

WebMD[®]

DIABETES

March/April 2014

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DIABETES NOW

HOT TOPICS!

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DIABETES



15

NUMBER OF CARBOHYDRATES IN A SMALL PIECE OF FRUIT, LIKE AN APPLE OR ORANGE OR HALF A GRAPEFRUIT. **YES, YOU CAN EAT FRUIT!**

Source: American Diabetes Association



CONTROL PATROL

Too much sugar in the blood can be damaging over time. But letting blood sugar get too low (also known as hypoglycemia or insulin shock) is dangerous for your heart, too. In a study, those with episodes of severely low blood sugar were twice as likely to have heart disease as others with type 2.

Source: BMJ



Good Morning

Here's yet another reason to eat breakfast: It could help lower your blood sugar later in the day. In a recent study, overweight women had their blood sugar tested before and after lunch on two different days. One day, they had eaten breakfast; the other day, they skipped it. On both days, their blood sugar levels were the same before lunch, and their lunches had the same calorie count. But on the day the women went without breakfast, their blood sugar was higher after lunch than on the day they had a morning meal.

Source: Endocrine Society

NUMBER OF HOURS after a workout that your body can continue to reap the blood sugar-lowering benefits of exercise.



Source: American Diabetes Association

STRIDE BREAK

No time to exercise? You may not need as many minutes as you think. In a recent study of 70 adults who typically sat for nine hours a day, those who walked for a minute and 40 seconds after every half hour of sitting had lower blood sugar after meals than people who took a single 30-minute walk during the day.

Source: American Journal of Clinical Nutrition



LIVING WELL

Clear the Air

ALLERGY TREATMENTS CAN AFFECT YOUR BLOOD SUGAR. HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

By Christina Boufis

● Aaachoooo! It's that time of year again: spring allergy season. For about one in five people, warm weather brings not only blooming flowers and trees but also the telltale symptoms of hay fever (seasonal allergic rhinitis)—sneezing, coughing, runny or stuffy nose, scratchy throat, itchy eyes, and general misery.

For those with type 2 diabetes, spring allergies don't directly affect blood sugar, but there are things you need to watch out for, says Gerald Bernstein, MD, FACP, director of the Diabetes Management Program at the Friedman Diabetes Institute, Beth Israel Medical Center in New York.

For relief from itching, sneezing, and runny nose, you might reach for an over-the-counter (OTC) medication such as an antihistamine, which millions have used safely, Bernstein says.

"But when you're throwing something like issues around blood sugar into the mix, you need to be a little more aware of the potential things that can occur."

One in five people who use antihistamines become drowsy, according to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA). "So if you take a nap and miss a meal, you can wake up with low blood sugar," Bernstein says. Look for newer antihistamines with less of a sedative effect or talk with a pharmacist about the side effects of various medications.

To unclog a stuffy nose, you might choose an OTC or prescription nasal spray, but you might not know that some contain steroids. "Steroids stimulate the liver to make more glucose, so now your liver is beginning to make more sugar," Bernstein explains. "And if you're not aware of this, you might



TRIGGER POINTS

THE BEST WAY TO BEAT SPRING ALLERGIES? AVOID OR REDUCE THINGS THAT TRIGGER THEM.

Get squeaky clean. Shower after spending time outdoors to remove pollen from your hair and body.

Keep pollen out. Close home and car windows. Use an air filter or air conditioner to filter out allergens.

Put your rain boots on. Go for a walk or exercise outdoors on cool, damp, or rainy days, when pollen is more likely to be washed to the ground.

be surprised and ask, 'Why are my numbers high?'" Ask your doctor or pharmacist about nasal sprays without steroids. You have two choices: an OTC decongestant nasal spray or an OTC antihistamine nasal spray. If you choose the decongestant spray, don't use it for more than three days, cautions the AAFA. It may make congestion worse, even after you stop using it.

To relieve a dry, scratchy throat or a cough, check the label and choose a sugar-free brand.

