

Diabetes Education

HOW TO PREVENT TYPE 2 DIABETES COMPLICATIONS

Don't smoke

Smoking increases your risk of suffering from cardiovascular disease (heart attack, stroke) and prevents you from improving your life expectancy and the risk of complications even if you correct other risk factors such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure.

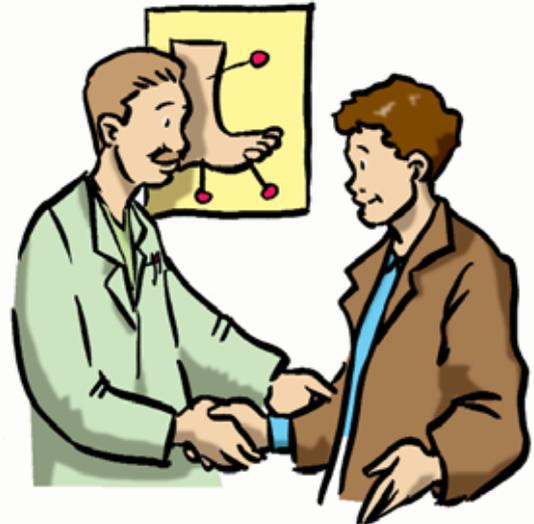
Smoking should be forbidden in diabetics!

Check your weight regularly

Being overweight increases a diabetic's need for insulin, which makes it harder to control blood sugar level and increases the need to take medication to treat diabetes. Being overweight raises blood pressure and increases the risk of suffering from cardiovascular disease (heart attack, stroke).

Keep to an appropriate diet for your weight and physical activity

Diet is essential in preventing complications in diabetics. Your diet should be prescribed for you by your doctor or nurse by calculating the calories required to maintain or reach your ideal weight, bearing in mind your daily physical activity. Your diet should be balanced in regard to its composition (sugars, proteins and fats) and divided into suitable portions to be taken throughout the day depending on your particular needs.



Keep your blood pressure under 130/80 mmHg

High blood pressure is an important factor increasing the risk of suffering from diseases of the heart (heart attacks and heart failure), the brain (haemorrhages and clots), the kidneys (kidney failure) and the retinas (blindness). Keeping your blood pressure under control is as important as controlling your blood sugar level in preventing cardiovascular disease.

Check your blood pressure regularly!

Set yourself a target of keeping your HbA1C under 7

Haemoglobin A1C (HbA1C) is an indicator used by doctors to check whether your blood sugar has been at the right level over the past 2 months. So if you are capable of keeping your HbA1C under 7, you can be sure that your metabolism is well under control and that you won't have any complications.

Keep your cholesterol under 200 mg

Cholesterol is a fat that builds up in the blood vessels and may eventually block them causing heart and cerebrovascular (brain) diseases. It is therefore essential that you watch your diet, control your intake of animal fats and eat appropriate amounts of fish and olive oil in accordance with the daily calorie intake prescribed by your doctor.

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Learn to control your diabetes

Controlling your illness yourself is essential for you to be independent and stay free of complications. Adjusting your diet, exercise and drugs (pills and insulin) according to the results of your self-administered blood sugar tests (capillary blood glucose) will enable you to improve your quality of life and become more independent.

Learn to test your capillary blood sugar level yourself!

Watch your feet

It is important for you to look at your feet every day to check for calluses (hard skin) and cracks, as these can lead to infections that are difficult to treat and have unpredictable consequences. You should therefore take care of your feet and make sure you use appropriate footwear. Wash your feet with soap and water every day and apply moisturising cream if the skin is dry. If you notice any calluses or cracks on your feet, change your shoes and tell your doctor or nurse.

Do regular physical exercise

Physical exercise is essential in controlling your illness and avoiding complications. As well as using up part of the calories you take in through your diet, it will help you to enhance your body's sensitivity to insulin (which means you won't need to take so many drugs) and to improve your whole cardiovascular system.

Do regular moderate physical exercise!

Never forget to see your doctor or nurse regularly

Even if you think you know enough about your illness and can keep it perfectly under control by yourself, make sure you go to see your doctor or nurse on a regular basis so that they can check your diet, weight, feet, medication and eyes and have tests done.

Regular check-ups for diabetics

Weight	Every 3 months
Blood pressure	Every 3 months
Capillary blood glucose	Depending on treatment and doctor's advice
Haemoglobin A1C	Twice a year
Cholesterol	Twice a year
Proteins in urine	Once a year
Feet care	Every day
Feet check-up	Once a year by your nurse or doctor
Eye check-up	At least once a year by an ophthalmologist
Self-test diary	Every three months by your nurse or doctor