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WebMD

# diabetes

at *Walgreens*

## GLOBAL GRILLING

A healthy  
take on  
flavors of  
the world

**ALSO**

**FOOT CARE  
TRAVEL SMARTS  
3 ESSENTIAL TESTS**

SUMMER 2016  
WIC: 912141



# Summer 2016 CONTENTS



## GLOBAL GRILLING

From Mexico to the Caribbean, our delicious dishes are worthy of your best backyard parties



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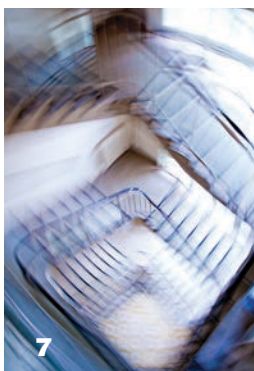


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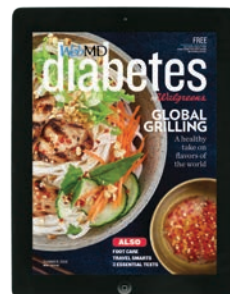
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anovinger@webmd.net

312-416-9278



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Katie Ellsworth

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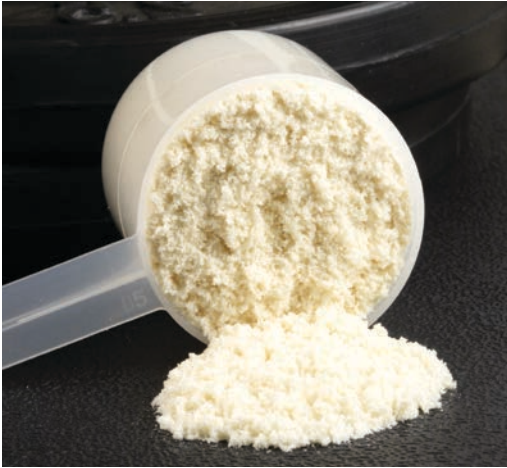
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## WHEY IN

A big, high-protein breakfast, followed by a small lunch and dinner is a proven method for feeling full longer and losing weight. But some types of protein may be more satisfying than others. About 50 overweight adults with type 2 diabetes tried three different diets. One group started the day with shakes made from whey protein powder (a dairy by product of cheese production). Another had eggs, tuna, and cheese, and the third group had cereal. Everyone had the same lunch and dinner and the same number of daily calories. After three months, the whey dieters had lost the most weight and stayed more satisfied throughout the day. They also had fewer sugar spikes and lower average blood sugar.

Source: Endocrine Society



# 530

## NUMBER OF CALORIES

a 150-pound woman burns in an hour of leisurely swimming.

Source: USDA

# 33

Calories in a cup of cooked cauliflower. Compare that to 142 calories in a cup of boiled potatoes.

Source: USDA

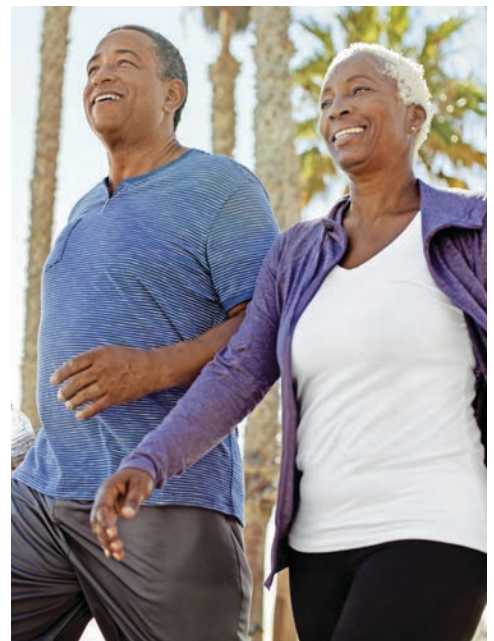


## SHORT IS SWEET

Even short exercise breaks throughout the day are better than no activity at all for people with type 2 diabetes.

Twenty-four inactive, overweight adults with type 2 diabetes put this theory to the test for three days. One day they sat for eight hours straight. Another day they took three-minute light walking breaks every 30 minutes over eight hours. On day three, they took three-minute exercise breaks that included half-squats, calf raises, buttocks squeezes, and knee raises. On the two days they took exercise breaks, all 24 adults had lower post-meal blood sugar and better insulin and fat levels in their bloodstreams.

Source: *Diabetes Care*



CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: CSP\_FAHREWASSER/AGEFOTOSTOCK; THINKSTOCK/GETTY IMAGES; CSP\_TACAR/AGEFOTOSTOCK; SAM EDWARDS/GETTY IMAGES

# 1

**NUMBER OF  
TIMES PER  
YEAR**

you should  
get an eye exam,  
a urine test, and a  
complete foot exam.

Source: Oregon  
Department of Public Health



## DISAPPEARING ACT

Wish you could turn back time on your diabetes? It may be possible. About 30 people with type 2 diabetes went on a strict diet of just 600 to 700 calories a day for eight weeks. Then they went on a maintenance diet. At the end of six months, 12 people had gone into remission, meaning they had the blood sugar and insulin levels of someone without diabetes. Those who got this benefit hadn't had diabetes as long as the others and had higher fasting insulin levels when they started the program.

