

HEALTHY LIVING

Wellness Newsletter from ARISTAPOINT

NOVEMBER 2015

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This dish fits well into meal plans for many diabetics.

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Making Mealtime Together a Priority



It may not be easy to get everyone around the table at once but there are plenty of reasons to make it happen as often as you can.

Here are five tips that may help you get around the table more often:

1. Book it. Check everyone's schedules. See which days — and meals — will work best each week.

2. Make it easy. A meal doesn't have to be fancy to be healthy. Think quick, nutritious and satisfying. That could even be soup and salad with whole-grain bread.

3. Do some prep. Find a quieter time to get as much chopping and cooking done ahead of time.

4. Cook once, eat twice. Baking chicken breasts for dinner tonight?

Cook a few extra and use them for chicken tacos tomorrow. Grilled salmon can top a green salad the next day.

5. Keep it fun. Leave homework and chore reminders for later. Focus on catching up and enjoying each other's company.

'YOU CAN'T EAT SUGAR' AND OTHER DIABETES MYTHS

Diabetes is a complicated, often misunderstood disease. If you have it or know someone who does, there's a lot for you to learn - including sifting fact from fiction. Below are the truths behind some common diabetes myths.

Myth: People with diabetes can't eat sugar and require special "diabetic" foods.

Fact: If your blood glucose levels are under control, some sugar can be part of your diet. In fact, a diabetes diet is no different than a healthy diet. Just like people without diabetes, you should limit foods high in saturated fat, trans fat, sodium and added sugar. Your diet should be rich in whole grains, fruits, vegetables, low-fat or nonfat dairy, and lean proteins.

And you probably don't need to buy special "diabetic" foods. Consider the cost and convenience of these products when making your decision.

Work with a certified diabetes educator or a registered dietician to create a nutrition plan that fits your needs.

Myth: Eating too much sugar causes diabetes.

Fact: Diabetes is not caused by eating sugar. Refined sugar that's found in foods is completely different than "blood sugar."

- Type 1 diabetes occurs when people have little or no insulin in their body.

- Type 2 diabetes occurs when your body cannot properly use the insulin it makes. In time, it is no longer able to make enough insulin to keep up.



Insulin is responsible for moving glucose from the bloodstream to the cells. If you don't have insulin, the glucose stays in the bloodstream. This is why people with diabetes have "high blood sugar."

Myth: I have diabetes, but I don't have the serious kind.

Fact: All types of diabetes - Type 1, Type 2 and gestational (diabetes that occurs during pregnancy) - are serious. Even if you don't have to take insulin or medication, your blood sugar levels still need to be managed. Poorly-controlled diabetes can lead to serious health problems, such as heart disease, nerve damage, kidney failure and blindness.

Myth: I can't exercise because I have diabetes.

Fact: Most people with diabetes should exercise. It is often part of a diabetes treatment program. Regular exercise helps your body use insulin better. Talk to your doctor first before you start or increase your activity.

Myth: I don't have a family history of diabetes, so I won't get it.

Fact: Plenty of people who are diagnosed with diabetes don't have a family history of the disease. And, many people with a family history of diabetes will never get it.

Having a family history of diabetes does raise your risk, though. There is nothing you can do to prevent Type 1 diabetes. But, you can take steps to cut your risk of Type 2 diabetes by making some changes to your lifestyle.

Myth: My diabetes has been "cured."

Fact: The only known "cure" for Type 1 diabetes is a risky pancreas transplant surgery. There is no known cure for Type 2 diabetes yet. Once you have diabetes, you have it forever.

Even if you don't need insulin or medication and your blood sugar levels are under control, you still have diabetes. If you stop following your diabetes treatment plan, your blood sugar levels will rise.

If you have more questions about diabetes, talk to your doctor. He or she will be able to separate fact from fiction.

Baked Chicken and Veggies



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 2 Tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1 1/2 teaspoons paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 4 chicken thighs, skinless
- 3 cups fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1 medium red onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 10 ounces frozen peas, thawed and drained
- 2 cups bok choy, shredded

PREPARATION:

In a shallow 2-quart casserole dish, combine oil, soy sauce, paprika, basil and thyme. Add chicken thighs and coat them well. Add mushrooms, onions and chicken broth. Cover and bake at 350 degrees for 50 minutes. Add peas and bok choy; cover and continue baking for an additional 10 to 15 minutes or until the peas are tender.

Nutrition Facts

Yields 4 Servings

Amount Per Serving

Calories 174	Fiber 3g
Fat 7g	Protein 19g
Sodium 409mg	Cholesterol 66mg

12 Ways to Halt Pre-Diabetes in its Tracks

Type 2 diabetes is a dangerous disease, and one that can be a challenge to manage. It can lead to heart and kidney disease, blindness and many other health conditions. Until a cure is found, people with the disease have to watch what they eat, measure their blood sugar and take medication each day.

Am I at-risk?

Fifty-seven million people in the U.S. are pre-diabetic, and even more are at-risk. Pre-diabetes is when blood glucose levels are above normal, but not high enough to be in the diabetic range. But, people with pre-diabetes are already at a higher risk for heart disease and other complications.

You are at an increased risk for Type 2 diabetes if you:

- Are overweight
- Exercise fewer than three times each week
- Have a family history of diabetes
- Are African-American, Hispanic, American-Indian or Pacific Islander
- Are older than 45
- Have high blood pressure or cholesterol
- Have a history of heart disease

Small changes, big rewards.

