

DIABETES MYTHS AND FACTS



Be smart about your health.

Myth: Having diabetes isn't a big deal.¹

Fact: Diabetes is a chronic disease that can significantly increase your risk of having a heart attack. The good news is there are steps you can take to reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes and diabetes complications.

Myth: Everyone who is overweight will develop type 2 diabetes.¹

Fact: Not all those who have diabetes are overweight. Likewise, not all those who are overweight have diabetes. But, being overweight is one of many risk factors that can lead to type 2 diabetes.

Myth: Eating too many sweets can cause type 2 diabetes.²

Fact: Type 2 diabetes is caused by genetics and lifestyle issues like being overweight, obese and physically inactive. It isn't known for sure that too much sugar causes diabetes. What is known, however, is that a diet high in calories can lead to weight gain. And being overweight can increase your risk for developing diabetes.

Myth: There are a lot of restrictions in a diabetes-friendly diet.³

Fact: When you have diabetes, you do need to make smarter decisions about what you eat, especially when it comes to keeping your blood sugar levels down. But the overall goal is really no different than what we should all aim for, which is a healthy, balanced diet. It's about learning how to eat the right amounts of the right foods, including a healthy balance of all major food groups.



Healthy fats



Fruits and vegetables



Dairy products



Breads, cereals, rice and whole grains



Meat and meat substitutes

Together, all the way.[®]



Myth: You'll know it if your blood glucose (blood sugar) is too high or too low.⁴

Fact: Your blood glucose level is a way to track how well your diabetes care plan is working. The only way to know if your blood glucose is too high or too low is to check it. You can't always rely on how you feel because any symptoms you may or may not be experiencing could be the result of something completely unrelated, like simply having a cold or the flu.

Myth: If you use insulin, you're not managing your diabetes properly.¹

Fact: Many people with type 2 diabetes can keep their blood glucose at a healthy level with oral medications at first. But your body can gradually produce less and less of its own insulin over time, through no fault of your own. Using insulin can help get blood glucose levels to a healthy level, when oral medications no longer can.



Sources:

1. American Diabetes Association. "Diabetes Myths." <http://www.diabetes.org/diabetes-basics/myths/?loc=db-slabnav> (last reviewed and edited August 17, 2015)
2. WebMD. "Plain Truth: Diabetes Myths Debunked." <http://www.webmd.com/diabetes/features/diabetes-myths-truth#2> (accessed January 19, 2017)
3. WebMD. "10 Diabetes Diet Myths." <http://www.webmd.com/diabetes/10-diabetes-diet-myths#1-3> (accessed January 19, 2017)
4. American Diabetes Association. "Checking Your Blood Glucose" <http://www.diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/treatment-and-care/blood-glucose-control/checking-your-blood-glucose.html> (last edited August 4, 2016)

This is intended to be general health information and not medical advice or services. You should consult your doctor for medical advice or services, including seeking advice prior to undertaking a new diet or exercise program.

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