Source: *Diabetes Care*



# 5

**NUMBER OF  
MINUTES**

you should  
put your feet up and wiggle  
your toes. Do it two to  
three times a day to keep  
the blood flowing.

Source: American Diabetes  
Association



## ASK YOUR DOCTOR

What types of tests should I have to protect my eyes, feet, heart, kidneys, and nerves?

How often should I schedule exams?

Who should be on my medical team besides you?

How can I get my A1c levels in a healthy range?



Read [12 Lifestyle Tips to Avoid Diabetes Complications](#), a slideshow at [WebMD.com](#).

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PAGE 3

# Testing 1, 2, 3

Commit to these regular screenings to manage type 2 diabetes

BY KIMBERLY GOAD

Today, with the help of three basic tests, you can help keep your diabetes—and related health complications—in check.

## 1. Hemoglobin A1c Test

A simple blood test, the A1c (your doctor may call it the glycosylated hemoglobin test) is done on a sample of blood taken with a finger-stick or from a small vial drawn from your arm. Not to be confused with the daily at-home monitoring that some people with diabetes use to measure their current blood sugar, the A1c test paints a picture of your average blood sugar level for the past three months.

If you can keep your hemoglobin A1c in the range of about 7%, you're much less likely to have complications in your eyes, your kidneys, or your nerves, says Robert Rizza, MD, professor of medicine at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn.

## 2. Dilated eye exam

High blood sugar and high blood pressure can

do a number on the tiny blood vessels in your eyes, but the damage can be prevented if your doctor spots it early. Schedule a yearly dilated eye exam. With the help of eye drops that enlarge your pupils for a short time, your eye doctor will examine the inside of your eyes for signs of leaky blood vessels.

## 3. Foot exam

Diabetes can also slow circulation in your feet and legs and cause loss of feeling. That's why an annual foot exam is a must.

A doctor will check your feet for redness, cracks, sores, or open wounds. He'll look for problems (like overlapping toes).

He'll also do a monofilament test. You'll close your eyes and he'll press a piece of nylon to various parts of your foot. If you can't feel it, you might have nerve damage.

Don't wait for a yearly exam to give your feet the once-over. Rizza suggests you check them every day at home. If you notice any changes, bring them to your doctor's attention right away.

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL DANSINGER, MD, WEBMD MEDICAL REVIEWER



# Know the Signs

Suddenly dizzy or nauseated?  
These symptoms are a red flag

BY MICHELE COHEN MARILL

As careful as you may be to keep your blood glucose under control, complications can arise. Don't ignore the following symptoms, says Sethu K. Reddy, MD, chief of the adult diabetes section at Joslin Diabetes Center in Boston.

**Sweating, nervousness, or lightheadedness:** If you suddenly feel shaky and your heart is racing, your blood glucose may have dropped below 70 mg/dL. Low blood sugar, or hypoglycemia, also can cause hunger, headaches, irritability, and fatigue. "If the blood sugar goes down further, people are more likely to get changes in personality or they might lose consciousness," Reddy says. You should have a handy source of about 15 to 20 grams of simple carbohydrates, such as a glucose tablet or gel, 2 tablespoons of raisins, or 4 ounces of juice or soda, to raise your blood sugar quickly.

**Thirst and frequent urination:** High blood glucose, a condition called hyperglycemia, makes you feel much as you did when you were first diagnosed, with increased thirst and urination, a dry mouth, unexplained weight loss, fatigue, and slow-healing sores. Those symptoms also can be warning signs of a serious condition called diabetic ketoacidosis, or DKA, which is related to high blood glucose. When you don't have enough insulin, your body burns fat for energy instead of glucose, and ketones accumulate in your blood. High levels of ketones may cause you to feel tired or confused, have trouble breathing, vomit or have abdominal pain, and have dry or flushed skin. Use an at-home urine test or a blood glucose meter (if yours has this capability) to measure your ketones. Contact your health



care provider if the level is high.

**Numbness, tingling, or pain:** Even when high blood sugar does not cause symptoms, it can lead to nerve damage, or neuropathy. You may first notice numbness or tingling in your hands or feet. If you lose the ability to feel cold, heat, or pain in your feet, you could develop a sore or infection without being aware of it.

**Constipation, heartburn, or nausea:** Digestive discomfort could be a sign of gastroparesis, when the stomach empties slowly because of nerve damage. "Constipation is probably the earliest sign that something is going on with the nervous system and the GI [gastrointestinal] system," Reddy says. Gastroparesis can lead to gastroesophageal reflux, when some food or stomach acid leaks back into the esophagus, causing a burning feeling.

**Blurry vision:** When blood sugars fluctuate, as they often do with type 1 diabetes, fluid buildup can blur your vision. Getting your blood glucose under control resolves the problem. Still, be aware that serious eye damage can occur from other conditions, such as diabetic retinopathy, without early symptoms.

## ASK YOUR DOCTOR

What is the level of protein in my urine?

What should I do if my blood sugar is high or low?

