutes in the morning, take a 10-minute walk during lunch, and do 10 minutes with weights in the evening.



Watch the **Three Most Important Things You Can Do** video at [WebMD.com](http://WebMD.com).

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# Waist Watch

Dropping pounds improves blood sugar levels.  
Here's how to do it right BY STEPHANIE WATSON

One of the best ways to manage diabetes is to lose weight. Dial back just a few digits on your bathroom scale, and you'll get your blood sugar levels more in check and feel better overall.

Weight loss doesn't have to be dramatic to yield big results. "What we found in our research was that when people lose around 7% of their body weight, their insulin sensitivity improves by 57%," says Osama Hamdy, MD, PhD, medical director of the Obesity Clinical Program at the Joslin Diabetes Center and author of *The Diabetes Breakthrough*.

So if you weigh 200 pounds, losing just 14 pounds will make a difference.

When it comes to diet, the key is to strike the right balance between carbohydrates, fats, and protein. "Cutting the carbohydrates is the No. 1 way to lose weight," Hamdy says. "Carbohydrates cause the pancreas to release insulin." Carbs should make up no more than 45% or so of daily calories for most people with diabetes, but check with your doctor because your target might differ based on your weight, activity level, and which

medicines you take. When choosing carbs, pick ones that won't make your blood sugar spike—high-fiber fruits and vegetables and whole grains, rather than pastries and white bread.

Another goal is to lower your daily calorie count, but not by skimping on protein. You need protein to maintain muscle, which helps you maximize your calorie-burning potential. At least 20% to 30% of your plate should be made up of lean protein sources like fish, tofu, and skinless grilled chicken breast.

You also need some fat in your diet—it should contribute about 30% to 40% to your daily calories—but the type of fat you eat matters. Unsaturated fats from foods like nuts, avocado, fish, flaxseeds, and canola oil are much better bets than saturated and trans fats from meat and fried foods.

Pair diet with its partner in weight loss—exercise. "If people would like to lose weight, they should get 300 minutes of exercise per week," Hamdy says. Split those five hours between aerobics and strength training, both of which help your body trim down and use insulin more effectively.

REVIEWED BY AREFA CASSOOBHOY, MD, MPH, WEBMD MEDICAL EDITOR



# Short Stop

Control your blood sugar with quick workouts several times a day

BY KARA MAYER ROBINSON

Sometimes nibbling is better than gorging. A new study suggests that several shorter bouts of exercise, done before meals, can be good for blood sugar control. The results, published in *Diabetologia*, are from just one study—more research is needed. But experts say divvying up your workouts into exercise “snacks” can be good for you.

“You can build the same amount of strength and burn the same amount of calories by doing it in chunks,” says fitness expert Fitz Koehler, MS, member of the University of Florida Diabetes Institute’s leadership council. Koehler explains how to swap long workouts for shorter sessions.

**Hit your totals.** Break it up how you want. Chunks of five to 25 minutes are fine. Just be sure they add up to 45 minutes of exercise a day, five to six days a week.

**Take your pick.** Both aerobic exercise and strength training can be broken into chunks. Walk, dance, or try a fitness video game. Try short bursts of squats or lunges, push-ups, or dumbbell work. The trick is to choose an exercise that doesn’t require a change of clothes.

**Start small.** Aim big, but start with short, easy segments. Then gradually ramp up as you get more fit. Slow and steady is the best way to pump up your fitness level.

**But don’t be afraid to aim high.** “I work with people who have diabetes and run marathons, enter strength-training competitions, do CrossFit, and do Zumba,” Koehler says. “You can do anything you want to do. You just have to be better at managing your exercise.”



**Time it right.** For blood sugar control, the study suggests the best time to exercise is before your main meals. But it’s OK to exercise when it feels right for you. “It’s very personal,” Koehler says. Some people are uncomfortable eating before a workout. For others, it’s a must.

**Check your glucose levels.** Exercise will affect your numbers. Ask your doctor for guidelines and stick to that range. Check blood sugar before and after you exercise, and have an action plan in case it goes too low. After a while you’ll know what you need to keep your numbers on track, Koehler says. You may need to nibble on a snack, or wait an hour after eating before exercising.

