

DIABETES ONE DAY AT A TIME

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Smoking and Diabetes

By Kara McGill-Meeks MS, RD, LD, CDCES

Can smoking increase my diabetes risk?

Yes- smoking cigarettes increases your risk for developing diabetes.

People who smoke are 30 - 40% more likely to develop Type 2 Diabetes than people who do not smoke.

Smoking can interfere with the normal function of the cells in your body which can result in diabetes. The inflammation caused by smoking can make your insulin less effective. (Insulin is a hormone that helps your body use the sugar in your blood)

Smoking can also result in weight gain around your belly. This can also increase resistance to insulin.

Smoking can also raise your LDL ("bad") cholesterol and triglyceride levels. At the same time, it can lower your HDL ("good") cholesterol.

What if I already have diabetes?

Smoking cigarettes makes managing diabetes more difficult. This makes smoking even more high-risk for people with diabetes.

Nicotine can make the cells in your body less responsive to insulin. This can make your blood sugar levels higher. If you use insulin, you may need to take more to control your blood sugar than a person who does not smoke.

Smoking along with unmanaged diabetes can harm the small and large blood vessels in your body.

People with diabetes who smoke have a greater chance of developing serious health problems, such as:

- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Kidney disease
- Vision loss
- Poor circulation
- Amputations
- Erectile dysfunction
- Nerve damage (neuropathy)

Smoking and Diabetes *cont.*

Smoking and your sleep

Studies show that smokers do not get as much quality sleep. This is because nicotine is a stimulant (can keep you awake). There is a link between the lack of good sleep and type 2 diabetes. (See "Sleep" article to learn more)

Can quitting smoking help?

Yes. The health benefits for people with diabetes who stop smoking begin immediately.

Quitting smoking can:

- Help your body use insulin better.
- Give you better control over your blood sugar levels.
- Help you recover from surgery faster.

Be aware that blood sugar levels may go up when you first stop smoking. This may happen because of an increase in appetite that may occur after quitting. REMEMBER- even if you do gain some weight after quitting, the benefits of getting cigarettes out of your life far outweigh any negatives of weight-gain. Within about 2 months of quitting, you may see your insulin needs come down.

Diabetes management tips when quitting:



Keep yourself well-fed.

Eat a small snack or meal every 3-4 hours.



Stay hydrated!



Choose foods with fiber, protein and fat with every meal or snack.

Example: an apple with peanut butter instead of chips



Start a regular exercise routine.

The activity will help your muscle cells to better use your insulin. This will result in better blood sugar levels.

READY TO QUIT?

Check out these resources:



LOCAL RESOURCES



Mount Carmel Ambulatory Care Clinic

mountcarmelhealth.com/services/ambulatory-care-clinic



PHONE RESOURCES

Quit hotline:

1-8---QUIT-NOW

App:

quitSTART app

Text:

QUITNOW to 333888



WEB RESOURCES



Lung.org



Cdc.gov



Smokefree.gov



Heart.org

So...you want to start an exercise program, but you are not sure how?

By Valerie Blair RDN, LD, CNSC

Exercise is a great way to help manage your blood sugar. Even walking or seated activities can have a big impact.

Once your doctor clears you for exercise, keep these tips in mind:

What is recommended?

150 minutes of exercise each week. This includes moderate-intensity exercises that increase your heart rate, such as brisk walking, swimming, even yard or housework. It is best to divide the 150 minutes into smaller amounts over the week. For example, exercise for thirty minutes on five days of the week. You do not need to do all 30 minutes at once. Walking for 10 minutes after 3 daily meals = 30 minutes!

What is moderate intensity?

This differs for each person. Can you talk, but are too out of breath to sing? If so, you are exercising at a moderate intensity - fantastic job!

What about high intensity exercises like running, strength training or interval training?

These are also great. You may notice your blood sugar increase after this type of exercise. The rise is only temporary, do not let this stop you. High intensity exercise helps improve your blood sugar overall by making your muscles more sensitive to insulin. This can continue up to 48 hours after exercising. Making exercise a habit causes your muscles to go through additional changes, helping how you process blood sugar.

Where should my sugar level be before exercising?

Each person is different. In general, the safe range is between 90 and 250 mg/dL. Especially for people who take insulin, a small snack before exercise may help to prevent low blood sugar. Talk with your healthcare provider for more guidance. Choose a snack with about 15-30 grams of carbohydrates along with a little protein. Some examples include ½ or 1 whole banana with peanut butter or string cheese with 15-30 mini pretzels. If blood sugar is above 250, consider only gentle activity instead of intense activity. People with Type 1 diabetes may need to check their ketones if blood sugar levels are above 250.

Do I need to eat before exercising?

Not if your blood sugar is in a safe range. However, if you are at risk of low blood sugar, it is always good to carry a fast-acting carbohydrate source with you, such as glucose gel or tablets.

Do I need to eat AFTER exercising?

Not if you are doing moderate-intensity exercise, like walking. You should eat something after strength training or after exercising for more than 60 minutes. You should also eat after any high intensity training workout or sport, like tennis.

What if I take a fast-acting insulin or another medication that can cause low blood sugar levels?