How often should I have a medical or eye exam?

What symptoms signal a medical emergency?



Know The Truth  
About Type 1  
Diabetes at  
WebMD.com.

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## ASK YOUR DIABETES DIETITIAN

How much  
fruit can I eat  
each day?

Will I have to  
exchange other  
sources of carbs  
for fruit?

Which are  
the best fruits for  
my diabetes?

Can I drink  
fruit juice?

Could any  
fruits interact  
with my  
medications?



Find diabetes-friendly  
recipes on  
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# Summer Bounty

Choose fruits that won't  
bump up your blood sugar

BY STEPHANIE WATSON

Now that summer is here, supermarket produce sections and farmer markets brim with the colors of the season. You might wonder if fruit is a good fit for your diet. The answer is yes, as long as you choose wisely. Fruit is high in vitamins, minerals, and fiber, making it an excellent substitute for sugary desserts. Yet it also contains sugar and carbs, so you need to watch portion sizes. Work with your dietitian to figure out how many carb grams you should eat per meal, and per day.

One 15-gram serving of carbs is equal to 1¼ cups whole strawberries, 1 medium peach, or 1 cup of cubed cantaloupe. Dried fruit is a much more concentrated source of sugar, so a serving will be smaller. For example, you could eat two whole plums or three small dried prunes for the same 15 grams of carbs.

If you eat based on the glycemic index (GI)—a measure of how much certain foods raise your blood sugar—most fruits are fine because their fiber puts them low on the index. Higher GI fruits to watch out for are pineapple, watermelon, bananas, and dried fruits.

### Is Fruit Juice OK?

When it comes to drinking fruit juice, it's all about timing. Juice is high in sugar and carbs, which raises blood sugar. Yet that can come in handy at times. "It's used by many people to raise their sugar if they're having a low," says Clara Schneider, RD, RN, a certified diabetes educator and dietitian in Corolla, N.C.

REVIEWED BY HANSA BHARGAVA, MD, WEBMD MEDICAL EDITOR



If you drink juice regularly, look for brands labeled 100% fruit juice with no added sugar. And watch how much you drink. A 4-ounce glass of juice supplies about 15 carb grams.

### Fresh, Frozen, or Canned?

Fresh fruit is always ideal, but it may not be available or affordable where you live. Canned or frozen fruits make good substitutes, with a few caveats.

"Most frozen fruits are taken from the field and frozen very quickly, so they're not losing that many nutrients," Schneider says. Yet you want to avoid products with added syrup, sugar, and salt. Read the labels.

### Medicine Interactions

Keep in mind how certain fruits might affect your medications. Grapefruit and its juice, as well as orange and apple juices, can interact with drugs used to treat high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and other conditions. Check with your doctor before eating citrus fruits or drinking their juice.



## ASK YOUR DOCTOR

Is it safe for me to begin or increase regular physical activity?

What time of day might I benefit more from exercise?

What's a safe range for my blood sugar to be in when I start my workout?

In what situations should I not exercise?



Read **10 Muscle Moves to Help Tame Diabetes** at WebMD.com.

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# Exercise Right

A well-timed workout has plenty of benefits

BY SONYA COLLINS

Diet, medication, and exercise are the three pillars of diabetes management. And while there's a right time for meals and for medications if you take them, what about exercise?

"Exercise is beneficial for people with diabetes almost any time, but depending on other health factors, it may be more beneficial to some people at certain times of day," says Claudia Scott, RD, a certified diabetes educator and clinical assistant professor at the University of Houston.

## Early bird

If you have early-morning sugar spikes, a rise-and-shine workout could help burn some of that extra sugar. "Any blood sugar reading around or above 120 would be ideal for exercising first thing," Scott says. However, check with your doctor first if your blood sugar is above 250.

## After a meal

If your sugar is normal, say 100 to 110, exercise

could push your liver to release glucose for fuel. "That could leave your blood sugar higher than it was to begin with," Scott says. In that case, it's best to wait till after you eat. That way, you burn the sugar you take in at mealtimes rather than releasing your body's natural stores of sugar into your bloodstream.

Post-meal exercise doesn't just help process the glucose from that meal. It can continue to help regulate blood sugar for up to 24 hours.

## Before a meal

If you can most easily fit in a workout before lunch or dinner, go for it. Exercise before or after a meal can help you feel less hungry and increase that full, satisfied feeling. Even six minutes of intense exercise before a meal can reap benefits all day long. In an experiment, people with diabetes walked briskly uphill on a treadmill for six minutes, taking a quick break each minute, for 30 minutes before dinner. The mini-workouts helped regulate their blood sugar after dinner and for some, the effects lasted 24 hours.

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL W. SMITH, MD, CPT, WEBMD CHIEF MEDICAL EDITOR

TARA MOORE/GETTY IMAGES



# GLOBAL GRILLING

From Mexico to the Caribbean, we bring you delicious dishes

worthy of your best backyard parties

BY KERRI-ANN JENNINGS

REVIEWED BY HANSA BHARGAVA, MD, WEBMD MEDICAL EDITOR

## VIVA LA MEXICO

Whether you're grilling meat, fish, or chicken to fill tacos or infusing cobs of corn with smokiness, spice up your cookout with the flavors of Mexico.