**Listen to your body.** On a scale of one to 10, shoot for a level of exertion between five and seven. You should be huffing and puffing but still able to talk. “If you start to feel sick, dizzy, or lethargic, pull back and evaluate,” Koehler says. The consequences can be bigger when you have diabetes.

## SNACK BREAK

These tips from fitness expert Fitz Koehler will help you squeeze exercise “snacks” into your workday.

### Bring your phone call on the go.

“If I have a phone conference that’s more than 10 minutes, I’ll take the call on my treadmill or while walking around the block,” Koehler says.

**Step away.** Set your alarm to go off every hour as a reminder to get up from your computer. Do five minutes of strength training or stretching. Jumping jacks, lunges, and squats are other good ways to get moving without leaving your work area.



Check out the **Managing Diabetes With Exercise** slideshow at WebMD.com.

**LEARN HOW ON PAGE 3**



It's time to give your pantry a makeover.  
Here's what to stock, toss, freeze, and cook

# CLEAN Sweep

BY KERRI-ANN JENNINGS

When was the last time you really took stock of your pantry?

Harness the momentum of spring cleaning: Fling open your kitchen cupboards and freezer and take a good look at the contents. A “clean” pantry is not just tidy; it's stocked with whole foods you can turn into healthy meals. These tips from Michelle Dudash, RDN, author of *Clean Eating for Busy Families: Get Meals on the Table in Minutes With Simple and Satisfying Whole-Foods Recipes You and Your Kids Will Love*, can help you get started.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEIGH BEISCH  
FOOD STYLING BY DAN BECKER, PROP STYLING BY GLENN JENKINS

## INGREDIENTS

### Burgers

- 1 tbsp canola oil
- 1 small onion, peeled and thinly sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium beet, peeled
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- ¼ tsp mustard powder
- ¼ tsp coriander seeds
- ½ tsp kosher salt
- 1 cup cooked short-grain brown rice
- 1 cup cooked green lentils
- 1 cup walnuts
- 2 tbsp golden raisins
- 1 egg
- ¼ cup rolled oats

### Yogurt topping

- ½ cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- 3 oz feta cheese
- 1 tbsp fresh mint, chopped

6 100% whole wheat burger buns  
(140 calories or less)

## Smoky Mediterranean Beet Burgers

Frozen cooked brown rice and canned lentils make these smoky veggie burgers a snap to make. Use disposable kitchen gloves when forming patties to keep your hands from staining red.

Makes 6 servings

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. In a small sauté pan, heat oil and cook onion over medium-low heat until soft and golden. Add garlic, and cook two more minutes.
2. Grate beet using box grater or the grater attachment in a food processor. To a food processor fitted with a blade attachment, add the grated beet, onion/garlic mixture, spices, rice, lentils, nuts, and raisins. Pulse until combined. Add egg and pulse again. Add oats and pulse a couple times. Let sit in the fridge for 10 minutes to set.
3. Meanwhile, prepare yogurt topping by combining ingredients and set aside.
4. Form beet mixture into six patties, approximately ¾ cup each (kitchen gloves are helpful here) and place on prepared pan. Bake until heated through (about 10–12 minutes). Then, turn on the broiler and broil for two minutes on each side.
5. Place burgers on toasted buns and divide yogurt topping among burgers.

### PER SERVING

538 calories, 25 g protein, 65 g carbohydrate, 21 g fat (3 g saturated fat), 41 mg cholesterol, 17 g fiber, 9 g sugar, 665 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 36%



## All-Purpose Salad Dressing

Customize this vinaigrette according to your taste—mustard, shallots, and a combination of lemon juice and balsamic vinegar give your dressing a French flavor; dried oregano, minced garlic, and red wine vinegar are excellent on Greek salads.