Reviewed by **Brunilda Nazario, MD**
WebMD Lead Medical Editor

LIVING HEALTHY

Under Pressure

FEELING FRAZZLED? STRESS CAN MAKE YOUR BLOOD SUGAR SOAR. HERE'S HOW TO LOWER IT

By *Stephanie Watson*

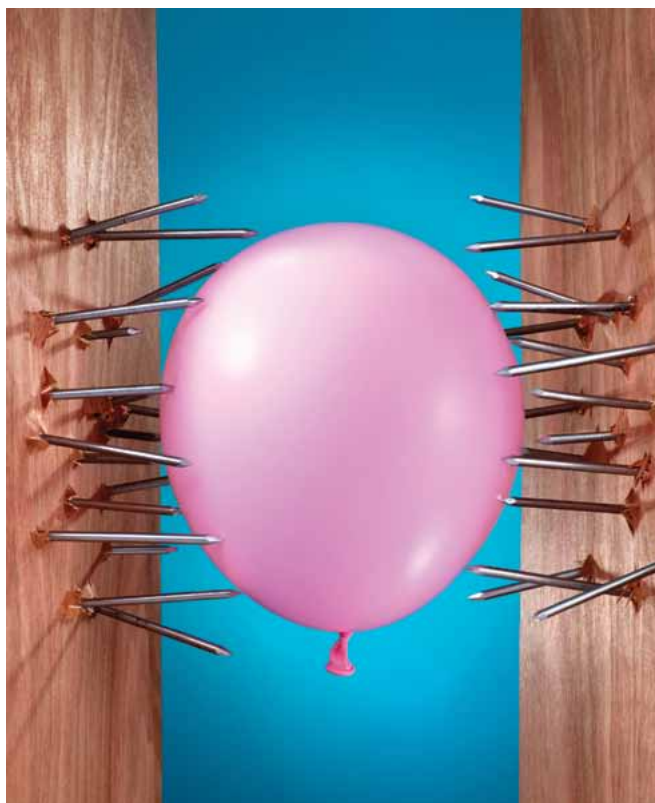
● Sherri Buffington knows immediately when she's stressed out. "I'll start to feel hot," she says. Once the warmth suffuses her body, she tests her blood sugar. It's almost always high.

Buffington isn't imagining the connection. Stress is known to spike blood sugar. "It's a very common occurrence," says Kevin Pantalone, DO, staff endocrinologist at Cleveland Clinic. "Stress can increase levels of hormones in the body, particularly cortisol, which can make blood sugar rise."

Hormone release is part of the body's fight-or-flight response, which readies it to take action at the first sign of trouble—or bolt in the other direction. Cortisol and other hormones release a surge of energy in the form of glucose (sugar), which the body can use to fight or flee.

That rush of glucose is no problem if your body's insulin response is working correctly. But for people with diabetes, whose bodies can't move glucose as efficiently into cells, it leads to a buildup of sugar in the bloodstream.

"The stress can make my numbers go up faster



than if I eat a cheesesteak and French fries," Buffington says. Yet food is another important part of the equation. "Patients who are under stress may turn to food as a means of stress release," Pantalone says. "And if they make bad choices, that can certainly cause significant elevations in blood sugar."

Another byproduct of stress is that it can make you neglect your health. "Stress makes managing diabetes more difficult," Pantalone says. When your attention is

focused on a miserable job or conflicted marriage, you have less energy to think about taking your insulin or eating healthy meals.

A chronic condition like diabetes can launch you into a never-ending cycle. You get stressed and your blood sugar rises, which stresses you out even more. Buffington says she's found relief from a progressive muscle relaxation CD. "If I do get stressed out or upset about something, my numbers may go up a little, but not as much," she says.

STRESS LESS

WANT TO GET A BETTER HANDLE ON YOUR STRESS? KEVIN PANTALONE, DO, SHARES A FEW TIPS.