**INGREDIENTS TO GET STARTED:** Start off with the right seasonings—cumin, oregano, chili powder, and cayenne pepper are Mexican must-haves to rub onto grillables.

## Grilled Fish Tacos With Avocado Crema

This recipe calls for soft whole wheat corn tortillas (90–100 calories per serving; 3 grams fiber). If you can't find them, feel free to substitute eight 6-inch corn tortillas for a similar amount of calories, carbs, and fiber. *Makes 4 servings*

### INGREDIENTS

1 lb firm white fish, such as cod  
1 tbsp olive oil  
1 tsp ground cumin  
1 tsp ground coriander  
½ tsp smoked paprika  
1 tsp oregano  
½ tsp garlic powder  
½ tsp salt  
1 tbsp lime juice

### Avocado Crema

1 avocado  
½ cup fat-free plain Greek yogurt  
2 tbsp lime juice  
½ cup cilantro  
4 whole wheat corn tortillas

### Toppings

½ head of cabbage, shredded  
cucumber slices  
radish slices  
cilantro  
hot sauce  
limes

### DIRECTIONS

1. Marinate fish in olive oil, spices, salt, and lime juice at least one hour and up to overnight.
2. Prepare avocado crema: Blend avocado, yogurt, lime juice, and cilantro in a mini food processor or blender.
3. Brush grill with oil and light grill to a medium-high flame.
4. Remove fish from marinade, shaking off and discarding excess. Grill fish about 3 minutes on each side (should be able to flake it with a fork when done).
5. Warm tortillas on the grill.
6. Assemble tacos: Divide fish among tortillas and serve with crema and toppings.

### PER SERVING

398 calories, 35 g protein, 31 g carbohydrate, 17 g fat (4 g saturated fat), 64 mg cholesterol, 672 mg sodium, 9 g fiber, 6 g sugar. Calories from fat: 39%

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEIGH BEISCH

FOOD STYLING BY DAN BECKER PROP STYLING BY PHILIPPINE SCALI





## GOOD EVENING, VIETNAM

One of the best takeaways from Vietnamese grilling is to make meat part of the dish, not the main event. Serve grilled, marinated meat over a bed of noodles and vegetables.

**INGREDIENTS TO GET STARTED:** Rice noodles are an instant side dish. Layer marinades with sweet, sour, and salty flavors of Southeast Asia: Fish sauce, soy sauce, and lime juice are a good base. Fresh herbs—cilantro, mint, and basil—brighten Vietnamese-flavored grilled dishes.

### Vietnamese Grilled Pork With Rice Noodles

In this Vietnamese-inspired dish, flavorful grilled pork is complemented by delicate rice noodles, fresh vegetables and herbs, and a tangy dressing. *Makes 4 servings*

#### INGREDIENTS

12 oz pork loin, sliced into ½-inch strips  
8 oz thin rice noodles

#### Marinade

2 tbsp lime juice  
1 tbsp fish sauce  
1½ tbsp brown sugar  
2 tbsp canola oil  
1 tbsp minced garlic  
1 tsp minced chili pepper (optional)

#### Toppings

1 large carrot, shredded  
½ English cucumber, sliced into half coins  
½ cup basil  
⅓ cup roasted peanuts, coarsely chopped  
4 cups shredded lettuce

#### Dressing

1½ tbsp lime juice  
1 tbsp fish sauce  
½ tbsp brown sugar  
⅓ cup water  
1 tsp minced chili pepper (optional)  
1 tsp minced garlic

#### DIRECTIONS

1. Combine marinade ingredients in gallon-sized zip-close bag. Add pork, seal bag, and massage to coat. Refrigerate meat at least one hour and up to overnight.
2. Cook rice noodles according to instructions on package. Drain, rinse with cold water, and set aside.
3. Combine dressing ingredients and set aside.
4. When ready to grill: Light the grill and brush grate with vegetable oil. Remove pork from marinade and shake off excess. Grill marinated pork over a medium-hot fire until golden brown and just cooked through, about 2 minutes per side. Take pork off the grill and set aside.
5. Divide rice noodles into serving bowls. Distribute pork slices and toppings among bowls. Serve with dressing.

#### PER SERVING

483 calories, 30 g protein, 54 g carbohydrate, 17 g fat (2 g saturated fat), 62 mg cholesterol, 770 mg sodium, 3 g fiber, 8 g sugar. Calories from fat: 31%

## CARIBBEAN SPICE

The sultry, sunny Caribbean lends sweet heat to its cuisine. Whether you're grilling fish or chicken, try a jerk marinade.

**INGREDIENTS TO GET STARTED:** Jerk seasoning is a quintessential flavoring of Jamaica. It's layered with flavors of allspice, thyme, cinnamon, garlic, and ginger. That sweetness is a natural pairing for grilled fruit. Avocados, tropical fruit, and watercress are also refreshing additions to Caribbean-themed grilling.

