

Alliance

Handshake

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There is good news when it comes to diabetes: Death rates from the disease are on the decline. In fact, all-cause mortality among individuals with diabetes is down 23 percent.

The bad news? Diabetes is still the 7th leading cause of death in the U.S. and a leading cause of kidney failure, lower-limb amputations and new cases of blindness. Diabetes is named the “silent killer” because nearly one-fourth of those with the disease do not know they have it. For many, diagnosis may come seven to ten years after the onset of the disease.

Early diagnosis is critical to successful treatment and delaying or preventing some of its complications. The Diabetes Risk Test can help you determine whether you are at low, moderate, or high risk of diabetes. Call the office if you are interested in obtaining a copy.

-William Van Ry

Food Focus

Lettuce

The darker the color of the lettuce, the more nutritious it is. Beta-carotene is the chief disease-fighting nutrient found in the darker-colored greens. As an antioxidant, it battles certain cancers, heart disease, and cataracts. A dark-green color also indicates the presence of folic acid, which may play a role in the prevention of heart disease and inflammation. Most salad greens are also notable sources of vitamin C, potassium, and fiber.

Memory Game



It is very important to exercise the mind as well as the body. With each edition of our newsletter, we will include a memory word game for you to complete.

Word Game



Last issues word: **HYPNOTIC**

hint	pinot	point	tiny	chin
hypo	pint	pointy	topi	chino
phonic	pinto	pony	topic	chip
phony	piny	python	typo	chit
phot	pitch	notch	icon	chop
photic	pith	ontic	inch	city
phyton	pithy	optic	into	coin
picot	piton	otic	itch	cony
pinch	pity	thin	itchy	copy

The average is 36 words. Did you meet or beat this standard?

Can you find 41 words in next issues word **BROODING** ?

DIABETES – FIVE STEPS TO TOTAL DIABETES BODY CARE

Diabetes is rampant in the United States. Health authorities believe this is because of our lifestyle of too little exercise and a diet full of fats, carbohydrates and sugars.

Uncontrolled diabetes increases the risk of heart disease, stroke, eye diseases including blindness, amputations, kidney disease, periodontal disease and certain cancers. Signs of diabetes are: frequent urination; feeling thirsty; unexplained weight loss; weakness and fatigue; tingling or numbness in hands, legs or feet; blurred vision; dry, itchy skin; and infections or cuts that don't heal.

WHAT IS DIABETES

Diabetes has two distinct forms: Type 1 (typically diagnosed in children and young adults, caused when the pancreas does not transform glucose into energy). With Type 2 diabetes, the body still produces insulin but it can't use it correctly. Genes, age and race contribute to the disease, but many diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes can reverse their disease with exercise and a healthful diet.

FIVE STEPS TO TOTAL BODY CARE

Your feet, skin, eyes, heart, and teeth and gums need special attention if you have diabetes. Here are steps you can take to care for these parts of your body:

1. Foot Care and Diabetes

Common foot problems can cause many complications, including athlete's foot, fungal infections in nails, calluses, corns, blisters, bunions, dry skin, sores, hammertoes, ingrown toenails, and plantar warts.

While anyone can have these problems, they're more critical for people with diabetes because:

- If you have nerve damage, you may not feel small wounds that need treatment.
- Poor blood flow can slow wound healing.
- If you're immune suppressed, you may be more prone to infection.
- Damaged foot muscle nerves may prevent your foot from aligning properly, causing you to put more pressure on one area of the foot, leading to foot sores and pressure point ulcers.

Prevention tips: Make time for foot care daily. Wash, dry and examine the tops and bottoms of your feet. Check for cracked skin, cuts, scratches, wounds, blisters, redness, calluses, and other changes. Use antibiotic creams recommended by your doctor and apply sterile bandages to protect cuts. Prevent ingrown toenails by cutting toenails straight across; don't cut corners. Don't go barefoot and always protect your feet. Make sure you wear properly fitting footwear.

If you develop even minor foot problems, treat them right away or see a doctor. And see a foot doctor (podiatrist) every two or three months.