Working our muscles after meals helps remove sugar from our blood faster. There are several things to keep in mind before you start exercising:

- Talk to your doctor about your exercise plans. Your doctor may want to update your medication or insulin dosage. The type of exercise, how long you exercise, and how intense you exercise can all impact your medication needs. Low blood sugar can occur even hours after exercise.
- Before exercise, avoid injecting insulin near the muscle that you will be using to prevent rapid absorption and a possible low blood sugar. For example, if you are taking a walk or running, avoid injecting yourself in the thigh. Instead, inject into your abdomen OR another non-exercised area.
- Wait at least 30-60 minutes after an injection of fast-acting insulin before you exercise. This will avoid overlapping with the insulin's peak action time.
- Keep a quick-acting carbohydrate source handy and ready to use if needed. If your blood sugar drops below 100 mg/dL, stop exercising and treat the low blood sugar right away. Once blood sugar levels return to over 100, you may resume exercise if you would like.
- Check your blood sugar as soon as you finish exercising. Check it again over the next few hours. This will give you information on how your body responds to activity and how to prepare in the future.

Physical activity has many health benefits for your body and your mental health. Have fun and make fitness a habit. You are doing something great for yourself!



Are you getting your vitamin ZZZs?

By Janie Jacoby, MS, RDN, LDN, CDCES



OK, there is no such thing as vitamin ZZZ. But you may know that SLEEP does have a significant impact on our health. Getting enough sleep helps keep the mind and body working well. Plus, it can also affect blood sugars and the risk of diabetes.

How does sleep affect diabetes?

A lack of sleep increases stress hormones, such as cortisol. High levels of stress hormones can increase blood sugar in two ways:

- An increase in insulin resistance. This means that our insulin is not working as well to keep blood sugar low.
- The liver releases more glucose (sugar) into the blood.

How much sleep do we need?

Each person is different. Most people do best with 7-9 hours of sleep per night.

When should I talk to my doctor?

Talk to your doctor if you are worried about your sleep. There are also specialists in behavioral sleep medicine who can help.

Sleep apnea is a serious condition that can cause difficulty sleeping. Talk to your doctor if you have symptoms of sleep apnea, such as:

- Snoring
- Dry mouth or throat
- Waking up often at night
- Pauses in breathing at night
- Headache
- Mood changes
- Daytime fatigue

How can I improve my sleep?

It can be hard to get enough sleep! Here are a few tips to help you fall asleep and sleep more soundly.

Is your room dark?

Light lowers our melatonin levels, which is the hormone that helps us sleep. Try to turn off or cover up any lights. If there are lights outside, light-blocking curtains make a big difference.

Is it quiet?

Lowering noise or wearing earplugs may help.

What is the temperature of your room?

People sleep best with a cooler temperature. We can't always control it, but, if possible, try reducing the temperature and see if that helps.

Do you drink alcohol?

Even though alcohol can make us sleepy, it lowers the quality of sleep. We may not get deep sleep; we may be restless or may wake up more often.

Do you drink caffeine?

Limiting caffeine, especially in the afternoon or evening, can make it easier to sleep. This would include coffee, energy drinks, or pop with caffeine. Even if it seems like it does not affect you, it could be helpful to do a trial run of avoiding all caffeine later in the day.

Do you smoke or use other tobacco products?

Nicotine is a stimulant that can make it hard to sleep. Quitting, as a result, can improve sleep.

What is your bedtime routine?

Reading or watching stressful things can keep us up. On the other hand, relaxing routines can help us sleep. For example, drinking herbal tea, deep breathing exercises, or listening to relaxing music.

Do you wake up at different times each day?

It can sometimes cause anxiety if we are not tired at "bedtime." But if you get up at about the same time each day, this helps set the body's "clock" and over time can make us feel sleepier at bedtime.



Skillet Chicken Potpie

By Andrea Kirkland MS, RD

Total Time: 60 minutes

Serves: 6 (1/6 of pie per serving)

Yield: 1 pie

Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups low sodium chicken broth, divided
- 2 Tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1 (8-ounces) package sliced cremini mushrooms
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 ½ cups frozen carrots and peas (7 ounces)
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh sage
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves, plus sprigs for garnish
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 1-pound shredded cooked chicken (about 3 cups)
- 1 (7-8 ounces) prepared pie crust, thawed if frozen
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.
2. Whisk 1 ¼ cups broth and flour in a medium bowl; set aside
3. Heat oil in a 10-inch cast-iron or oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms; cook until browned, 6 to 8 minutes. Reduce heat to medium. Add onion and garlic; cook until tender, 4 to 6 minutes.
4. Stir in the remaining ¼ cup broth, scraping up any browned bits. Stir in the reserved broth-flour mixture, peas and carrots, sage, thyme, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Reduce heat and cook, stirring constantly, until the vegetables are tender, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in chicken.
5. Lay pie crust over the chicken mixture, folding the edges over as needed. Cut four 4-inch slits into the crust to allow steam to escape. Brush with egg white.
6. Bake until the crust is golden and the filling is bubbly, 20 to 25 minutes. Let cool for 10 minutes before serving. Garnish with thyme sprigs, if desired.

NUTRITION FACTS PER SERVING: 336 calories, 13 g total fat (4 g Saturated fat), 64 mg cholesterol, 426 mg sodium, 26 g total carbohydrate (3 g dietary fiber, 0 g added sugars), 29 g protein, 528 mg Potassium

Source: Eatingwell.com

TIPS:

If you are not using rotisserie chicken, you can poach your own chicken.

1. Place 4 small boneless, skinless chicken thighs or 2 small boneless, skinless chicken breasts (12 ounces in total) in a medium saucepan; cover with cold water.
2. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce to low, partially cover, and cook until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the thickest part registers 165 degrees F, about 12 to 15 minutes.
3. Transfer to a plate and shred into small pieces.

You can reserve broth for another recipe.

NOTE: up to 4 days in fridge or 3 months in freezer.