



INFORM Yourself

DIABETES

You Did It!

Congratulations on completing the Focused Wellness program! This issue of **Inform Yourself** is meant to remind you of what you learned. You can draw on this information to help you stay on top of your health. You can also share the information with others. Having people around who understand your condition and how to support you can be a big help.



Fast Facts About Diabetes

During your time in the Focused Wellness program, you learned about diabetes and how to manage it. Here are a few quick reminders about the basics:

- Insulin helps the body use sugar. When you have diabetes, your body doesn't produce enough—or any—insulin.
- When you don't have the right amount of insulin, your blood sugar can get too high or too low. Both are dangerous. Working closely with your health care provider can help you manage your diabetes as well as possible. That could be through diet changes, exercise, and/or medications.
- There is no cure for diabetes, but it *can* be controlled with the help of your health care provider.

You can find more information on the American Diabetes Association's website at www.diabetes.org.

Source: CDC



Diabetes Camp for Kids

Diabetes camp is a great way for kids and teens to meet others their own age with diabetes. PrimeWest Health covers the cost of a qualified summer camp for members who meet eligibility requirements. For more information, call Member Services at **1-866-431-0801** and ask for the Focused Wellness nurse. TTY users call **1-800-627-3529** or **711**. These calls are free.



Read and Share

This publication is geared toward adults and parents of children with diabetes. But, if your child is old enough to read and understand these articles, please share them!

Your Treatment Plan: The Path to Better Health

A treatment plan can help you minimize the effects of diabetes. This will help you feel your best. If you have a plan, make sure you work with your provider to keep it updated and maintain your progress. If you don't have one, talk to your provider about making one. Treatment plans usually include the following.

Self-monitoring

It is important to monitor your blood sugar as recommended by your provider. This may include daily checks using a glucometer. Be sure to record the readings. That way you can talk about them with your provider at your next visit.

Medical testing and follow-up

Getting medical exams and tests on a schedule recommended by your provider is an important part of keeping your diabetes in check. Some tests your provider will likely recommend include an overall physical exam, a dilated eye exam, and a foot exam. Your provider will also recommend a test to measure your LDL ("bad") cholesterol and an HbA1c test to measure your blood sugar levels over time. You and your provider will create a follow-up plan based on your results.

Medication adherence

It is important that you take the medications your provider has prescribed as directed. This will help prevent complications. For example, if you do not take your insulin as directed, you may end up with high blood sugar levels. This can lead to problems like kidney disease or kidney failure, strokes, heart attacks, blindness, and nerve damage.

Source: WebMD



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Alcohol and Diabetes: Watch Your Blood Sugar

As with everything, moderation is key! When it comes to alcohol, it is important not to drink too much. The American Diabetes Association (ADA) recommends that women should have no more than 1 drink per day. Men should have no more than 2 drinks per day.

Alcohol can cause low blood sugar. If you are going to drink alcohol, it is very important to monitor your blood sugar. This is because the symptoms of having had too much alcohol and the symptoms of low blood sugar can be similar. Make sure you don't mistake one for the other. They both cause sleepiness, dizziness, and disorientation.

Check your blood sugar before you drink. Keep checking it while you drink and for up to 24 hours after. If you have been drinking, you should also be sure to check your blood sugar before you go to bed to make sure it is at a safe level. If your blood sugar is low, eat something to raise it before you go to sleep.

Talk with your health care provider about whether alcohol is safe for you. If you drink alcohol several times a week, make sure your provider knows this before prescribing any medication for you.

Source: ADA



Smoking: Get Help to Quit Now!

Smoking is the #1 cause of preventable death and disease in the United States. It can lead to a lot of health problems like cancer, heart disease, and stroke. It can also make your diabetes harder to control. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), people with diabetes who smoke have higher risks for complications, including the following:

- Heart and kidney disease
- Circulation problems in the legs and feet
- Eye disease
- Nerve damage

Those seem like good reasons to quit smoking! If you smoke, think about taking the following steps to quit.

- Visit **www.smokefree.gov**. You can find tools and tips, talk or chat with an expert, and build a quit plan.
- Call Quit Partner at **1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)**. TTY users call **1-877-777-6534**. These calls are free. Or, sign up on their website at **www.QuitPartnerMN.com**. Quit Partner offers text messaging, email, and phone support. There is no cost to PrimeWest Health members for this service; however, data and messaging rates from your cell phone provider may apply.
- Talk to your health care provider. Your provider can let you know about services such as individual or group counseling and prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) products to help you quit.