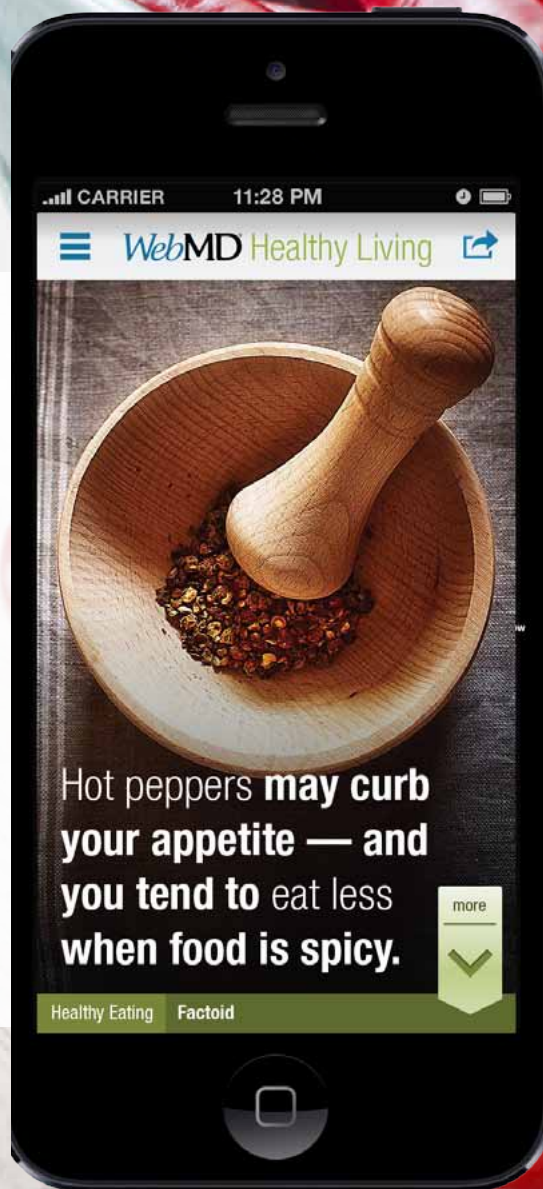
Be realistic. The idea of running three miles a day might sound like a good plan. But if you can't dedicate even 10 minutes to a daily workout—much less a couple of hours—your best ambitions will quickly go bust. "If you set the bar too high, you're setting yourself up for failure." Choose a more realistic amount, like 15 or 30 minutes a day to start, and stick to it.

Take small steps. You don't need to overhaul your entire life. "Small things add up," he says. Meditate for a few minutes a day. Start a new hobby, such as sewing or crossword puzzles. Memorize a poem that gives you peace. Take a 10-minute walk to get your mind off diabetes.

Assemble a dream team. Treating diabetes shouldn't be a solo endeavor. Your team should include a doctor, nurses, diabetes educators, a social worker, and your family and friends. They all should be ready to support you and cheer you on when you need encouragement.

JOHN KUCZALA/GETTY IMAGES

Reviewed by
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The New WebMD App for iPhone

Personalized healthy living tips and info that you want plus the health tools that you need.

- Daily mini-magazine based on your healthy interests
- First-aid essentials on the go
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Morning STARS

Start your day off on the right foot with these healthy breakfast recipes

BY KERRI-ANN JENNINGS

You've heard breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and that's especially true when you have type 2 diabetes. A healthy breakfast can help you control your weight and keep blood sugar stable, according to Melissa Joy Dobbins, RD, a Chicago-based certified diabetes educator. What should your focus be for the first meal of the day? When you have diabetes, it's key to keep total carbs consistent day to day, increase fiber, choose fewer processed foods, and make heart-healthy choices, Dobbins says.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEIGH BEISCH

FOOD STYLING BY DAN BECKER

PROP STYLING BY GLENN JENKINS



High-Protein Chocolate-Chip Raspberry Pancakes

Protein-rich nonfat cottage cheese stands in for ricotta in these light, custardy pancakes. Adding raspberries, chocolate chips, and orange zest makes them elegant and weekend-worthy (raspberries also lend this recipe 3 grams of fiber per serving). Round out this special breakfast with two strips of turkey bacon per person, and your meal will still clock in at just 300 calories.