Makes 8 servings

### INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup olive oil
- 3 tbsp vinegar (red wine, balsamic, white wine, sherry, or a combination) or lemon juice
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp ground pepper
- 1 tsp honey or sugar (optional)
- 1 tsp mustard (optional)
- 1–2 tsp minced garlic or shallots (optional)
- 2 tsp dried herbs, such as oregano, basil, or dill (optional)

### DIRECTIONS

1. Add all ingredients to a glass jar with tight-fitting lid and shake up until fully blended. Unless you add mustard and garlic or shallots, you can store this for several weeks in your fridge. If you add fresh ingredients, store in the fridge for up to one week.

**PER SERVING** (2 tbsp serving with all optional add-ins)  
116 calories, 1 g carbohydrate, 13 g fat (2 g saturated fat), 1 g sugar, 148 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 99%

## STOCK

**Lean proteins:** Keep canned and dried beans and lentils, shelf-stable tofu, canned tuna and salmon, and garbanzo, black, and white beans on hand.

**Nut and seed butters** (such as peanut, almond, cashew, sunflower): These are high in fiber, protein, and healthy fat. Keep at least one type for snacks, sandwiches, and sauce recipes. “Look for one with just nuts and possibly salt,” Dudash says.

**Semi-healthy snacks:** If you must keep snack foods on hand, make them the healthiest kind: 100% whole grain crackers and tortilla chips, says Dudash. And stick to fresh fruit and vegetables, paired with lean proteins.

**Dried fruits:** “No-added-sugar dried fruits have lots of fiber, potassium, antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals,” says Dudash, and are great for snacks, salads, and baking.

**Tomato products:** Dudash recommends whole and diced tomatoes, tomato paste, and a simple marinara with very little added sugar.

**Whole grains:** Keep a variety on hand for high-fiber sides. Dudash recommends brown rice, quinoa, freekeh, and oats. Quick-cooking whole grains can also be handy in a pinch.

**Cooking oils:** Stock extra virgin olive oil, organic expeller-pressed canola or grapeseed oil, and coconut oil, which is nice for high-heat cooking.

**Vinegars:** “These never go bad, even if they have flakes floating in them.” Four to stock: white wine vinegar, red wine vinegar, rice vinegar, and balsamic vinegar. “They pump up the flavor in your recipes with few if any calories and help you cut back on sodium.”

**Low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth:** Add flavor to pilafs, soups, and sauces.







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## Walgreens is taking steps toward diabetes prevention

Walgreens proudly supports the American Diabetes Association Alert Day®. In the U.S., 86 million people have prediabetes, putting them at high risk for developing type 2. Learn YOUR risk: Ask a local Walgreens pharmacist for the Diabetes Risk Test or visit [walgreens.com/diabetes-help](http://walgreens.com/diabetes-help). Once you take the test, share it with everyone you know. Then, try to lead a more active lifestyle. Join Walgreens and the American Diabetes Association: *Take it. Share it. Step out.*

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**American Diabetes Association.**

Did you know that you can earn points for the healthy choices you make every day? **Balance Rewards** gives 20 points per log when you track your blood glucose levels online, up to two times a day. For full program terms and conditions, visit [Walgreens.com/healthychoices](http://Walgreens.com/healthychoices).\*



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\*Limitations apply to earning points. Information provided to Walgreens online is covered by the terms of our Online Privacy and Security Policy and the terms and conditions of Balance Rewards. Personally identifiable information reported to earn points is not covered under HIPAA or the Walgreens Notice of Privacy Practices.



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**Or visit [Walgreens.com/Diabetes-help](https://www.walgreens.com/diabetes-help).**

\*For details, visit [www.walgreens.com/healthychoices](https://www.walgreens.com/healthychoices).

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# TOSS

**The “fake” stuff:** Throw out the most highly processed foods—those with artificial sweeteners, dyes, and refined white flour, or frozen meals with a jumble of fillers and preservatives.



Take the **What to Eat If You Have Diabetes** quiz at [WebMD.com](http://WebMD.com).

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**Anything expired:** Most oils can go rancid after a year or two, and spices lose their flavor. “You can use them, but you won’t get the full benefit of nutrition or taste,” says Dudash.

