



Diabetes is **NO** Sweet Thing!

WHAT IS DIABETES?

DIABETES is a disease that causes high blood sugar because the body either does not produce enough insulin or does not use insulin well. Insulin is a hormone that the body needs to use sugar we get from the foods we eat.

There are several types of diabetes.

- **In type 1**, the body does not make any insulin.
- **In type 2**, the body makes some insulin but does not use it well.
- **Gestational diabetes** affects only pregnant women.

All three types of diabetes are serious.

WHAT CAUSES DIABETES?

Diabetes is caused by several things, which may include:

- being overweight or obese
- not exercising
- having a family history of diabetes
- the body attacking its own tissues

DIABETES SYMPTOMS

You may have diabetes if you are having any of these symptoms:

- frequent urination
- unusual thirst
- unplanned weight loss
- blurred vision
- extreme hunger
- frequent skin, gum or bladder infections

You may have diabetes and not have any symptoms for a long time.



HOW IS DIABETES DIAGNOSED?

Diabetes can be diagnosed by a simple blood test that can be done wherever you receive medical care or at some health fairs.

DIABETES COMPLICATIONS

Diabetes is not something you can “just ignore until it goes away.” It can lead to other serious health problems, especially if it is poorly-controlled or untreated. These include:

- kidney disease (which can lead to dialysis)
- heart disease or heart attack
- stroke
- amputation
- nerve damage
- skin infections
- blindness
- hearing loss
- diabetic coma due to low blood sugar (which can lead to death)

These health problems can be prevented or delayed with good diabetes management and a healthy lifestyle.



For more information about diabetes or the *Diabetes is No Sweet Thing!* project, contact Sumter County Active Lifestyles by phone at **803-774-3860 or 3861**, or by email at **lpekuri@sumtercountysc.org**.

This project is funded in part by REACH US: SEA-CEED Grant/ Cooperative Agreement 1U58DP001015-04 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



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Lifestyle Habits that help Prevent and Control Diabetes

Physical activity and healthy eating lower your risk for diabetes and help you control diabetes better if you already have it. Below are some tips to help you get more exercise and eat right:

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:

- Be physically active for 30-60 minutes a day, 5-7 days a week.
- 10-minute bouts of activity are fine, as long as they add up to at least 30 minutes a day.
- Most of the time, include activities that get you breathing harder and your heart beating faster, like fast walking, jogging, swimming laps, bike riding, dancing, playing basketball or using a push mower.
- Two or three times a week, include exercises that strengthen muscles and bones, like running, climbing stairs, playing tennis, lifting weights or using resistance bands, or doing pushups, pull-ups, or sit-ups.
- Choose activities that you enjoy and will stick with.

HEALTHY EATING:

- Eat lots of various fruits and vegetables. Fresh and frozen are the best choices. If canned vegetables and fruits fit your food budget better, choose ones without added salt or sugar.
- Eat a fruit instead of drinking a fruit juice.
- Choose whole grain breads, pastas, rice & cereal.
- Choose lean meat, poultry, fish & dried beans.
- Drink water and sugar-free drinks instead of sugar-sweetened drinks.
- Use liquid oils for cooking instead of solid fats.
- Limit your portions. Eat only until you're comfortably full.

Get church members involved in being active and eating healthy.

- Form a walking group and take walks before or after church services.
- Participate as a church team in community walks when available, or do your own.

**At church potlucks, serve dishes
that are high in fiber and low in fat,
salt, sugar and calories.**

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Habits that increase diabetes risk

If you drink alcoholic beverages and/or smoke cigarettes, you are putting yourself at a greater risk of developing type 2 diabetes, especially if you have other diabetes risk factors (family history, obesity, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol).

Alcohol:

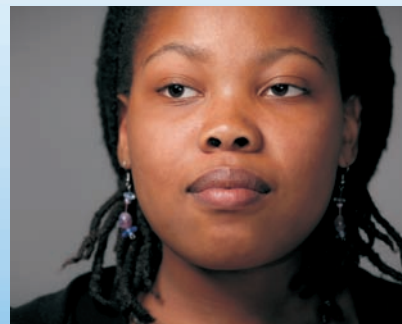
- Drinking *moderate* amounts of alcoholic beverages (one drink a day for women and two drinks a day for men) does not cause diabetes—but, *heavy* alcohol use can harm the pancreas, impairing its ability to secrete

insulin and ultimately causing diabetes.

- Drinking alcohol may lessen your resolve to eat healthy.
- If you choose to drink alcohol, limit the amount and have it with food. One alcoholic drink equals 12 ounces beer, 5 ounces wine or 1 ½ ounces distilled spirits (vodka, whiskey, gin, etc.).

Smoking:

- The more cigarettes you smoke, the greater your risk for diabetes.
- Nonsmokers who are frequently around smokers also have a greater risk for diabetes.
- Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health and the health of others.



Myths about diabetes

Myth: Diabetes is not that serious of a disease.

Fact: Diabetes causes more deaths a year than breast cancer and AIDS combined. Two out of three people with diabetes die from heart disease or stroke.

Myth: Type 1 diabetes is serious, but type 2 is not.

Fact: All types of diabetes are serious and must be taken seriously by people who have it and their families.

Myth: You can have “borderline diabetes” for many years.

Fact: There is no such thing as borderline diabetes. You either have diabetes or you don't.

Myth: If you are overweight or obese, you will develop type 2 diabetes.

Fact: Being overweight *is* a risk factor for developing this disease, but most overweight people never develop type 2 diabetes, and many people with type 2 diabetes are at a normal weight or only moderately overweight.

Myth: Eating too much sugar causes diabetes.

Fact: No, it does not—but it might replace more-nutritious

foods in the diet— like vegetables, fruits and whole-grains— that help lower diabetes risk. It can also cause you to gain too much weight.

Myth: Cancer can cause diabetes.

Fact: Actually, the opposite may be true. Available evidence suggests that people with diabetes (primarily type 2) have a greater risk of developing some forms of cancer (liver, pancreatic, endometrial, colon/rectal, breast and bladder).



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