Makes 4 servings (about four small pancakes per person)

Ingredients

1½ cups nonfat cottage cheese
4 eggs, lightly beaten
¼ tsp vanilla extract
1 tsp orange zest (optional)
1 tbsp sugar
½ cup whole wheat pastry flour
2 tbsp chocolate chips
Nonstick cooking spray
1½ cups raspberries, fresh or frozen

Directions

1. In a food processor, blend cottage cheese, eggs, vanilla extract, orange zest, if using, and sugar until smooth.
2. Add whole wheat pastry flour and chocolate chips and pulse 2–3 times or until flour is just incorporated (don't overmix).
3. Spray a large nonstick skillet with cooking spray and heat over medium heat. When pan is hot enough, pour pancake batter in ¼-cup servings.
4. When pancakes start to bubble, scatter raspberries over top, and flip to cook the other side, about 1 minute.

Per serving

261 calories, 20 g protein, 26 g carbohydrate, 8 g fat (4 g saturated fat), 172 mg cholesterol, 410 mg sodium, 5 g fiber, 9 g sugar. Calories from fat: 28%



Not going overboard on carbs in the morning can be a challenge since traditional breakfast foods tend to be carbohydrate-heavy (think cereal, milk, yogurt, waffles, granola, and fruit). Exactly how many grams of carbohydrates should you aim for? It depends

on your individual calorie needs, but about 30 to 45 grams is generally a safe range at breakfast (some people may need less, some more). The quality of those carbs also matters. Toss out refined grains, such as white toast and pancakes, and replace

them with whole grains, fruit, and low-fat dairy products. Whole grains and fruit will give you extra fiber, which helps control blood sugar, while dairy doubles as a lean protein.

In addition to curbing carbs, make sure you get enough protein. Spreading out your protein intake throughout the day may help you maintain a healthy weight.

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It can be tricky to get enough protein at breakfast (most of us don't sit down to a chicken breast or block of tofu in the morning), but Dobbins has some tips. First, home in on main protein sources: egg whites, lean meat (such as Canadian bacon), plain Greek yogurt (which has more protein than regular yogurt), milk, nuts, beans, and reduced-fat cheese. Second, don't forget about the smaller amounts of protein you can get in other foods, such as whole grain breads and vegetables.

The last thing to keep in mind is heart-healthy choices. "Diabetes increases your risk of heart disease, so you want to do everything you can to keep your heart as healthy as possible," Dobbins says. Limit sodium and saturated fat, and add more fiber with whole grains, fruits, and vegetables for a hearty—and heart-healthy—start to the day.

Reviewed by **Brunilda Nazario, MD**
WebMD Lead Medical Editor

Mango-Ginger Smoothie

Nonfat Greek yogurt is an impressive source of lean protein. It makes this smoothie a creamy, satisfying drink that's fat-free and low in sodium. An added bonus: You get an entire cup of fruit in this one drink.

Makes 1 serving

Ingredients

- ½ cup frozen mango chunks
- ½ banana
- 6 oz nonfat plain Greek yogurt
- ¼ cup skim milk
- 1 tsp maple syrup or honey
- ¼ tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp freshly grated ginger root (peel before grating)

Directions

Add all ingredients to blender and blend on high until smooth and creamy.

Per serving

230 calories, 20 g protein, 40 g carbohydrate, 0 g fat (0 g saturated fat), 9 mg cholesterol, 113 mg sodium, 3 g fiber, 32 g sugar. Calories from fat: 1%

When you have diabetes, it's key to keep carbs consistent day to day, increase fiber, and make heart-healthy choices.



Breakfast Tacos

Who says tacos are just for dinner? This veggie-enhanced twist on the classic breakfast burrito keeps carbs low while maximizing fiber. One whole egg delivers fat-soluble vitamin A, while two extra egg whites boost the protein.

