



# DIABETES ONE DAY AT A TIME

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## Goal Setting: Getting It Right

By Suzanne M. Christman, MS, RD, LD, CDCES, BSN, RN

Have you given up on your 2022 New Year's Resolution yet? If so, don't feel bad. It just means you're like most people. In fact, if you made it past mid-February, you're ahead of the game!

The real question is, why do so many resolutions fail? And while it seems like the answer should be complicated, it's usually quite simple: We aren't honest with ourselves. We believe making a goal and sticking to it will be easy. We forget that change requires fitting the change into our current routine. What are we going to give up or do less to make time for this new goal? Goals need to be positive changes that improve or resolve something we desire and become a permanent part of our lives. The fact is, simply setting a goal and depending on our willpower to reach it is typically a prelude to failure.

### SO WHAT'S A GOOD, ACHIEVABLE GOAL?

Well, let's start with some poorly constructed ones:

- I will start to eat breakfast every day.
- I will begin to walk after work.
- I will lower my A1c to 7%.

These are all very typical examples, but they all have a similar trait: they're too vague. They don't define a way to achieve the goal or include a means to measure its success or completion.

### SO HOW CAN WE SET GOALS THAT WILL HELP US SUCCEED?

One of the best ways is to check each goal using the SMART test.

1. Is it **Specific?** – Is the statement clear, to the point, and stated in a positive manner?
2. Is it **Measurable?** – Does it suggest how you'll determine success?
3. Is it **Achievable?** – Is it something you can actually reach?
4. Is it **Relevant?** – Is it going to materially improve your life or situation?
5. Is it **Time-Bound?** – Does it set a deadline for completion?

Each SMART you can include in your goal will improve the chance of success. Here are some examples of good SMART goals:

- I will eat breakfast three times a week for two weeks.
- I will walk 20 minutes a day after dinner for a month.
- By taking my diabetes medication daily and monitoring my blood glucose levels twice a day for a month, I will lower my A1c value to 7%.

## Goal Setting: Getting It Right *(continued)*

### NOW YOU TRY. WHAT GOAL DO YOU WANT TO START TO MANAGE YOUR DIABETES?

- I will \_\_\_\_\_ (walk/jog/yoga) \_\_\_\_\_ (two/three/four) times a week for \_\_\_ weeks.
- I will eat a healthy snack \_\_\_\_\_ (once/twice) a day for \_\_\_\_\_ (two/three/four) days a week for a month.

Or create your own goal using the SMART criteria:

There's nothing sacred about starting new goals and behaviors with the new year. You can make positive changes in your life any time you like. All you have to do is be honest with yourself and be ready to make a commitment. Then create a specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound goal and make changes and adjustments as needed. Soon the change you decided to make will be a regular part of your life and you'll have made a truly lasting impact.

For more information on lifestyle changes and goal setting, contact our diabetes self-management education team at 614-546-4582



**References:** Brewer, A. (2019, December 28). 10 Reasons New Year's Resolutions Fail and How You Can Stick to Them in 2020. *Knockaround*. <https://knockaround.com/blogs/journal/why-new-years-resolutions-fail-and-how-to-stick-to-them>; Eby, K. (2019, January 9). The Essential Guide to Writing SMART Goals. *Smartsheet*. <https://www.smartsheet.com/blog/essential-guide-writing-smart-goals>; Morin, A. (2019, December 31). This Is Why Most New Year's Resolutions Fail. *Psychology Today*. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/what-mentally-strong-people-dont-do/201912/is-why-most-new-years-resolutions-fail>

## Calendar of Events



Enjoy the following virtual events from the comfort and safety of your home with your laptop or cell phone:

**AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION ALERT DAY**  
Ask friends and family to take the [Diabetes Risk Test](#)  
March 22

**VIRTUAL DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP**  
These fun, informal sessions are for people coping with diabetes. Friends and family welcome. Call 614-546-4582 to learn more.  
March 28, April 25 | 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

**VIRTUAL DIABETES 101**  
These free classes cover diabetes basics, like blood sugar monitoring, medications, nutrition, physical activity, and weight management. Call 614-546-4582 to register.  
April 19 | 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.

#### Suggested Web Sites:

- » [American Diabetes Association](#)
- » [CDC-Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- » [National Institutes of Health](#)
- » [Diabetes Advocates](#)
- » [USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion](#)

#### Suggested Magazines:

- » Diabetes Forecast
- » Diabetes Self-Management
- » Eating Well

# Don't Neglect Your Feet!

By Jenny Parker RN, CDCES

As many people know, diabetes affects everything in your body. Anytime your blood sugar is high it causes damage to the blood vessels in your body and, in turn, to many of your organs.

One place that's particularly at risk for damage is your feet. High blood sugar damages the blood vessels that bring new oxygenated blood to the tissues of your feet, making it difficult to get things to heal quickly. High blood sugar also damages the nerves of the feet over time to the point that you cannot always feel the open sores or cuts that would have typically caused pain. These two things together create the perfect storm for unhealing cuts or wounds on your feet leading to amputations of the feet and lower extremities. That's why it's so important for people with diabetes to examine their feet each day.

When you get out of the shower or bath, dry your feet well, including in between your toes. Take a look at the sides and bottoms of your feet, watching for red spots, open wounds, or sores. Seeing the underside of your feet is difficult, but it's keenly important. One option is to lay a mirror on the floor and hold your foot over the top of it to see them better. The other is to have a friend or family member look at your feet regularly. If you or they notice any open sores blisters or wounds that do not go away within a day or two, you need to see your medical provider to have them checked out. Quickly getting treatment for any open sores could be the difference between a healed-up wound and an amputation, so do not delay.