Pre-diabetes and Type 2 diabetes can often be prevented. And it does not require a complete overhaul of your lifestyle. Research shows that reducing your body weight by 5% to 10% - 10 to 20 pounds for someone who weighs 200 pounds - can cut your diabetes risk in half. Weight loss can also delay the onset of diabetes.

Reduce your risk.

The key to stopping Type 2 diabetes is to reach a healthy weight. And the trick to long-lasting weight loss is a healthy diet and regular exercise.

Exercise.

Work up to 30 to 60 minutes of exercise most days of the week. Always check with your doctor before you start an exercise program.

Try these exercise tips to get started:

Exercise does not have to happen all at once.

1. Take a short, brisk walk before work, during your lunch break and after dinner.
2. Do squats while you brush your teeth.

Find something you enjoy.

1. Walk with friends in a nearby park.
2. Swim at your local gym or community pool. Swimming and water workouts reduce impact on your joints. This is a great form of exercise for people with knee and other joint problems.

Get in spurts of physical activity throughout the day.

1. Instead of letting the dog out, walk him around the block.
2. Take the stairs instead of the escalator or elevator.

Eating right

Eat a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean protein and low-fat and nonfat dairy. Try to limit foods high in saturated and trans fat, cholesterol, salt and added sugar.

Start with these tips:

Watch portion sizes.

1. Use a salad plate instead of a dinner plate for your meals.
2. Fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetables. One quarter of your plate should be a carbohydrate, such as brown rice or a baked potato. The other quarter should be lean protein, like grilled fish or chicken.

Stop drinking your calories.

1. Use skim or nonfat milk in place of whole or 2 percent.
2. Trade regular soda for diet. Better yet, choose water or unsweetened iced tea.

Be wary of dining out.

1. Brown-bag your lunch instead of going out to lunch.
2. Have an appetizer as your meal or split an entree.

9 Ways to Exercise ... When You're Short on Time

We all know exercise can help us improve our health and lose weight. Yet, 25% of adults don't exercise at all, according to the U.S. Surgeon General.

Hectic schedules may be to blame. Who has the time to exercise when juggling work, school, family and more? It's worth squeezing it in, though, because regular exercise can relieve daily stress and lift your mood. At the same time, you can reduce your risks of diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease.

Aim to be active for at least 30 minutes most days, but it's okay to start slowly. Find activities that you enjoy. You only need to find a few minutes a day to start getting the health benefits. First, check with your doctor before you start or increase your activity level.

Tips for fitting in fitness

- **Wake up a little earlier.** Start by setting your alarm clock just 5 minutes earlier. Do stretches and jumping jacks before getting in the shower, or follow a short exercise DVD.

- **Find a workout buddy.** Exercising with a friend is more fun than working out alone and a good motivator. Ask a co-worker to go for a walk during lunch or see if a neighbor wants to shoot hoops.

- **Change into exercise clothes before leaving work.** You'll be ready for a short walk as soon as you get home.

- **Schedule your fitness activities.** If you put exercise on your calendar like other appointments, you're more likely to do it.

- **Acknowledge your successes.** Keep a log of all the times you make a healthy choice to move more, like taking the stairs instead of an elevator. After the first week, reward yourself with a new pair of sneakers or a cool new water bottle.

- **Create a home (or desk) gym.** If you have equipment always at the ready, it will be easy to steal five minutes to use it. A jump rope, a stability ball, exercise bands and dumbbells don't cost much or take up much room.

- **Move while you watch TV.** Don't sit idly - or worse, get a snack - during commercials. Do sit-ups or jog in place instead.

- **Play games with your kids.** Don't just watch while your kids play outside - join in their fun. Play tag or Duck Duck Goose, or just toss a ball back and forth. If your kids love video games, think about swapping their console for the Nintendo Wii. The whole family will break a sweat using special controllers to compete at boxing, tennis, golf and bowling.

- **Exercise while you work.** Raise your activity level and productivity with neck rolls or arm raises (push hands out to the side and then up toward the ceiling). Or do a few modified push-ups on the edge of your desk.

Stepping it up

After you've built short periods of activity into your day, think about times when you could lengthen each burst by a few minutes. The key is to start small and ramp up gradually.

Even if you're worn out from a busy day, try to make time for fitness. Regular exercise actually boosts your energy level. Exercise, along with restricting calories, is also important for weight loss and maintaining a healthy weight.

Next time you look for an excuse to skip exercise, remind yourself of the benefits. You're helping yourself feel good, look better and live longer. Who wouldn't want that?



ARISTAPOINT

www.myaristapoint.com
www.aristapoint.com

(425) 968.0545
(866) 968.0545 (Toll Free)
10510 NE Northrup Way, Suite 200
Kirkland, WA 98033

NOVEMBER



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Wellness Tip

Holiday Eating

The holiday season can wreak havoc on your diet. With a little careful thought and planning, you can avoid holiday weight gain. Be sure to plan ahead when attending parties and limit yourself to no more than one alcoholic beverage. Focusing on enjoying good conversation, not just on eating, will also help.

We want your feedback about the Wellness Newsletter. Please e-mail us at wellness@aaooamerica.org with any wellness tips or healthy recipe ideas.