### Jamaican Jerk Chicken Kebabs With Corn and Mango

Jerk seasoning is incredibly flavorful: sweet, tangy, and savory all at once. You can find prepared jerk seasoning, or blend your own (this recipe shows you how). *Makes 4 servings*

#### INGREDIENTS

1 lb skinless, boneless chicken breast, cut into chunks  
1 tbsp canola oil  
1 clove garlic, minced  
½ tbsp peeled fresh ginger, minced  
2 tbsp orange juice  
2 tsp cider vinegar

#### Jerk seasoning

1 tsp allspice  
1 tsp thyme  
¼ tsp ground nutmeg  
¼ tsp ground cinnamon  
¼ tsp cayenne (or to taste)  
½ tsp salt  
1 tbsp canola oil for brushing corn and mango  
2 cobs of corn, shucked and sliced into 2-inch-thick rounds  
2 cups diced mango (fresh or frozen, thawed)  
12 bamboo skewers, soaked in water

#### DIRECTIONS

1. Combine all ingredients other than 1 tbsp canola oil, corn, and mango in a large zip-close bag. Seal and massage to blend. Set aside in fridge for 1 hour or overnight.
2. Thread soaked bamboo skewers with chicken, corn, and mango.
3. Heat grill to medium-high heat. Grill skewers until chicken is cooked through, 12–15 minutes.

#### PER SERVING

328 calories, 28 g protein, 27 g carbohydrate, 12 g fat (2 g saturated fat), 66 mg cholesterol, 355 mg sodium, 3 g fiber, 13 g sugar. Calories from fat: 33%



Find diabetes-friendly recipes on the [Healthy Recipe Finder](#) at [WebMD.com](#).

LEARN HOW ON PAGE 3



## Other global taste sensations

### INDIA

In India, the grill of choice is a very hot oven, or tandoor. You can take this as inspiration to grill naan (or pizza dough), while giving meat or poultry a rubdown with Indian seasonings.

**INGREDIENTS TO GET STARTED:** Curry powder (or make your own blend using the key ingredients: turmeric, cumin, coriander, dry mustard, fenugreek, cardamom, and cloves), garlic, fresh ginger, and onions

**TRY:** Serving with yogurt sauce and other traditional Indian condiments.

### MEDITERRANEAN

The ultimate healthy cuisine provides a good model for grilling: lots of vegetables, bright flavorings, an abundance of seafood, and smaller amounts of meat and cheese.

**INGREDIENTS TO GET STARTED:** Oregano, mint, sumac, garlic, lemons, and red wine vinegar

**TRY:** Using a small amount of feta to sprinkle on a dish before you serve it—you'll get maximum flavor by adding it at the end. As with Indian food, a cooling yogurt sauce can complement your dish. Make a quick tzatziki by grating cucumber and a bit of garlic into nonfat plain Greek yogurt.





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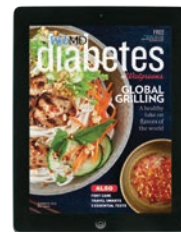
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## **FOLLOW THIS ADVICE**

**Check your feet daily.**

Use a mirror, or ask a spouse or friend to help you. If you've lost feeling in your feet, look to see if something is wrong.

**Wash them well.**

When you shower, soap your feet with warm water and fully dry them, even between the toes.

Trapped moisture can be harmful. Use lotion or cream to keep skin from drying or cracking, which can cause sores.

**Dress for comfort.**

Keep your feet cushioned with soft socks and comfy footwear.

**Trim your toenails.**

Ask your doctor if he or she (or a podiatrist) should cut your toenails to prevent injury. This is common for people who have neuropathy or who've had foot ulcers before.



Check out 8 First Aid Essentials for Car or Purse, a slideshow at WebMD.com.

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# Feet First

Avoid problems by preventing and treating skin sores early

BY LISA FIELDS

When you have diabetes, it's vital to treat foot injuries right away. Even minor wounds can turn into serious foot ulcers, which can cost you a foot—or an entire leg—if you don't care for them quickly and thoroughly. These easy steps can prevent problems down the road.

## **Common Causes**

What you put on your feet matters. "You can get a foot ulcer from something as simple as walking in new or tight-fitting shoes or getting a small pebble stuck in the shoe," says Raul Guzman, MD, a vascular surgeon at Joslin Diabetes Center in Boston.

If you have diabetes, you may get a kind of nerve damage that stops the feeling in your feet. Doctors call this neuropathy. If you can't feel your feet, you may not know you're hurt, and a small cut or sore can turn into something bigger.

Or you might have poor blood flow to your feet, which makes it hard for even minor cuts to heal.

Your doctor can tell you whether you have nerve damage or blood-flow problems. Guzman says he can do a test that shows how blood moves through your body. If the results are normal, you can have standard wound-care treatments. "If the results of this blood-flow test are abnormal, that means you have poor circulation that needs to be repaired," he says.

Surgery can help. "We can use a balloon and stent," Guzman says, "or we can do a bypass procedure, where we connect the artery above the blockage to one of the arteries in the calf or foot."

## **Wound Treatment Options**

If you do injure your foot, don't try to take care of it at home. Go to a wound-care center



or your doctor, even for blisters, calluses, and scratches.

