

health matters

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things to know

High cholesterol

Our veins and arteries are like a highway for blood. But sometimes there's a traffic jam.

This can happen if we have too much cholesterol.

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance in the blood. If there's too much, it can build up inside your arteries. This makes it hard for blood to pass through and could cause a heart attack.

To control or prevent high cholesterol:

Watch what you eat. Limit foods high in cholesterol and fat. These include meat, egg yolks, dairy products and baked goods. Choose lean meat and low-fat or nonfat milk and cheese.

Keep an eye on your weight. Being too heavy raises your cholesterol level.

Stay fit. Get 30 minutes of brisk exercise, such as walking, five days a week. Also do

strength exercise, such as lifting weights, twice a week.

Get tested. Ask your doctor about checking your cholesterol.



Sources: American Heart Association; National Cholesterol Education Program



Why kids need shots

There's no getting around it. Your child will wind up with sniffles and sore throats.

But there are many diseases you can help your child avoid—dangerous ones. All you need to do is be sure your child gets vaccinated.

Today's vaccines help keep your child safe from more than a dozen diseases. And many of these diseases are deadly.

They include:

- Whooping cough, which can

make it hard for your child to breathe

- Measles, which can cause brain swelling

- Hepatitis B, an infection of the liver that can lead to cancer

So check with your child's doctor to see if your child's shots are up-to-date.

If your child has missed some shots, don't worry. It's not too late to catch up. Ask your child's doctor.

Source: American Academy of Family Physicians

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Breast changes:

What's cause for concern

Getting breast cancer may be one of your health concerns. But there are changes that can occur in your breasts that aren't cancer. They still may need a doctor's attention.

Changes that aren't dangerous

You can have pain or swelling in breasts during your period or if you are pregnant. While this may be uncomfortable, it's usually not a reason for concern.

You might also find:

Fibrocystic changes. This is the most common breast problem. Your breast may feel lumpy, swollen or tender.

Fibroadenomas. These are hard, round growths that feel rubbery. They move around easily and usually don't cause any pain.

Cysts. These are fluid-filled sacs. They can be almost any size, and they can be painful.

These changes usually don't require treatment. But talk to your doctor if you have any of these symptoms. He or she can make sure you don't have a more serious condition.

Other changes

You should see your doctor if you notice a new lump. Even though most are not cause for concern, some are cancer.

If you have unusual changes in a breast, your doctor may want you to have a mammogram.

Women older than 40 should have a mammogram every one or two years. Mammograms are the best way to find breast cancer.

Source: National Cancer Institute

Is a good night's sleep just a dream?



You can add another item to the list of differences between men and women—sleep. What's the difference? Women get less of it than men.

Hormones are one reason. Pregnancy, your periods and menopause all can affect sleep. You also tend to think about the day's problems after you go to bed, which can keep you awake.

To sleep better:

- Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time every day.
- Avoid foods and drinks with caffeine or sugar near bedtime.
- Don't eat a heavy meal late in the day.
- Relax before bed with a book or warm bath.
- Make a "to do" list before bedtime to help let go of worries.

If these tips don't help, talk to your doctor.

Source: National Sleep Foundation

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women's health, go to
www.4woman.gov

Dealing with diabetes

Your body is made of millions of tiny cells.

To keep you healthy, these cells need to eat. The food these cells eat is called glucose, or sugar.

