



long term care connection

Summer 2009

Diabetes

Moving forward

If you just found out that you have diabetes, you might feel a bit overwhelmed. Diabetes means that the sugar levels in your blood are too high.

Try not to worry too much. You'll get the hang of it. Your health care team can help you learn about diabetes and how you can manage it. Make sure to ask any questions you have.

First, you'll need to know how to control your diabetes so you'll feel better and have a lower risk for serious health problems. You and your doctor are partners in managing your diabetes. Managing your diabetes includes:

- Keeping blood sugar levels within a normal range
- Maintaining or lowering overall body weight
- Managing or lowering cholesterol levels
- Controlling blood pressure
- Reducing long-term diabetes complications, such as heart and kidney disease, and eye, nerve and foot problems

Take control

To manage diabetes:

Eat well. All food affects your blood sugar, but eating some types of food can make more of a difference than others. Your doctor or a dietitian can help you plan healthy meals.

Stay active. Walking and other exercise can help you control diabetes and stay healthy in other ways.

Track your blood sugar. Your doctor can tell you about when and how to check your blood sugar.

Get your eyes checked. Each year you should have an eye exam. An eye doctor can determine if you have an eye problem or disease related to diabetes.

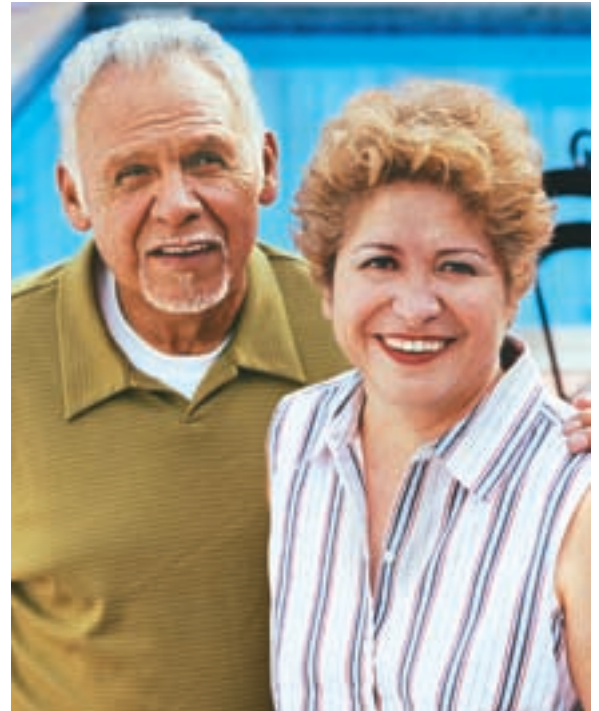
Take your medicines. If your doctor says you need diabetes pills,

take them as prescribed.

Other tips:

- If you smoke, quit.
- Keep your blood pressure and cholesterol levels under control.
- Ask when you need checkups.

Sources: American Diabetes Association; National Institutes of Health



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Prostate health

A man's concern

More than half of all men older than 50 will have some kind of problem with their prostate, reports the American Urological Association.

The good news? Most of these problems are not cancer. But it's still important to be checked out.

A common problem

The prostate is a gland that produces semen, the fluid that carries sperm. This gland surrounds the urethra, the tube that carries urine from the bladder.

It is normal for the prostate to grow larger with age. But if the prostate gets too big, it can squeeze the urethra. This can cause urinary symptoms such as:

- The urge to go a lot

- Feeling like the bladder isn't empty

- The urge to go again as soon as you're done

- Trouble starting or stopping

- A weak stream

- Dribbling or leaking

If you are bothered by any of these symptoms, talk with your doctor.

To find out what's wrong, he or she will do a physical exam and ask about your symptoms. Your urine may also be tested.

An enlarged prostate may not need treatment. Your doctor may suggest a wait-and-see approach. Medicines or surgery can also help.

See your doctor right away if



you have pain or burning with urination, blood in your urine, or if you can't go. These may be signs of something more serious.

Additional source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Cooking for one

You don't have to be an expert cook to eat well.

Even if you're cooking for one, you can make simple, healthy meals that don't cost a lot.

Try these tips from the American Dietetic Association:

Plan ahead. Make a menu before you go shopping. Be sure to

check your supply of staples (such as flour and cereal) before you go. Stick to your list and buy only the amount you need.

Buy smart. Get fresh foods in small amounts. Buy frozen fruits and veggies so you can use them as you need them. When possible, buy small amounts from bulk bins. And look for foods sold in single servings, such as low-fat yogurt, 100 percent juice and soup.

Freeze for later. When you cook a meal, divide it and freeze some as

single servings. That way, you can cook when you have the time and energy. When you don't feel like cooking, you can enjoy a ready-made, healthy meal instead of processed foods that have added salt and fat.

Dine with company. Invite friends or neighbors to share in a weekly or monthly potluck.

And whether you're eating with friends or alone, try to make it special. Set the table, turn on some favorite music and make mealtime enjoyable.