"Put on some antibiotic ointment and see a wound center or your doctor, at the latest, the next day," says Harold Brem, MD, chief of the wound healing and regenerative medicine division at Winthrop-University Hospital in Mineola, New York. "These are limb- and life-threatening problems, so do not take chances."

Your doctor will know the proper way to clean and treat the wound. He or she may prescribe a cream to use at home. If you develop a foot ulcer, the doctor will probably have to clean it out, a process called debridement, followed by a bandage if needed, Guzman says.

In recent years, doctors have used cutting-edge treatments like stem cells and growth factors to treat foot ulcers. "These are no longer extreme measures," Brem says.

You should also keep weight off your foot as you heal. Different types of casts or boots can help, Guzman says.

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL DANSINGER, MD, WEBMD MEDICAL REVIEWER



# Gestational Diabetes

## Are You at Risk?

Even if you've never had diabetes before, your blood sugar could rise during pregnancy. Just under 10% of pregnant women get gestational diabetes. Why worry? Glucose crosses the placenta, giving your infant high blood sugar. Babies born to moms with gestational diabetes are bigger than normal. And they're more likely to become obese or have type 2 diabetes when they get older. Your doctor should test you between the 24th and 28th weeks of your pregnancy. Are you at risk? Take the quiz.



## QUIZ

- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <b>1. I'm overweight or obese.</b><br>Yes    No | <b>2. My last baby weighed more than 9 pounds.</b><br>Yes    No | <b>3. My mother, father, brother, or sister has type 2 diabetes.</b><br>Yes    No | <b>4. I'm Hispanic, American Indian, African American, or Asian.</b><br>Yes    No |
|---|---|---|---|

### ANSWERS:

**1. YES.** If you started out your pregnancy overweight, your risk of gestational diabetes is about twice as high as it would be if you were at a healthy weight. If you're obese, your risk quadruples. When you're overweight, your body needs more of the hormone insulin to bring down your blood sugar levels. Sometimes your pancreas can't keep up with the insulin demand and your blood sugar spikes. Even if you started your pregnancy at a healthy weight, too much weight gain during those nine months could make you vulnerable to gestational diabetes.

**2. YES.** You're more likely to have gestational diabetes if you've given birth to a baby weighing more than 9 pounds. Women with gestational diabetes often have larger-than-normal newborns because the extra sugar makes babies grow faster than usual. A big baby can make delivery trickier. If the baby is too large to get down the birth canal without injury, you could end up with

a C-section. Also, a large baby's shoulders can become stuck inside the mother's body, a situation called shoulder dystocia.

**3. YES.** A family history of type 2 diabetes makes you more likely to have high blood sugar during pregnancy, especially if this is your first baby. The reason likely has to do with both genes and lifestyle factors—like the kind of foods your family ate around the dinner table or how often you exercised together.

**4. YES.** Certain ethnic groups are at higher risk for gestational diabetes. Women who are Hispanic, American Indian, African American, or Asian are more likely to get this condition than non-Hispanic white women. Doctors aren't sure why, but obesity rates may be to blame in some of these groups. If you're overweight, talk to your doctor about weight loss strategies before you conceive.

## ASK YOUR DOCTOR

1. Am I at risk for gestational diabetes?
2. When will you test me for this condition?
3. What can I do to bring down my blood sugar?
4. How can I prevent gestational diabetes in my next pregnancy?

**ASK YOUR  
DOCTOR  
OR  
DIABETES  
EDUCATOR**

Am I healthy  
enough to travel?

How might changes  
in temperature or  
air pressure affect  
my medications?

Should I pack  
a glucagon  
emergency kit?

What medications,  
other than those  
used to treat  
diabetes, should  
I pack?

Do I need any  
vaccinations?

Will you give me  
a letter that says  
I need to carry  
certain medications  
and supplies?



Read **10 Ways to  
Stop Stress Now**,  
a slideshow at  
WebMD.com.

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# Travel Smarts

Summer getaways  
and diabetes *can* mix

BY BARBARA BRODY

Vacation should equal rest and relaxation (or, if you prefer, sightseeing and adventure), but having diabetes means you'll need to take a few precautions. Step one: Talk to your doctor.

"I like to speak to them about what they should pack, how to store their medications, and how to prepare for any emergencies related to hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia," says Deena Adimoolam, MD, assistant professor of medicine, endocrinology, diabetes, and bone disease at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City. She also asks patients about where they're going and the length of their trips so she can help them prepare accordingly.

## Make a List and Check It Twice

Start a detailed packing list. Adimoolam recommends taking twice as much medication as you think you'll need, just in case you get stuck and are away longer than expected. Always transport meds in their original pharmacy containers so that everything is clearly labeled. You may also want to take a prescription with you.

If you use insulin, you know that pens and needles or vials and syringes are a must. You may also need a cooling wallet to protect your insulin from heat; most types don't do well above 86°F, so check with your doctor about your brand.

And of course you'll need your glucose monitor, lancets, and testing strips as well as snacks and hard candy in case your blood sugar drops too low. All of these supplies must be easy to access at all times (so if you're



flying, keep them in your carry-on bag).