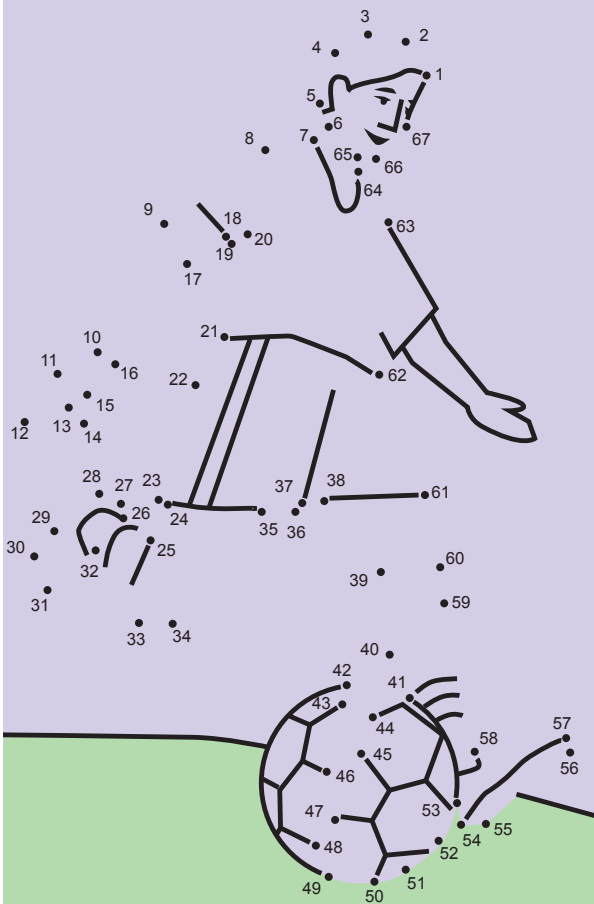
But the cells can't eat the sugar without help. They get help from insulin.

If you have diabetes, your body

doesn't make enough insulin or use it the right way. So the cells don't get the sugar they need. That can make you sick.

But there's good news. You can be healthy with diabetes if you make smart choices.

Here are a fun game and snack ideas to get you started.



Jake knows that exercise is good for people with diabetes. When you are active, your body works better.

Connect the dots to find out what sport Jake likes to play.

Fun treats—and healthy too

Having diabetes means you have to be careful about what you eat and when you eat it.

But that doesn't mean you can't have a sweet treat once in awhile!

It's important to work snacks into your diabetes food plan. Just be sure to ask a parent first.

Here are some fun ideas for treats to make in your own kitchen:

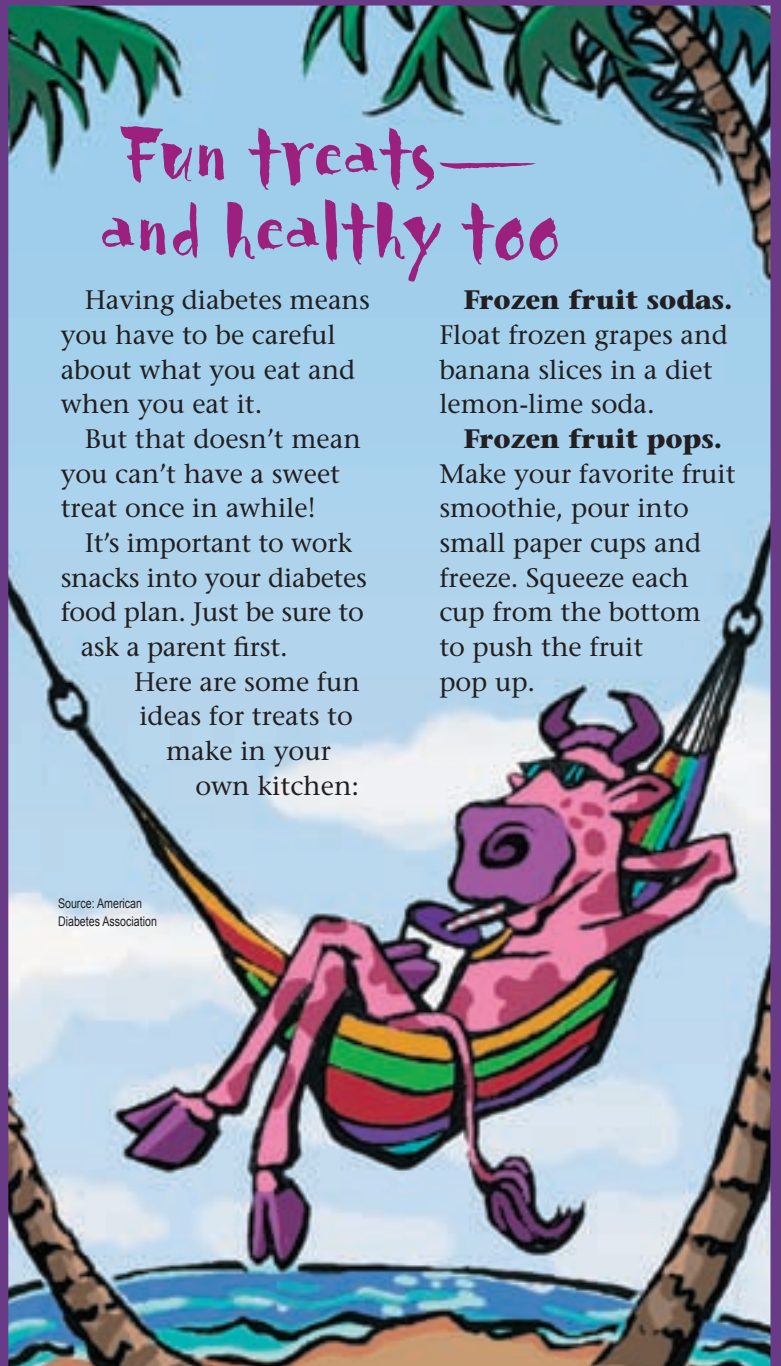
Frozen fruit sodas.