**Rarely used condiments:** These take up a lot of fridge space, so Dudash recommends purging the ones you don’t eat or cook with often.

# FREEZE

**Veggies:** Keep frozen veggies such as peas, corn, and shelled edamame on hand to add to almost any meal to boost fiber and nutrition.

**Chicken breasts and shrimp:** These are perfect proteins to stock for made-in-minutes meals.

**Leftovers:** Making your own “frozen food” ensures you’ll never get stuck in a rut.



## Raspberry Chocolate Crumble

Frozen raspberries and dark chocolate chips are the perfect combo for something sweet. Almond flour keeps carbs low, but you can swap it out for whole wheat pastry flour for an extra 9 grams of carbohydrate per serving.

Makes 4 servings

### INGREDIENTS

#### Fruit mixture

- 2 cups frozen raspberries, thawed (or use fresh)
- 1½ tsp arrowroot powder or cornstarch
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp dark chocolate chips

#### Topping

- ½ cup almond flour or cashew flour
- ½ cup rolled oats
- 1 tbsp coconut oil
- 1 tbsp maple syrup
- ⅛ tsp salt

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Combine ingredients for fruit mixture in a medium bowl and set aside. In a small food processor, pulse together almond or cashew flour, oats, coconut oil, maple syrup, and salt until small clumps form. Divide fruit mixture among 4 ramekins; top each with 2 tablespoons of the topping.
2. Place the ramekins on a rimmed sheet pan and bake on the middle rack of the oven for 30 minutes or until the fruit is bubbling and the topping is browned.

### PER SERVING

237 calories, 2 g protein, 26 g carbohydrate, 13 g fat (4 g saturated fat), 7 g fiber, 10 g sugar, 76 mg sodium. Calories from fat: 49%

REVIEWED BY HANSA BHARGAVA, MD, WEBMD MEDICAL EDITOR



## ASK YOUR DOCTOR

In your practice,  
do you see many  
patients with  
diabetes?

How does  
diabetes affect  
the eyes? What  
kinds of vision  
problems might  
occur?

What blood sugar  
levels should I  
aim for to keep  
my eyes healthy?

When should I  
have my next  
eye exam?

What kinds of  
symptoms should  
I watch for?

What types of  
eye problems  
should I call you  
about?

Do I show any  
signs of diabetic  
retinopathy or  
other problems?

Do you perform  
eye surgery?



Check out the **Diabetes Complications: Eye Problems** slideshow at [WebMD.com](http://WebMD.com).

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# Vision Quest

## How to protect your eyesight

BY KATHERINE KAM

Diabetes can harm one of your most prized assets: your eyesight. But vision problems are not inevitable, says Elizabeth Seaquist, MD, an endocrinologist at the University of Minnesota.

What are the keys to preserving your eye health? “It’s blood sugar control and hypertension control,” she says.

Abundant studies make it perfectly clear: “The people whose sugars are better controlled always have fewer problems with eye disease,” Seaquist says. “People need to work to achieve the level of glucose control that their doctor thinks is important to reduce their risk of eye problems. That’s critically important.”

Managing blood pressure is the other very important thing, she says. “We know that hypertension—uncontrolled blood pressure—increases the risk of retinopathy and increases progression of the eye disease.”

High blood sugar can damage the tiny blood vessels in the retina, a nerve layer at the back of your eye that relays images to your brain. This type of damage, called diabetic retinopathy, causes blood vessels in the retina to weaken and leak fluid. In some people, abnormal blood vessels can grow on the surface of the retina. Left unchecked, diabetic retinopathy can progress to the point of impairing vision.

“Usually the first sign is something the eye doctor sees,” Seaquist says. With regular visits, the doctor can catch eye disease before you notice any symptoms.

“You need a dilated eye exam. You need someone who is experienced in looking at



the retina,” she says. Usually, an ophthalmologist performs such exams, but you can get a screening exam by a well-qualified optometrist, she says.