A pair of quality shoes—whether you'll be pounding the pavement or taking walks on the beach—is also essential to protect your feet.

## Check Yourself Often

Vacation often means doing lots of physical activity (going for a hike or fast-paced sightseeing) and eating foods you normally don't, so you'll need to be extra vigilant about monitoring your glucose levels. Changing time zones? That means you'll be eating at different times than you would at home; you may also need to adjust your routine if you're used to taking insulin first thing in the morning or before bed. Review all of this with your doctor before you leave.

## Know How to Get Help

Get some info from your health insurance company about your coverage, especially if you're leaving the country, Adimoolam says. If you go to a place where a foreign language is spoken, learn a few phrases, such as "I need help" or "Where's the hospital?" Adimoolam advises carrying the phone number for the American consulate as well.

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



## ASK YOUR DOCTOR OR DIABETES EDUCATOR

If I ignore my diabetes, what will happen to my body?

If I only start with one diabetes-management habit, which one is the most important?

What is my current A1C, and what target level should I aim for?

Can you refer me to a nutritionist who can help me consider changes to my diet?

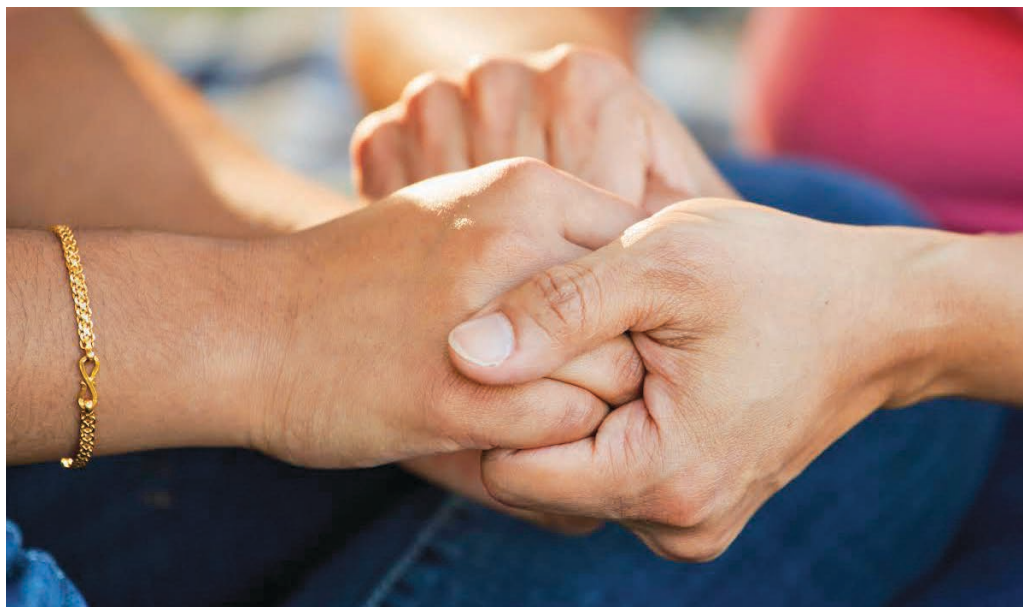
Is it possible that I am depressed? What symptoms should I watch for?

Can you put me in touch with a support group for people with diabetes?



Read *Don't Blame Me for Diabetes*, an article on WebMD.com.

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# Diabetes Denial

5 steps to accepting—and managing—your condition

BY ERIN O'DONNELL

Some people respond to the news that they have type 2 diabetes by ignoring the diagnosis, a head-in-the-sand reaction that is risky but somewhat understandable, acknowledges Sherita Golden, MD, MHS, an endocrinologist at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. “We often ask patients to alter their lifestyle significantly” with a host of new habits, she says. “It’s initially overwhelming.”

Golden aims to meet diabetes denial with patience, and recommends family and friends do the same. “But we shouldn’t be so patient that they’re allowed to ignore their diabetes for years,” she adds. Over time, uncontrolled high blood sugar levels can lead to serious complications: eye diseases such as glaucoma, kidney disease, and foot ulcers that can result in amputation. “All of those can be avoided by getting glucose under control sooner rather than later,” she says.

If you or someone close to you is in denial, Golden suggests taking these steps.

**Start simple.** If you’re only willing to take on one diabetes management habit at first, Golden advises taking any medications your doctor prescribes—consistently. Speak up if you

have side effects, a situation that may tempt you to skip meds. “There are alternatives that we can prescribe,” Golden says.

**Listen to and express your emotions.** Golden led research revealing that people with type 1 or type 2 diabetes “are twice as likely to have depression and depressed mood compared to individuals who don’t have diabetes.” The choice to ignore a diabetes diagnosis may be a symptom of depression, and treating the condition (with therapy and/or medication) could help some people stick to a diabetes treatment plan.

**Find a group.** Consider joining a support group for people with type 2. “Support groups are valuable because they let patients know they’re not alone,” Golden says. When you’re newly diagnosed, it helps to meet experienced patients who can share tips.

**Talk to a nutrition counselor.** Many people believe a diabetes diagnosis means no sweets ever. In reality, people with diabetes can eat treats if they adjust their meals accordingly. A dietitian or certified diabetes educator can help you develop a meal plan built around your own needs and preferences.

