

# Mission In Motion

Health & Wellness Monthly Newsletter  
November 2012—Diabetes



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## Take control of your diabetes

**Test your blood sugar daily.** Write down the results. Regular testing helps ensure your treatment plan is working.

**Eat right.** Choose foods and recipes with less sugar, less fat and low sodium. Eat meals that are high in fruits, vegetables and whole grain.

**Stay active.** You can walk, bike, swim or hike. Everyone is different, so check with your physician to see if you should have any limits in your exercise program.

**Take prescribed medicines as directed.** Ask your health care provider if other medication that you may be taking, either prescribed or over the counter, will interfere with your diabetes medication.

Taking control of your diabetes may help you with problems such as: kidney disease, high blood pressure, vision and circulation.

These tips are intended as general information only. Please consult your physician for specific advice.

Visit Blue Access® for Members at [www.bcbstx.com](http://www.bcbstx.com) for more information about diabetes.

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## Stop Diabetes in its Tracks

Before people develop type 2 diabetes, they almost always have pre-diabetes—blood glucose levels that are higher than normal but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. More than 54 million people in the United States have this condition.

If you have pre-diabetes, you can prevent the development of diabetes by:

- Step 1** Engaging in just 30 minutes of daily moderate physical activity
- Step 2** Making healthy food choices
- Step 3** Reducing your body weight by five to 10 percent

Take a step in the right direction and get pre-diabetes under control. Visit the Personal Health Manager available through Blue Access® for Members and find online tracking logs for physical activity, daily food choices and weight management.

Source: American Diabetes Association

# Diabetes Myths, Get the Facts

Get the facts about diabetes and learn how you can stop diabetes myths and misconceptions.

**Myth:** Diabetes is not that serious of a disease.

**Fact:** Diabetes causes more deaths a year than breast cancer and AIDS combined. Two out of three people with diabetes die from heart disease or stroke.

**Myth:** If you are overweight or obese, you will eventually develop type 2 diabetes.

**Fact:** Being overweight is a risk factor for developing this disease, but other risk factors such as family history, ethnicity and age also play a role. Unfortunately, too many people disregard the other risk factors for diabetes and think that weight is the only risk factor for type 2 diabetes. Most overweight people never develop type 2 diabetes, and many people with type 2 diabetes are at a normal weight or only moderately overweight.

**Myth:** Eating too much sugar causes diabetes.

**Fact:** No, it does not. Type 1 diabetes is caused by genetics and unknown factors that trigger the onset of the disease; type 2 diabetes is caused by genetics and lifestyle factors. Being overweight does increase your risk for developing type 2 diabetes, and a diet high in calories, whether from sugar or from fat, can contribute to weight gain. If you have a history of diabetes in your family, eating a healthy meal plan and regular exercise are recommended to manage your weight.

**Myth:** People with diabetes should eat special diabetic foods.

**Fact:** A healthy meal plan for people

with diabetes is generally the same as a healthy diet for anyone – low in fat (especially saturated and trans fat), moderate in salt and sugar, with meals based on whole grain foods, vegetables and fruit. Diabetic and "dietetic" foods generally offer no special benefit. Most of them still raise blood glucose levels, are usually more expensive and can also have a laxative effect if they contain sugar alcohols.

**Myth:** If you have diabetes, you should only eat small amounts of starchy foods, such as bread, potatoes and pasta.

**Fact:** Starchy foods are part of a healthy meal plan. What is important is the portion size. Whole grain breads, cereals, pasta, rice and starchy vegetables like potatoes, yams, peas and corn can be included in your meals and snacks. The key is portions. For most people with diabetes, having 3-4 servings of carbohydrate-containing foods per meal is about right. Whole grain starchy foods are also a good source of fiber, which helps keep your gut healthy.

**Myth:** People with diabetes can't eat sweets or chocolate.

**Fact:** If eaten as part of a healthy meal plan, or combined with exercise, sweets and desserts can be eaten by people with diabetes. They are no more "off limits" to people with diabetes than they are to people without diabetes. The key to sweets is to have a very small portion and save them for special occasions so you focus your meal on more healthful foods.

**Myth:** You can catch diabetes from someone else.

**Fact:** No. Although we don't know exactly why some people develop diabetes, we know diabetes is not

contagious. It can't be caught like a cold or flu. There seems to be some genetic link in diabetes, particularly type 2 diabetes. Lifestyle factors also play a part.

**Myth:** People with diabetes are more likely to get colds and other illnesses.

**Fact:** You are no more likely to get a cold or another illness if you have diabetes. However, people with diabetes are advised to get flu shots. This is because any illness can make diabetes more difficult to control, and people with diabetes who do get the flu are more likely than others to go on to develop serious complications.

**Myth:** If you have type 2 diabetes and your doctor says you need to start using insulin, it means you're failing to take care of your diabetes properly.