Get your eyes screened annually, or as often as your doctor recommends. “The changes that happen in the back of the eye as the result of diabetes are pretty predictable,” Seaquist says. “An eye doctor can look at one point in time and get a good sense of what’s going to happen to a person’s eyes over the next year.”

If you do develop diabetic retinopathy, doctors have many effective options, including laser treatment to seal leaking blood vessels or to discourage new leaky vessels from developing. This works best before bleeding starts, which is why regular eye doctor visits are crucial. Doctors can also inject medications into the eye to reduce inflammation and shrink troublesome vessels, or they can surgically remove the blood inside the eye to improve vision.

As Seaquist says, “The key is getting the treatment at the right point in the progression of the disease to make certain you do not go on to have any vision loss.”

REVIEWED BY BRUNILDA NAZARIO, MD, WEBMD LEAD MEDICAL EDITOR

GERILAVROV/GETTY IMAGES



# Social Study

Don't pass up parties or dinners out. Hit the town with this going-out guide BY MICHELE COHEN MARILL



Whether you're on a dinner date or spending a night out with friends, type 2 diabetes doesn't need to intrude like an unwanted guest. You can eat, drink, and dance the night away, as long as you stay within healthy limits.

"It's so important to enjoy life and not let diabetes drag you down," says certified diabetes educator Janis Roszler, MS, RD, author of *Diabetes on Your Own Terms*. So give taboos the boot and focus on balance. Let a relaxed attitude guide your evenings out as well. If you're at ease with managing diabetes, your companions will be, too, even if you need to test your blood sugar before a meal. "The people who have the most success are the ones who don't make a big deal about it and don't try to hide it," says Roszler.

Avoid the mistake of starving yourself during the day so you can eat more on a dinner date. Don't go more than four or five hours

without eating and keep snack food handy in your purse or car, Roszler suggests.

Practice portion control at restaurants. The plate method is a no-fuss way to keep your eating in line at restaurants and parties. Fill half of a standard 9-inch dinner plate with nonstarchy vegetables or salad. Your protein should fit in one-quarter of the plate, and the other quarter is for carbohydrates such as rice or pasta. If you want some cake or other dessert later, eat less of the carbohydrates.

"In 99% of restaurants, you can choose to eat healthfully," says Hope Warshaw, RD, a certified diabetes educator in Alexandria, Va., and author of *Eat Out, Eat Well: The Guide to Healthier Restaurant Eating*. If portion sizes at your favorite dining spot are huge, for example, she suggests sharing an entrée with a dinner companion. Don't shy away from asking for substitutions or accommodations.

## DRINK RAP

Having type 2 diabetes doesn't mean you can't tip a celebratory glass of champagne or have some wine with dinner. Avoid blood sugar spikes and dips with these tips.

**Drink alcohol with food, and avoid mixers or sweet wine.** Many have sugars that can cause your blood sugar to spike. Check your blood sugar to see how the alcohol is affecting you. Keep in mind that alcohol can lower blood sugar as long as 24 hours later.

**Limit alcohol to one drink a day for women and two a day for men.** A drink is 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1½ ounces of vodka, whiskey, or other distilled spirits.



Read *Tips for Dining Out When You Have Diabetes* at WebMD.com.

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## ASK YOUR DOCTOR

I don't have any symptoms, but I do have risk factors for prediabetes. Should I be tested?

If I have prediabetes, what are the odds that it will progress to diabetes?

How often should I exercise, and which kinds of workouts are best?

What foods can I eat to lower my blood sugar levels? Any foods I should avoid?

Should I see a dietitian or other specialist about prediabetes?

How often should I see you for checkups?



Read **Prediabetes: 7 Steps to Take Now** at WebMD.com.

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# Q

What is prediabetes, and how can I stop it from progressing to full-blown diabetes?



**Rita Rastogi Kalyani, MD, MHS**  
assistant professor of medicine, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine

# A

Prediabetes means your blood sugar (glucose) level is above normal, but not high enough to be considered diabetes. The higher level means your body is starting to have trouble using the hormone insulin, which normally moves glucose from the blood into your body's cells. Without insulin working properly, glucose begins to build up in your bloodstream.