REVIEWED BY BRUNILDA NAZARIO, MD, WEBMD LEAD MEDICAL EDITOR

## How can the summer heat affect diabetes control?



**Marwan Hamaty, MD**  
Endocrinologist,  
Cleveland Clinic

Heat, especially extreme heat, is hard for anyone to tolerate. It's especially hard on people with diabetes. When your body is exposed to heat, you lose more water through sweat, which can dehydrate you. Dehydration increases blood sugar levels. High blood sugar will make you urinate more often, which can dehydrate you even more. To stay hydrated, drink more fluids. You can tell when you're drinking enough because your urine will be lighter-colored.

Heat can also affect the way your body absorbs insulin. In hot weather, more blood flows to

your skin. When you're dehydrated, the opposite happens—less blood flows to the skin. Most types of insulin, especially short-acting insulin, don't work as well when blood flow is decreased.

The heat can affect your medicines, especially insulin, in other ways. If you leave insulin in a hot car, it will start to degrade. Bring along a cooler to keep insulin at room temperature or below. Heat can also damage test strips, leading to false readings. That's going to affect your blood sugar management and how much insulin you take.

Be careful when you exercise in the heat. Watch for both high and low blood sugar. Your blood sugar can drop if you are on a medication that could cause low blood sugar. Being outside in hot weather and exercising produce similar symptoms, such as sweating and a fast heart rate, so it's easy to overlook the early symptoms of low blood sugar. That's why you need to check your blood sugar every hour or two while you exercise. Bring juice, glucose tablets, or glucose gel along for your workout, in case your blood sugar dips. If you take insulin, ask your provider how to adjust your dosage when exercising.

***Avoid sunburn, both because of the damage it does to your skin and because it can affect diabetes control.***

Avoid sunburn, both because of the damage it does to your skin and because it can affect diabetes control. A serious sunburn causes inflammation, which in turn raises blood sugar. Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen and wear protective clothing

and a wide-brimmed hat whenever you go outside.

Finally, take care of your feet. Avoid walking barefoot, especially if you have nerve damage that reduces your ability to feel sharp objects and hot surfaces. You might hurt yourself and not realize it. Wear protective shoes. Check your feet every day for cuts and other injuries. Also look for a scaly rash on your feet and white spots between your toes, which could be athlete's foot. Sweaty feet make you more likely to get athlete's foot and other fungal infections. Keep your feet dry, and treat athlete's foot as soon as you see it with an over-the-counter antifungal cream.



Tap into the 500-plus convos in WebMD's Diabetes Community at WebMD.com.

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REVIEWED BY BRUNILDA NAZARIO, MD, WEDMD LEAD MEDICAL EDITOR



# Tight Control

If you have diabetes, monitoring and managing your blood sugar levels to keep the disease from getting worse is crucial. “Diabetes complications are preventable,” notes WebMD diabetes community member NutriJoy, “but that requires a genuine commitment on your part to make whatever lifestyle changes are needed to lower your blood glucose levels as close to ‘normal’ as possible.” Is your diabetes in control? Take this quiz to find out.



## QUIZ

- |  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>1. I follow a diabetes food plan:</b><br><br>Every day<br>Some days<br>I don't have a food plan | <b>2. I check my feet for cuts and sores:</b><br><br>Daily<br>Sometimes<br>When my doctor reminds me | <b>3. I exercise:</b><br><br>Regularly, checking my blood sugar before and after<br>Rarely or not at all | <b>4. I check my blood sugar levels:</b><br><br>Per my doctor's instructions<br>When it's convenient<br>I rarely remember |
|--|--|--|---|

### ANSWERS:

**1.** A healthy diet and regular exercise are the cornerstones to maintaining good blood sugar levels and controlling type 2 diabetes. If you don't have a diabetes food plan, ask your doctor about seeing a dietitian or nutritionist who specializes in creating these.

**2.** Chronically elevated blood sugars can damage the nerves, including those in your feet, which can make it hard to feel pain. Diabetes can also damage circulation to your feet, which can make it harder for sores to heal. To prevent foot problems, check your feet every day for cuts, blisters,

red spots, and swelling. Take care of your nails and skin and wear shoes that fit properly.

**3.** Regular exercise helps maintain blood sugar levels and stay fit. Get 30 to 60 minutes of activity on most days of the week. Check with your doctor before changing your routine.

**4.** Monitor your blood glucose the way your doctor suggests. High blood sugar can make you thirsty and tired, cause blurry vision, or make you urinate often. Low blood sugar can make you feel weak, tired, confused, or shaky.

REVIEWED BY BRUNILDA NAZARIO, MD  
WEBMD LEAD MEDICAL EDITOR

Sources: American Diabetes Association,  
WebMD Diabetes Health Center

## QUESTIONS FOR YOUR DOCTOR

**1. What kinds of dietary and fitness changes should I make to stay healthy?**

**2. What other doctors and medical professionals should I see?**  
How often?

**3. Will I need injections like insulin or take medications?**  
If so, how often?

**4. How do I avoid complications?**  
What do I need to be aware of?