

# 6 WAYS TO LOWER YOUR RISK OF DIABETES



## 1. LOSE WEIGHT IF YOU NEED TO.

- Too much body fat makes it harder for the body to use insulin.
- Try to lose five to seven percent of your body weight. It can help lower your blood glucose.
- Not sure if you need to lose weight? Talk to your doctor about your weight. Ask what is best for your health.

### These simple steps can help you lose weight:

- Eat a little less at each meal.
- Try for three small meals and two healthy snacks each day.
- If losing weight is hard, get help. Talk to a doctor or counselor. Ask about weight-loss programs that may work for you.

## 2. EAT A HEALTHY DIET.

- Healthy foods help lower your risk of diabetes. Eat a diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables, whole grains and lean protein.
- Limit sweets, fats and “junk foods.” You don’t have to give these foods up - just eat them less often and eat smaller amounts.

## 3. BE ACTIVE.

- Regular physical activity helps your body use insulin. Plus, it helps you keep a healthy weight. Being active can reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke.
- Aim for at least 30 mins. of activity on most days.
- Talk with a health care provider before starting a new exercise program.

### These simple steps can help you be more active:

- Pick activities you enjoy. Walk. Dance. Swim.
- Vary what you do (so you don’t get bored).
- Choose the stairs, not the elevator. Park farther away and walk to where you are going.
- Be active with friends & family. Bike ride with your kids. Take a walk at lunch with a coworker.

#### 4. IF YOU SMOKE, PLAN TO QUIT

- Smoking affects blood sugar levels. If you smoke, your risk of type 2 diabetes is higher.
- Talk to a health care provider. Ask about quit-smoking programs and medications that may help you quit.
- Pick a quit date. Ask your friends and family for support.

#### 5. KNOW YOUR RISK.

- Being overweight & not getting enough physical activity are risk factors for type 2 diabetes.
- If a close family member has diabetes, your own risk is greater. Also, being over the age of 45 increases your risk.
- If you are African American, American Indian, Latino1 Asian American, Alaska Native or Pacific Islander you have a higher risk.

#### Know the symptoms.

You can have diabetes or pre-diabetes and not have symptoms. If you do have symptoms they may include:

- Frequent urination. · Increased thirst.
- Feeling tired. · Blurred vision.
- Eating more than usual.
- Unusual weight loss.
- Having sores or infections that do not heal or heal slowly.

#### 6. TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

- Ask about your risk. Ask how lifestyle changes can help lower your risk.
- Ask if you should be screened for pre-diabetes or diabetes.

**Diabetes is a serious condition. But getting and keeping a healthy weight and being physically active can lower your risk for type 2 diabetes. To learn more, visit the National Diabetes Education Program at: [www.ndep.nih.gov](http://www.ndep.nih.gov)**