Part of the reason people with diabetes have so many infections on their feet is that bacteria love sweet tissues where they can thrive. When you have high blood sugar, everything about your body is "sweeter" and it makes it much easier for infections to run rampant. This includes your feet.



## HERE ARE A FEW MORE POINTERS WHEN IT COMES TO CARING FOR YOUR FEET:

- Always have your medical provider look at your feet when you go for an appointment. Just take off your shoes and socks while you wait for them to enter the room.
- Always wear a well-fitted shoe and cotton sock (no socks that have holes or make marks on your feet or legs).
- Do not go bare foot.
- Trim your toenails straight across, not rounded on the edges.
- Apply lotion regularly to your feet, avoiding the area between your toes.
- Do not do "bathroom surgery" on corns, blisters, or other issues. See your medical provider if anything looks odd to you.
- Never soak your feet unless told to do so by your medical provider.

Of course, the best thing you can do to keep your feet healthy and happy is to keep your blood sugar within your target range of 70-130 mg/dL. Please keep that top of mind and don't neglect your feet!



## Diabetes-Friendly Ricotta Cheesecake

Enjoy this individually portioned cheesecake at your next celebration.

### INGREDIENTS

- 32 oz part skim ricotta cheese
- 3 large eggs
- 24 packets saccharin sugar substitute\*
- 2 Tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 ¾ tsp almond extract
- Low-fat whipped cream (optional)
- Fresh berries (optional)

### NUTRITION FACTS PER SERVING:

Makes 12 Servings

Calories 147, Carbohydrates 16 g, Fiber 1 g, Protein 10 g, Total fat 9 g, Saturated Fat 5 g, Trans fat 0 g, Sodium 80 mg

\*Sugar substitute packets of Splenda or Truvia could be used instead of saccharin in this recipe.

Source: Felice Kosakavich, MS, RD,CDN

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Beat ricotta cheese, eggs, sugar substitute, flour, and almond extract in a large bowl. Use hand mixer or stir until well blended. Pour into 12 standard cupcake tins.
3. Bake 30 minutes or until knife inserted in center comes out clean. Tops should just be starting to brown.
4. Cool on wire rack 30 minutes or longer and serve or refrigerate. Serve with whipped cream and berries, if desired.

# Could Diabetes Stigma Be Getting in the Way of your Diabetes Self-Care?

By Cathy Maurer, MS, RDN, LD

What is a stigma? A stigma is a negative attitude or discrimination against someone based on characteristics like age, gender, weight, or other health challenges.

Diabetes stigma refers to blame, prejudices, and negative attitudes that family, friends, coworkers, health care workers, or strangers have towards someone with diabetes. There are actually a couple of types:

## Internal Stigma

Internal stigma can happen when a person with diabetes feels guilty about not losing weight as the physician ordered. It can happen when a person blames him or herself for getting diabetes. Stigma can be associated with having to take insulin and feelings of failure when oral medications did not work to bring blood sugars into healthier range.

## External stigma

External stigma can happen when someone asks "Are you sure you should eat a cookie? You are diabetic." External stigma can happen when a person is passed over for a job because someone thinks that people with diabetes "can't do this job."

People may think someone has diabetes because they don't want to exercise or eat healthier. There are many reasons why members of society have negative feelings and attitudes towards people with diabetes. Friends and family may have good intentions, but they can get in the way of your diabetes self-care.

## WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT DIABETES STIGMA?

If diabetes stigma is getting in the way of you managing your health, there are ways to combat it. Here are a few:

### 1. Instead of saying "he is diabetic" or "I am diabetic" say "I have diabetes" or "he has diabetes".

Diabetes should not define you. It is just part of who you are.

### 2. Don't blame yourself for your diabetes.

Connect with people who share your experiences to help you lessen self-blame. Join an online chat or forum for people who have diabetes. [Type2diabetes.com/forum](http://Type2diabetes.com/forum) and [diabtribe.org/diabetes-blogs-and-forums](http://diabtribe.org/diabetes-blogs-and-forums) are two examples.

You can also join our virtual Mount Carmel Diabetes Education and Support group. We meet the 4th Monday of the month. Call 614-546-4582 for more information.

### 3. Learn all you can about diabetes.

There are many people who have diabetes and do not know anything about it. It can seem overwhelming or hopeless at times if you don't know about diabetes and how to manage it. The Mount Carmel Diabetes Self-Management Education Program has virtual classes and in-person education that can help, whether you have a new diagnosis or if you've had diabetes for many years. All are welcome. Call 614-546-4582 for more information and to sign up.

### 4. Share your knowledge and experiences with family and friends.

It may seem embarrassing to talk about your health, but you may be surprised at the number of people who have diabetes in your friend and family group. They might want to talk and share ideas about what you do to manage your diabetes. Help them understand diabetes and how you live your life with diabetes. You may be able to help save someone's life. They may have diabetes and not even know it. You might just encourage them to seek help.

### 5. Raise awareness about diabetes.

The American Diabetes Association Advocacy Group supports "diabetes priorities in Congress, state legislatures and legal advocacy." They work to support research, insulin affordability, and diabetes prevention. Their website is [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org).

You are the one taking care of your health. Learn more about your health challenges, help others to understand, and take action at home, in your local community or beyond. These ideas may help you feel free and empowered to improve your physical and emotional health.

References: [Type2diabetes.com](http://Type2diabetes.com); [Diabtribe.org](http://Diabtribe.org); [Diabetes.org](http://Diabetes.org)

For questions or more information on scheduling an individual appointment or a group class, please call **614-546-4582** or **614-546-3483**.

