

## Diabetes

Chances are, you or someone you love has high blood sugar. Among American adults, nearly 35% have pre-diabetes, and 13% have diabetes. Lifestyle factors — such as stress level, sleep quality, food choice and amount of exercise — can play a huge role in managing these conditions. Read on for information about managing pre-diabetes or type 2 diabetes through your lifestyle.

### 1. What should I eat?

Many people with diabetes have heard common myths such as: Don't eat pineapple. Go low-carb. Avoid all sugar. While those managing their blood sugar should be extra mindful about food choices, their plate can still look like that of someone who doesn't have diabetes. A good eating pattern will help you manage your A1C level, and is sustainable for you in the long run.

### 2. Move It

Start small and stay consistent — any movement is good movement! Exercise can have a huge impact on managing your blood sugar over time. In some cases, it's as effective or more effective than medication. If you do cardio, start where you're comfortable and gradually increase your speed, distance or duration. If you favor strength training, know your baseline and increase your resistance or repetitions to achieve your goals. An ideal physical activity routine incorporates both types of activity, and challenges your body safely and gently.

### 3. Healthy hormones

Insulin is a hormone, and the levels of other hormones can affect it. This is just one of the many reasons it's important to aim for seven to nine hours of sleep each night. Similarly, being under a lot of stress can affect blood sugar levels — learn how to manage your stress before it manages you.

### 4. Stop the stigma

Many people want to manage their blood sugar through lifestyle alone. But if your health care provider recommends pills or injections, don't see this as a failure on your part. Diabetes affects the whole body, so oftentimes medicine (along with a healthy lifestyle) is the best way to manage the disease, especially as it evolves. Talk honestly with your primary care provider or certified diabetes care and education specialist about your fears and concerns.

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