Quitting is hard, but the benefits are countless. Make a plan to quit and get the help you need to do it.

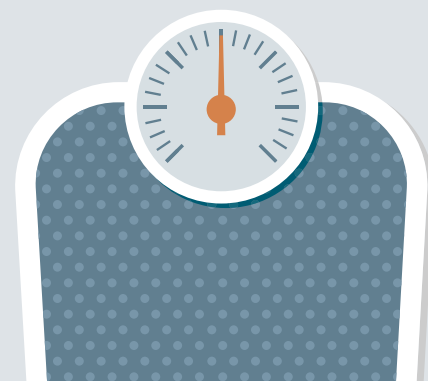
Source: CDC



Go Ahead and Lose... the Weight

Losing weight can lower your cholesterol, protect your heart, and give you more energy. It can also help people with type 2 diabetes use insulin better. If you are overweight, it is important to work with your health care provider to come up with a plan to reach and maintain a healthy weight. The 2 main areas you'll work on are eating right and exercising.

Source: Vertical Health, LLC



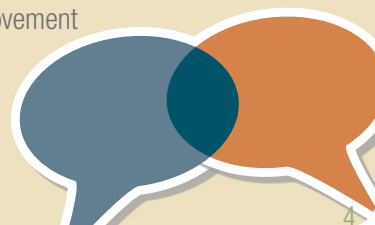
It's Your Health: Speak Up and Listen Up!

Remember that every time you visit your health care provider, it's *your* time to ask questions and get the answers you need to be the healthiest you can be.

- ☑ Express any concerns you have about your health.
- ☑ Make sure you understand the “whats”—*what* your health problem is, *what* you should do about it, and *what* steps to take next.
- ☑ Also ask your provider the “whys.” Sometimes understanding *why* you should do something will help motivate you to do it.
- ☑ If you don't understand something, ask your provider to tell you more or to explain it using different words.

If you have questions after you leave your appointment, you can call your health care provider's office. You can usually speak to a nurse or ask to leave a message for your provider. Your provider will call you back.

Source: Institute for Healthcare Improvement





Does Diabetes Have You Down?

According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA), people with diabetes have a greater risk of depression than people who don't. Experts aren't sure exactly why, but a few things likely contribute. Managing diabetes can be stressful. This is especially true if you face complications. It can also make you feel lonely if you don't have someone to talk to who understands what you're going through. The most important thing to do if you are feeling depressed, frustrated, or anxious is to talk with your health care provider. Your provider may be able to help by adjusting your treatment plan. You can also talk to a mental health professional who might recommend therapy and/or medication.

Don't be afraid to ask for help.

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Source: ADA

Help Manage Your Diabetes with Exercise

Exercise can help you manage your diabetes. Here's how:

- When you exercise, your cells become more sensitive to insulin. This means the insulin can work more efficiently in your body.
- Exercise removes excess blood sugar from your body. This may help protect you from the long-term effects of diabetes and allow you to use less medicine.

There are 3 types of exercise: cardiovascular (cardio), strength training, and stretching. You should try to make each a part of your exercise routine.

- **Cardiovascular exercise** is good for your heart and lungs. Examples include swimming, biking, walking, and jogging.
- **Strength training** strengthens your muscles. Examples include lifting weights and doing push-ups, sit-ups, and squats.
- **Stretching** makes you more flexible. It also helps you move better and helps prevent injury, so you may want to stretch for a bit before and after you exercise.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends people get 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week. You should spread your activity throughout the week, so a good way to get your time in is to exercise for 20 – 30 minutes a day.

Be sure to check your blood sugar before you exercise. Exercising when your blood sugar is too high or too low can cause serious problems. You should check your blood sugar again when you're done exercising.

Talk with your health care provider about an exercise plan that is right for you. Once you have your provider's okay, carve out some time in your schedule for exercising. Commit to it and soon you'll start to feel the benefits.

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Source: CDC



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Note: The information in this magazine is not professional medical advice. It is not a substitute for diagnosis or treatment. Do not ignore your health care provider's advice or wait to ask for it because of something you read here. Links to other websites are provided as a resource only. PrimeWest Health does not endorse, recommend, or pay for products or services offered by such sites.

1-866-431-0801 (toll free); TTY 1-800-627-3529 or 711

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ملاحظة: إذا أردت مساعدة مجانية لترجمة هذه الوثيقة، اتصل على الرقم أعلاه.

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