

National Diabetes Month: Preventing Diabetes-Get Educated!

November is National Diabetes Month, and World Diabetes Day is November 14th. Although diabetes may seem to be a difficult disease to manage, the good news is that you can lead a healthy life and control your blood sugars and prevent many of the long term complications associated with diabetes.

Diabetes is defined as having 2 fasting blood sugars over 126 mg/dl or any random blood sugar over 200 mg/dl. Prediabetes is generally considered having 2 fasting blood sugars 100-125 mg/dl. People without diabetes generally have fasting blood sugars between 70 - 99 and after meal blood sugars less than 140. When your blood sugars are elevated, artery walls become sticky from the excess sugar and the damage over time can result in cardiovascular events, nerve, kidney and foot problems and loss of vision. You can manage your blood sugars by controlling your carbohydrates, managing your weight by limiting fat intake and exercising regularly, and managing your stress. This will help to keep you healthy.

Are you at risk for type 2 diabetes and prediabetes? Here are the risk factors:

- * Obesity and overweight
- * Less than 30 minutes of exercise/day
- * Previously identified glucose intolerance
- * Unhealthy diet
- * Increased Age
- * High blood pressure and high cholesterol
- * A family history of diabetes
- * A history of gestational diabetes
- * Ethnicity-diabetes is more prevalent in Asians, Hispanics, Indigenous peoples (USA, Canada, Australia) and African Americans.



See your physician and get your blood sugar tested if you have any of these risk factors.

The International Diabetes Federation (wdd@idf.org) set goals in 2003 for all people with diabetes to get education on diabetes self management. Learning to adjust your diet for the correct amount of carbohydrates, fats, fiber and vitamins and minerals, planning an exercise program that you can fit into your lifestyle and learning new ways to manage your stress are all key to optimizing your health and reducing your risk of developing diabetes or managing it. A certified diabetes educator or registered dietitian can help you personalize your health plan. The Frederick Memorial Hospital Diabetes Program staffs dietitians and diabetes educators that can work with you to meet your goals of improved health and lowering your risk of diabetes.

Happy National Diabetes Month!
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