5 Tips to Manage Diabetes

Almost 30 million Americans, 9.3% of the US population, have diabetes. Diabetes is associated with heart attacks, strokes, kidney disease, and blindness. The key to success in managing diabetes is taking control of what you eat!

**Snack on nuts**

Substitute carbohydrates with food high in monounsaturated fats, like nuts. These can help improve blood sugar levels by as much as 12% and lower triglycerides by up to 26%.

- **Beans**
- **Nuts**
- **Lean Meats**
- **Healthy Fats**

**Lose weight**

It is important for patients with diabetes who are overweight to lose weight.

Losing 5-10% of your body weight will help decrease insulin resistance and burn sugar calories more effectively.

Along with daily exercise, eating 500 calories less per day will help you lose a pound each week. The quantity and quality of what you eat matters! See handouts: What Can I Eat? and Healthy Diet Swaps.

**Note:** Limiting refined carbohydrates and sugar may also help with weight loss.

**Follow the Mediterranean diet**

The Mediterranean diet can improve glycemic control, reduce need for diabetic medication, and decrease insulin resistance. A low-carb Mediterranean diet can reduce A1C % by 2.0–better than many diabetes medications! See the Mediterranean Diet handout.

**Limit refined carbohydrates**

Limit refined carbohydrates (starchy carbs) and the total amount of carbs you eat. By sticking to a lower glycemic index/load diet, you can substantially improve your health. You may lower your A1C % by 0.5, and decrease your insulin resistance.

See Glycemic Index/Load handout.

**Limit sugar**

Limit sugar:
- for men, the recommendation is 9 teaspoons or less (37.5 grams of sugar or less) per day
- for women, the recommendation is 6 teaspoons or less (24 grams of sugar or less) per day

Americans currently consume about 88 grams of sugar per day, more than 2 to 3 times the recommended amount (including fruit juice and beverages with corn syrups)!

One serving = 1 teaspoon = 4 grams

**References:**

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**ACTION PLAN**

- Which of the tips will you try? Circle them.
- When will you start? ________
- How confident are you that you will accomplish your goal (from 0-100%)?
- Follow-up plan

**ALAMEDA HEALTH SYSTEM**

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