Makes 1 serving

Ingredients

- 2 small corn tortillas
- 2 tbsp unsalted canned black beans
- 1 cup washed spinach or baby spinach
- 1 tsp canola oil
- 1 egg and 2 egg whites, beaten together
- 2 tbsp salsa fresca
- pepper to taste

Directions

1. Place corn tortillas on a toaster-oven tray; top each with 1 tbsp black beans. Heat in a 350-degree toaster oven until tortilla and beans are heated through (they should be ready when other ingredients are done cooking).
2. In a small sauté pan, cook spinach with a little water over medium heat until wilted. Remove from pan, drain excess liquid, and set aside.
3. Add oil to the pan and heat. Add beaten eggs to pan and use a spatula to scramble the eggs.
4. When eggs are done, divide eggs and spinach between the two tortillas. Top with salsa fresca and pepper.

Per serving

285 calories, 18 g protein, 30 g carbohydrate, 11 g fat (2 g saturated fat), 164 mg cholesterol, 410 mg sodium, 5 g fiber, 2 g sugar. Calories from fat: 35%

Home in on main protein sources, including egg whites and lean meats.




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HEALTHY HABITS

Check, Please

ARE YOU KEEPING TABS ON YOUR TO-DO'S? DON'T FORGET THESE DAILY TASKS

By Katherine Kam

When you have type 2 diabetes, it's often a juggling act to remember all of your daily tasks. Nora Saul, MS, RD, LDN, CDE, a diabetes educator and manager for nutrition services at the Joslin Diabetes Center in Boston, offers this "healthy habits" checklist to guide you through the day.

Remembering your daily tasks is often a juggling act.

Check your blood glucose levels.

Most people with type 2 diabetes need to check their blood sugar at least once a day. "That's the minimum," Saul says. But the frequency depends on your treatment plan. For instance, people who take insulin four times a day will need to test blood glucose more often, including before each meal.

Brush and floss your teeth twice a day.

"You might not think of this one, but it's really important for people with diabetes," Saul says. If you have dental disease or infection, such as inflamed gums, the problem may cause your blood glucose to rise. "When the blood sugar's high, it's also high

in the saliva and mouth and can lead to an environment where bacteria can grow." That can cause more cavities and gum disease if you don't brush and floss regularly.

Look at your feet.

Diabetes can cause your feet to have less sensation of pain. If you fail to notice a cut or blister on your foot, it can turn into a sore that's hard to treat. Check both feet carefully for blisters, cuts, scrapes, bruises, redness, or swelling. If you

spot any foot troubles, see your doctor.

Take stock of your diabetes supplies.

If your doctor tells you to, always carry a carbohydrate source to treat low blood sugar. Make sure you have it within easy reach, whether it's glucose tablets, jelly beans, gummy bears, jam or jelly, juice box, or regular (not diet) soda. Check daily, too, to make sure you carry needed backup supplies if you use an insulin pump.

Work in some physical activity.

Ideally, people with diabetes should get at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous aerobic exercise spread out over at least three days a week. "It's best to do something that raises your heart rate," Saul says. Even housework and gardening helps to get you moving.

Eat fruits and vegetables.

Aim for at least two servings of non-starchy vegetables each day, especially leafy greens. "There's spinach, kale, Swiss chard, bok choy," Saul says. "They're very low in calories, and have wonderful vitamins and minerals and antioxidants." Enjoy fresh fruit every day, too. It's a better choice than dried fruit or juice, which can make blood sugars rise too high.

Practice mindfulness with food.

Ask yourself: Why are you eating? Are you hungry, nervous, anxious or bored? Or are you eating that treat for the sheer pleasure of it? "A lot of times, if people stop and become aware of what they're doing, that's half the battle," Saul says. A splurge is OK once in a while.

Reviewed by
Michael Dansinger, MD
WebMD Diabetes Expert