2. Skin Care and Diabetes

Bacterial infections, fungal infections, and itching are common skin problems anyone can develop, but they're especially problematic for people with diabetes because of poor blood flow and because the body may not be fighting infection well. Avoid extremely serious complications. Don't ignore these problems:

- **Bacterial infections** like boils (hair follicle infections) require antibiotic treatment.
- **Fungal infections** include the yeast-like fungus called *Candida albicans*, which often occurs in warm, moist folds of the skin: under the breasts, around the nails, between fingers and toes, and in the armpit and groin areas.
 - Jock itch (in the genitals and thighs), athlete's foot (between the toes), ringworm (on the feet,

groin, chest, abdomen, scalp, and nails) and vaginal infections are very common when blood sugar isn't controlled. These may require treatment with prescription medications, though occasional over-the-counter antifungal treatments may work.

- A fungal infection called mucormycosis (contracted from soil fungus and decaying plants) can become extremely serious, especially for those with out of control type 2 diabetes. It may start as a sinus infection that gets worse, and can spread to the lungs and brain. Symptoms are sinus infection, fever, eye swelling, skin redness over the sinus area; occasionally ulceration can occur with drainage. See a doctor immediately; this can be life-threatening.
- **Itching** caused by dry skin, a yeast infection, or poor blood flow (in the legs especially) is often a result of diabetes. Using lotion or creams can provide relief.

Other skin conditions are caused by poor blood supply and some by your body's resistance to using insulin.

Rashes, bumps, and blisters can also occur; some require treatment, some don't. You need to know which is which and get them treated when necessary.

Prevention tips: Boost your body's ability to fight infection, and help prevent dry skin, by controlling your blood sugar. Use talcum powder in areas prone to infections and use moisturizing lotions and soaps when needed. (Don't put lotions between toes; extra moisture there can trigger fungus growth.)

And remember, see your doctor for treatment of skin problems that won't go away -- especially foot problems and fungal infections. These can be very serious, and

require treatment with prescription medication.

3. Eye Care and Diabetes

Diabetes can damage the blood vessels in the eyes, leading to serious preventable problems like cataracts, glaucoma, and retinopathy.

- With a cataract, the eye's lens becomes cloudy, blurring vision. While anyone can get cataracts, they may develop at an earlier age -- and progress more quickly -- if you have diabetes.
- Glaucoma occurs when pressure builds inside the eye due to fluid not draining properly. The pressure damages the eye's nerves and blood vessels, harming vision.
- Retinopathy is caused by blood vessel damage in the eyes, and if not diagnosed and treated early, can lead to blindness

Prevention tips: Prevent these problems from becoming serious by making sure your blood sugar is under control and see an eye doctor for an annual exam.

4. Teeth and Gum Care with Diabetes

Most people develop gum problems during their lives but, if you have diabetes, your risks are higher for serious gum disease -- and for getting it at an earlier age.

That's because, with diabetes, your body is more vulnerable to bacteria and infection. High blood sugar levels can make gum disease worse, resulting in bleeding, tender gums, and gums that pull away from teeth. In time, you may need gum surgery to save your teeth.

Other mouth problems that are a risk:

- Gum inflammation
- Poor healing after dental treatment
- Dry mouth
- Burning mouth or tongue

Prevention tips: Brush after every meal, floss daily, and see your dentist twice a year. Be sure to tell your dentist you have diabetes and bring a list of the medications you take.

Discuss any mouth infections or difficulties in controlling blood sugar levels with your dentist, and make sure blood sugar is under control before routine dental procedures. If you're having dental surgery, your dentist should consult with your diabetes doctor about your medications and the need for an antibiotic.

5. Caring for Your Heart When You Have Diabetes

Heart disease, heart attack, and stroke are very serious concerns for anyone with diabetes, but they can also be prevented.

Buildup of cholesterol on blood vessel walls (hardening of the arteries) is the most common cause of heart disease and stroke. When blood sugar levels are higher than normal, this damaging process escalates - reducing blood flow to the heart and brain and increasing heart attack and stroke risks. The heart's pumping ability can also be affected, leading to heart failure.

Prevention tips: Follow your doctor's advice in keeping blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol in check.

If you have diabetes, your cholesterol and blood pressure levels must be lower than for the average person - so you must take your prescribed medications. Lose weight if you are obese, exercise regularly, and eat a heart-healthy diet low in fat and salt. Quit smoking and talk to your doctor about taking a daily aspirin.



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