Prediabetes is a warning, signaling that you could develop diabetes if you don't change your lifestyle. In addition, higher-than-normal blood sugar over time puts you at risk for complications like heart disease and nerve damage (neuropathy).

Prediabetes often doesn't have any symptoms, so you may not know you have it. Your doctor can measure your blood sugar during a routine blood screening. To decide whether to screen, your doctor will look at risk factors, such as your age (if you're 45 or older), ethnic background, family history of diabetes, and if you're overweight, you have high blood pressure or high cholesterol, or you had gestational diabetes during a past pregnancy.

Your doctor might order one or more of three blood tests to measure blood sugar. A fasting blood glucose test checks your blood sugar level after you haven't eaten anything for at least eight hours. The hemoglobin A1c test shows your average blood sugar levels over the past three months. And an oral glucose tolerance test checks your blood sugar two hours after you have a carbohydrate-containing drink.

If you do have prediabetes, you can prevent it from progressing. In fact, our studies show that people can delay diabetes for a decade or more just by making lifestyle changes. Those changes include eating low-calorie, low-fat meals and exercising to lose 5% to 7% of your body weight. Exercise should include at least five half-hour aerobic sessions (such as a brisk walk) and a few bouts of strength training (such as lifting light weights) each week.

People who still have high blood sugar levels after changing their diet and exercise habits may need diabetes medicines to bring them down. But for most people, lifestyle changes can prevent diabetes if you start making them early.

REVIEWED BY BRUNILDA NAZARIO, MD, WEBMD LEAD MEDICAL EDITOR



# Critic's Choice

A restaurant reviewer explains how she dealt with her surprising diagnosis

BY SLOANE BURWELL, WEBMD.COM COMMUNITY MEMBER



I was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes the day before Thanksgiving five years ago. I was 40 years old and making a career transition, from technology to food writing. Not only was the timing terrible, I felt like diabetes was going to destroy all of my plans. Who'd want to read my restaurant reviews if I couldn't eat any dessert or starches? I was devastated.

I was pretty surprised by the diagnosis. I'd put on a little weight, and my mood swings were out of control, but I had a very stressful job at the time, and I figured that was the reason. The week before my diagnosis, I'd woken up and the white of my left eye was all red. The next week, the same thing happened in my right eye.

## SLOANE'S SECRETS

"Exercise is important and walking is key. You can do it anywhere. It clears your head. And it doesn't cost you any money."

"Let your blood sugar tell you how your body reacts to what you eat. The only way you can tell is by testing, particularly every one and two hours after meals."

"It's totally normal to feel like your life is turned upside down because it is. Take it as an opportunity to get better."

My doctor sent me to an eye specialist who immediately said, "You have diabetes." A blood sugar test confirmed it.

I was depressed for months. I cried every day. Then I started reading about the disease, took a six-week diabetes class, and met with a nutritionist. Still, my blood sugar rose even higher.

From my reading, I thought that if the carbohydrates in food were causing my blood sugar to rise, I'd just eat fewer carbs. But I learned that all carbs break down into sugar in the bloodstream, whether it comes from bread or sweets. That was a shock.

Of course, I had to pay attention to sugar. I was surprised to learn the amount of sugar in dried fruits, so that was the first thing to go. I made other trade-offs. I used to eat lots of chips and dips, but I realized what I really liked was the dip, so I switched chips for celery. Now I eat salsa and dips like baba ghanoush to my heart's content. I also love chocolate, and I thought I'd have to give that up. But I found dark chocolate, which has less sugar and therefore fewer carbs, so I eat that.

If I'm reviewing a restaurant, I examine the menu extensively ahead of time. I'll have one kind of carb—bread or dessert or pasta—and enjoy it.

I wasn't an exerciser before, but now I do yoga once a week and walk two to three times a week for about an hour. By watching my carbs, taking medication, and exercising, I've lost about 50 pounds. I feel great.

REVIEWED BY AREFA CASSOOBHOY, MD, MPH, WEBMD MEDICAL EDITOR

STEVE CASE