**Fact:** For most people, type 2 diabetes is a progressive disease. When first diagnosed, many people with type 2 diabetes can keep their blood glucose at a healthy level with oral medications. But over time, the body gradually produces less and less of its own insulin, and eventually oral medications may not be enough to keep blood glucose levels normal. Using insulin to get blood glucose levels to a healthy level is a good thing, not a bad one.

**Myth:** Fruit is a healthy food. Therefore, it is ok to eat as much of it as you wish.

**Fact:** Fruit is a healthy food. It contains fiber and lots of vitamins and minerals. Because fruits contain carbohydrates, they need to be included in your meal plan. Talk to your dietitian about the amount, frequency and types of fruits you **should** eat.

Source: American Diabetes Association



## Make diabetes prevention your intention



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### Are appearances deceiving you?

#### *The truth about undetected diabetes*

Diabetes is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States. Yet close to a third of the 17 million adults affected by the disease may not know they have it. Many people first learn they have diabetes through blood tests for other conditions or during routine physical exams. Left undetected and untreated, diabetes can do irreversible damage to your eyes, kidneys and other major organs.

There are two types of diabetes, Type 1 and Type 2. Type 1 diabetes, also known as insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (IDDM), usually develops before age 30. Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes and usually occurs after age 40 and in overweight people. Each type has several symptoms, but symptoms common to both types include excessive thirst and frequent urination. Physicians don't usually screen for diabetes during routine visits, so you should make your physician aware of any symptoms or risk factors you may have. If you are at risk for diabetes, have a fasting blood glucose test starting at age 45. If test results are normal, repeat the test every three years.\*

#### *Defending against diabetes*

You may need medication to control your blood sugar level. But even with medication, the right diet and regular exercise are vital to managing diabetes. Unfortunately, there is no cure for the disease, but there are steps you can take to help prevent it, or gain tighter control of your blood sugar levels if you have diabetes. Some preventive or self-management steps include:

- Eating right
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Getting plenty of exercise
- Knowing your risk factors

By practicing a healthy lifestyle and having your blood sugar tested on a regular basis, you can protect your health against diabetes.

Check your benefits booklet to determine if your health plan coverage pays for this type of screening.

[www.bcbstx.com](http://www.bcbstx.com)

\*American Diabetes Association

### Make diabetes prevention your intention..

You can do a lot to lower your chances of getting diabetes. Exercising regularly, reducing fat and calorie intake, losing a little weight, cutting out tobacco products, lowering blood pressure and cholesterol levels can enhance your health.

To help lower your risk of diabetes:

- Make a plan to change behavior.
- Decide exactly what you will do and when you will do it.
- Plan what you need to get ready.
- Think about what might prevent you from reaching your goals.
- If you smoke, enroll in a smoking cessation program.
- Find family and friends who will support and encourage you.
- Decide how you will reward yourself when you do what you have planned.

Develop your wellness plan with the Personal Health Manager's fitness and nutrition resources available from Blue Access® for Members at [www.bcbstx.com](http://www.bcbstx.com).

Source: The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases



10/18/2012—  
Breast Cancer  
Awareness  
Luncheon held  
at Shary Golf  
Course.

## 2012 Annual Health Fair

**Come join us for our 2012 Annual Health Fair!**

**Location: Parks and Recreation Gym**

**Date & Time: Friday, November 30, 2012 @ 7:30 a.m.—10:00 a.m.**

**Services: Flu shots, blood work, health screenings & lots more!**

**Look to Health Fair flyer for more information.**

### Spinach Cheese Pie

Prep Time: 5 or less minutes

Serves 4

Total Time: 30 minutes

#### Ingredients

- 10 ounces spinach, chopped, frozen
- 2 cups part-skim ricotta cheese
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, fat-free
- 4 ounces roasted red peppers (canned in brine)
- 1/2 cup liquid egg substitute

#### Preparation:

- Preheat oven to 350°F.
- Thaw and drain spinach thoroughly. Drain and chop roasted red peppers.
- Combine all ingredients in a bowl and stir until well mixed. Add any sodium-free herbs or spices of choice, such as garlic powder, black pepper, oregano, and/or basil.
- Lightly spray a deep-dish pie pan or 8x8-inch square pan with cooking spray.
- Pour spinach mixture into pan and spread out evenly. Bake for 30 minutes or until golden.
- Serve warm with whole-wheat toast or English muffins and fresh fruit, if desired.

### Upcoming Monthly Health & Wellness Seminars:

November 2012—Health Fair  
December 2012—Alcohol/Drug Abuse

(All topics subject to change)

\*If you have a subject or topic that you would like more information on, feel free to make your requests at 956-580-8630.

### 2012 Annual Health Fair

Free Flu Shots, Lab/Blood Tests, Cholesterol, Blood Pressure exams, etc.  
You don't want to miss it!  
**BCBS ID Card needed**

### Wellness Scramble

Unscramble the letters of these words. Look for the answer next month.

**ontrocl boold ugars**

**October Answer:**

**Ask for help if you need it**

## Mission In Motion

**Our mission is to promote health awareness and to encourage healthy lifestyles.**

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