



Eating Healthy

Eating healthy is an important part of managing diabetes and **reaching your A1C goal** – but it can be challenging. Take the next step with the tips below:

Plan ahead

Try planning dishes for the week, and write your grocery list ahead of time. If you find it difficult to cook after work, consider dedicating one night for meal prep so you have a few healthy dishes ready to go.

Make healthy choices

If your favorite food or drink isn't the healthiest, simple switches can satisfy your cravings and keep you on track. Skip the potato chips, and have kale chips instead. Swap out ice cream for frozen low-fat Greek yogurt or choose sparkling water with fresh lime instead of soda.

Spice it up

Eating healthy doesn't have to be boring! For extra flavor, use salt-free spices and herbs like dried basil, cumin, chili powder and cayenne. Finding ways to enjoy your food may make it easier to maintain a healthy diet. And don't forget to check out **AmericasDiabetesChallenge.com** for more nutritious recipes.

Prepare for lows

Many people with diabetes know the importance of managing high blood glucose, but they may not know that blood glucose can also go too low (known as hypoglycemia). Hypoglycemia can be caused by certain diabetes medicines, skipping meals or exercising excessively. Work with your doctor to learn if you're at risk for hypoglycemia and what the symptoms are, and remember to set aside a few quick acting sources of sugar to have on hand in case your blood glucose gets low. Think fruit juice (about 4 ounces or ½ cup) or hard candies (see package to determine how many to consume).



Exercising

Being active is a key part of your diabetes management plan, but beginning a workout routine can sometimes be intimidating. **Get and stay motivated** by taking the next step with the tips below, and remember to work with your doctor before starting or making any changes to an exercise routine:

Make small changes

Take one step at a time (literally!) by slowly adding more physical activity into your day. You can start by using the stairs instead of the elevator or go on a short walk around the block after dinner.

Team up

Working out with a friend or partner can make fitness fun, and making a plan with someone can help keep you committed to your exercise goals. It's a great way to stay motivated and encourage each other to stay with it!

Make the most of your daily routine

Finding time to exercise can be tough. But, there are simple choices you can make to get yourself moving during the day. Keep a set of light weights by the couch and take five minutes to do a quick set of reps in between tasks. Or while at work, do stretches at your desk and set up walking meetings with your colleagues.

Use the time you have

Committing to regular exercise is important, but you don't need to attend exercise classes or have a gym membership to stay moving – do your best to sneak in more activity during the day! Instead of carrying everything up the stairs at once, make a few trips. You can also choose a parking space at the far end of the lot when you go shopping to fit in more walking.



Coping with the Disease

Managing type 2 diabetes has its ups and downs, which can make it difficult to **stay on track with your management plan**. If you're struggling to cope with the disease, try these tips to help keep a positive outlook:

Build your support system

Whether it's your doctor, a family member or a friend, surround yourself with people who can support you when you struggle – and celebrate with when you reach a goal. Knowing you're not alone and having a support system can make a big difference.

Get involved

Sometimes the best people to talk to are those who've experienced the challenges you're facing first-hand – consider getting involved in your local diabetes community to meet others who can help motivate you.

Set manageable goals

There's a lot to think about when managing type 2 diabetes, so set small, reachable goals to make it less overwhelming to stay on track. For example, if you're aiming to lose weight, stay on track by being active. You can start off slow by taking a walk after dinner.

Reward yourself

Celebrate each success, no matter how small. Whether you cooked a healthy meal, made it to the gym before work or saw a decrease in your A1C – acknowledge your progress. Reward yourself with something you enjoy like a night out with friends or relax at home with a new book. If you have a setback, remind yourself that tomorrow is a new day, and you'll have the opportunity to get back on track. Also remember that diabetes is a progressive disease, so don't get discouraged if your doctor needs to change your treatment plan over time.



Sticking to a Treatment Plan

Keeping track of the different aspects of your treatment plan – like diet, exercise and taking medicine (if prescribed) – can be overwhelming. But being consistent and forming healthy habits can help make things easier. **Take the next step** with the tips below:

Set your A1C goal

Your A1C (average blood glucose over the past 2-3 months) is needed to help you and your doctor understand how well your treatment plan is working. At your next appointment, ask about your A1C and work with your doctor to set and reach your personal goal.

Know your numbers

In addition to having your A1C checked by your doctor, you should also check your blood glucose regularly. Checking your blood glucose, using a blood glucose meter, shows what your blood glucose level is at that moment. Just make sure to ask your doctor how often you should check your blood glucose and what your target range should be.

Everyone is different

Remember, your treatment plan is individualized, so you can work with your doctor to make sure it fits your needs. This will help make your plan easier to maintain.

Start a routine

If your doctor has prescribed medication, you may struggle to remember to take it. Using a pillbox that you fill each week or scheduling reminders on your phone may be helpful. Or, if you often forget to check your blood glucose, keep a meter in the kitchen so you can easily check before and after meals.