

Managing your type 2 diabetes – your lifestyle

Simple lifestyle changes can help you control your diabetes and improve your blood glucose, blood pressure, cholesterol levels and help protect your eyes, feet and kidneys from disease.

Stop smoking

If you have diabetes and smoke, the risk of heart disease, stroke and the risk of losing limbs is increased. If you stop smoking, your risk reduces.

Where do I go to quit?

- Your pharmacist or doctor can give you support and refer you to other places to help you.
- The Quitline 13 QUIT (13 7848) provides counselling over the phone.

You can ring Quitline at any time of the day or night.

Healthy eating

Healthy eating can help control your blood pressure, cholesterol level (blood fats) and blood glucose level by preventing you from being overweight or having fatty deposits in your heart.

Everyone, including people with diabetes can benefit from eating healthy foods. There is no need for separate meals or a special diet but if you are overweight smaller meals are recommended.

Most importantly enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods:

- Eat plenty of vegetables, legumes and fruit (Recommended daily amount for adults is 5 serves of vegetables + 2 serves of fruit. A serve of vegetables is 1/2 a cup of cooked vegetables e.g. broccoli, carrot, stir-fry or mixed vegetables or 1 cup of salad)
- Eat plenty of cereals (including breads, rice, pasta and noodles), preferably wholegrain
- Include lean meat, fish and/or poultry — cut the visible fat off your meat
- Include milks, yoghurts, cheeses (moderate amounts) and/or alternatives. Reduced fat varieties should be chosen where possible
- Drink plenty of water
- Limit takeaway foods and fatty and sugary foods like sausages and cakes.

Physical activity

Exercise is vital to maintain a healthy lifestyle. By becoming more active you can improve your general health, quality of life and diabetes management.

Aim for at least 30 minutes of 'moderate-intensity' physical activity on most days of the week and resistance training 2 to 3 times

a week. You should notice your breathing and heart rate speeding up and perhaps a light sweat, however you should still be able to talk. Try walking or gardening. Some people enjoy taking a class in strength-based training, dancing, water aerobics or Tai Chi. You can add up your activity: three 10 minute sessions is the same as one 30 minute session.

Stop exercising if you experience shakiness, tingling lips, hunger, weakness, palpitations, chest pain, light headedness or difficulty breathing.

Be sure to check with your doctor before starting any new physical activity program.

Moderate alcohol consumption

Alcohol increases your likelihood of being overweight and developing heart disease. It can increase your blood glucose levels. Most people with diabetes can enjoy a moderate amount of alcohol.

In general, the maximum amount of alcohol recommended for people with diabetes is 2 standard drinks or less per day (for men or women).



Know about your medicines

Know how your medicines help you. Understand how your medicines work, what side effects they may have and how they interact with other medicines that you are taking.

You may use medicines to make you feel better, others might stop your diabetes from getting worse or prevent complications from arising or they could be for another condition altogether.

Medicines don't just come on prescription. You can also get medicines that are recommended by a pharmacist. You might choose medicines yourself from the chemist or pharmacy, a supermarket or a health food shop (herbal or 'natural' medicines). Knowing your medicines will help you to choose the right medicine, get better results from them, avoid side effects where possible and enjoy better health.



You may take a lot of medicines and this can make it difficult to remember which medicine you need to take and what time it needs to be taken. It is important to talk to your pharmacist or doctor about all your medicines and any concerns you have with managing any of them.

It can help to know:

- what the medicine is for
- how much you use and how often
- what times of the day you use it
- what to do if you miss a dose
- side effects to watch out for and what to do if you get a side effect
- any special instructions, for instance before or after meals.

Ask your pharmacist or doctor to help you maintain a list of all your medicines.

For more information

Download or order free resources from National Prescribing Service Limited at www.nps.org.au or order on 02 8217 8700.

National Prescribing Service Limited provides free medicines information:

Medicines Line 1300 888 763 – independent information on your medicines

Medicines List – a sheet for you to record your medicines

Consumer Medicines Information (CMI) – important facts about medicines

Seniors find out how to book a free medicines information session on 02 8217 8724

Fact sheets – including, What is a medicine? Generic medicines, Remembering your medicines

Medimate – helps you find, understand and use information about medicines (4 languages).

Diabetes Australia State and Territory organisations provide useful general information and resources about type 2 diabetes and its management including the use of medicines.

Contact Diabetes Australia at www.diabetesaustralia.com.au or the Diabetes Australia office in your State on 1300 136 588.

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This leaflet may be printed for patient use.

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