



Tips for Achieving a Healthy Weight for Individuals with Type 2 Diabetes

If you have type 2 diabetes and are overweight chances are your medical provider has recommended that you lose weight. For individuals with type 2 diabetes high blood glucose (sugar) is partly due to *insulin resistance*. Insulin resistance can lead to an elevation in blood glucose by not allowing the insulin to work properly; insulin resistance is also linked to high blood pressure and abnormal blood fats (cholesterol and triglycerides). Carrying extra weight, especially around the belly, appears to be linked to insulin resistance.

For overweight and obese individuals with type 2 diabetes weight loss has been shown to improve insulin sensitivity, blood glucose, blood pressure and blood fats. Below are tips and resources on how to achieve and maintain a healthy weight for individuals with type 2 diabetes.

How Much Weight Do You Need to Lose?

Work with your health care provider and diabetes team to determine what is considered a healthy weight for you and to set realistic goals. The good news is that health benefits can be seen with as little as 10 to 20 pounds weight loss. Most nutrition experts recommend a weight loss of no more than 1-2 pounds per week.

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a tool used to determine a healthy weight. BMI is calculated using your height and current weight. To calculate your BMI, go to the BMI calculator:

http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/BMI/bmicalc.htm

Please note that the BMI calculator listed above is intended for adults. A different calculator is used for children and teens: <http://nccd.cdc.gov/dnpabmi/calculator.aspx>

What Is the Best Way to Lose Weight?

There is no “one way” to lose weight. In deciding on a weight loss plan the key is to select a plan that makes sense for you. It needs to be “doable” and it needs to fit into your lifestyle. In choosing a plan keep in mind that it’s not just about losing weight. It’s also about *maintaining* – both the healthy habits and weight loss. Things to consider are: Does the meal plan include a variety of foods? Can you follow it long term? Does the weight loss plan include physical activity? Does it include making lifestyle change and does it include ongoing support?

In today’s world there is one popular “diet” after another. Just because a “diet” is popular doesn’t mean it is safe or effective. The following website provides guidance in selecting a weight loss plan:

<http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/choosing.htm>

Whichever meal plan you choose, keep in mind that your *eating schedule* and *counting carbohydrates* remain important for good blood glucose control. Some weight loss programs focus on counting “points” or “calories.” They do not take into consideration the impact of your schedule

and carbohydrates on your blood glucose. For more information on carbohydrate counting visit:

<http://www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/food/planning-meals/carb-counting/>

Finding support is also important - whether it is from family, friends, coworkers, a weight loss group or online. The following links provide meal planning information for improving blood glucose and/or losing weight:

Mediterranean-style Eating

<http://oldwayspt.org/resources/heritage-pyramids/mediterranean-diet-pyramid>

DASH Diet

https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/public/heart/hbp_low.pdf

American Diabetes Association - Weight Loss

<http://www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/weight-loss/?loc=ff-slabnav>

American Diabetes Association "Create Your Plate"

<http://www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/food/planning-meals/diabetes-food-pyramid.html>

Choose My Plate

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov>

Does Your Weight Loss Plan Include Physical Activity?

Being physically active has numerous health benefits including lowering your blood sugar and blood pressure. The American Diabetes Association (ADA) recommends 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous aerobic exercise at least 5 times a week. For losing weight or for maintaining weight loss 60 minutes a day is recommended.

Talk with your health care provider before starting an exercise plan. Together you can determine a safe and realistic plan. Because exercise improves your body's ability to use insulin, hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) can occur with certain diabetes medications such as insulin and sulfonylureas. Monitor your blood glucose and carry a high carbohydrate snack while exercising. Contact your provider if you begin to experience low blood sugar; he or she may need to adjust your medication.

For more information about physical activity or how to start a walking program visit:

<http://www.diabetes.org/food-and-fitness/fitness/>

http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/lose_wt/phy_act.htm

<http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/walking.htm>

Why is it Important to Work Closely with Your Provider?

Because weight loss can lower blood sugar and blood pressure, if a person is taking certain diabetes or blood pressure medication, hypoglycemia or hypotension (low blood pressure) can become an issue. Contact your provider if you begin to experience signs or symptoms of low blood sugar or low blood pressure; he or she may need to adjust your medication.

It is best to meet with your medical provider and diabetes team *before* embarking on a weight loss plan talk. They can provide guidance and support so that you lose weight and make changes safely.

Ask for a referral to a Registered Dietitian who specializes in diabetes. Medicare, and a growing number of other insurances, pays for Medical Nutrition Therapy for individuals with diabetes. Medicare also pays for a separate benefit, Diabetes Self-Management Training, which includes nutrition education. Check with your insurance plan to find out what services are covered.

For information regarding Medicare coverage of Medical Nutrition Therapy and Diabetes Self-Management Training visit:

<https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/nutrition-therapy-services.html>

<https://www.medicare.gov/coverage/diabetes-self-mgmt-training.html>

To find a highly qualified accredited or recognized Diabetes Self-Management Education Program, go to www.diabeteseducator.org (American Association of Diabetes Educators) or www.diabetes.org (American Diabetes Association).

Don't Forget to Keep Up with Your Usual Diabetes Care Plan

Shedding those extra pounds is a great way to control your diabetes but remember that good diabetes management includes keeping up with your diabetes medical appointments and exams. These tests include: A1C, cholesterol and triglycerides, blood pressure, microalbumin (urine kidney test), foot and eye exams, as well as getting a flu shot and pneumonia vaccine. The Diabetes Health Record can help you keep track of your diabetes care plan to stay healthy:

<http://diabetescoalitionofcalifornia.org/health-records/>

Do you have Friends or Family Members at Risk for Type 2 Diabetes?

In the United States, there are 86 million people with prediabetes; 9 out of 10 do not know they have prediabetes. The cornerstone of the National Diabetes Prevention Program is a structured lifestyle intervention, which has been proven effective in helping people at high risk for type 2 diabetes lose a moderate amount of weight (5 percent to 7 percent of their current weight) and increase their physical activity to 150 minutes per week. These two lifestyle change outcomes have been shown to prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes by nearly 60 percent in adults and by 71 percent in those over 60.

Learn more at: <http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention/index.html>