Float frozen grapes and banana slices in a diet lemon-lime soda.

Frozen fruit pops.

Make your favorite fruit smoothie, pour into small paper cups and freeze. Squeeze each cup from the bottom to push the fruit pop up.

Source: American Diabetes Association



diabetes

Step up to control diabetes



Diabetes can affect many parts of your body. If your blood sugar is out of control, it hurts your heart, kidneys, eyes and more.

That's why it's so important to get your diabetes under control. It can help you avoid or delay problems like heart disease and stroke.

And if you already have certain problems, like eye disease, controlling your diabetes may help keep them from getting worse.

Plus, you'll feel better and have more energy too.

Are you ready to get to work? Start with these steps.

Step 1: Watch your blood sugar levels. You'll need to check your blood sugar often. That will help you keep track from day to day. Talk to your doctor about how and when to test.

Dropping extra weight has a big impact on getting your blood sugar under control.

You'll also need a test called the A1C. It shows what your average blood sugar has been over the past few months.

You'll have less risk of health problems if you keep your A1C as low as possible. In general, a good A1C goal is less than 7 percent. Aim to get the test at least twice a year.

Step 2: Exercise often. Do 30 minutes of brisk exercise five days a week. Do strengthening exercises—for example, lift weights—twice a week. Being active helps your body use blood sugar better.

Step 3: Get to a healthy weight. Dropping extra weight helps get blood sugar under control.

Step 4: See your doctor regularly. Keep up with eye exams, foot exams and other important checkups.

Sources: American Diabetes Association; American Heart Association; National Institutes of Health

Are you at risk?

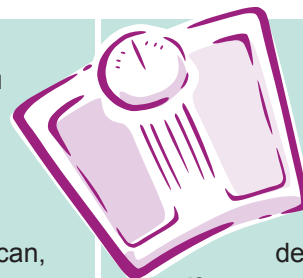
Diabetes is a common problem. You most likely know someone who has the disease.

But do you know if you are at risk yourself? If you don't, you need to find out. Take a look at this list of risk factors:

- You have a parent, brother or sister who has diabetes.
- You are over 45.

- You had diabetes when you were pregnant.
- You had a baby that weighed more than 9 pounds.
- You are African American, American Indian, Asian American, Hispanic or Pacific Islander.
- You are overweight.
- You don't get much exercise.

Many of these risks can't be changed. But you can control some of them. For example, you



can lose weight or exercise more. These steps may help prevent or delay diabetes even if you are at high risk.

Talk to your doctor about your risk factors. He or she can tell you if you should be tested for diabetes.

Sources: American Diabetes Association; National Institutes of Health