

Life with diabetes

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Ask a CDE

By Denise Born, RN, Barbara George, RD and Jeana Van Dyke, RD, CDE

Q: Can I control my blood sugar levels by avoiding all carbohydrates?

A: It takes a combination of diet, exercise and sometimes medications to control your blood glucose (sugar). It's not reasonable or healthy to try to eliminate all carbohydrates (carbs). You need some carbs to give your body and brain energy to work right. We recommend a minimum of 30 grams of carbs or two carb choices per meal, especially if you are taking insulin or pills such as Glyburide, Glipizide, Glimepiride, Prandin or Starlix. If you don't eat enough carbs while taking these medications, you can be at risk for low blood sugar symptoms.

To maximize the nutritional value from your carb choices, stick to whole grains, vegetables, fruits and low-fat dairy products. It's also important to eat healthy fats, limit red meats and get 25 or more grams of fiber per day. A balanced diet is important for blood glucose control.

Diabetes a 'blessing' for local 30-year-old

When Chris Ketcham moved to Albany in 2009, he started a new insurance plan and figured it was a good time to visit the doctor's office. It had been years since he'd had an annual exam, or for that matter, really put much effort into his health.

"I knew I was overweight," recalls Chris. "And I had been feeling run down — always tired — for years. But I just figured it was because I needed to lose weight."

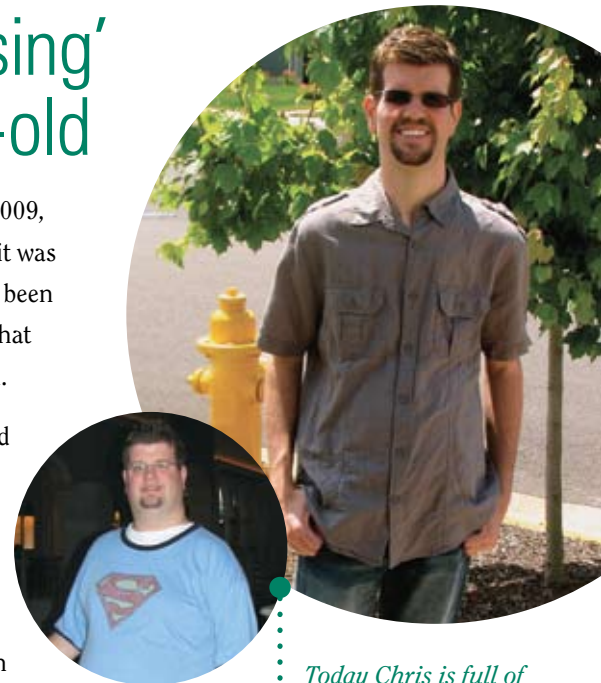
But when Albany physician, Jenny Olsen, MD, tested Chris for a variety of health issues, the results indicated he had much more to be concerned with than just his weight.

"She told me I had type 2 diabetes and when she explained the symptoms, it all made sense," says Chris. "I had been constantly thirsty and always tired. She said I'd probably been diabetic for at least three years."

Chris said he instantly made some healthy changes on his own. He cut out soda and foods that were obviously loaded with sugar. But it wasn't until he became more educated about diabetes that he adopted a completely new lifestyle.

"I was feeling really overwhelmed at first," says Chris. "I had a new job, my wife and I were trying to adopt a baby and I knew I had to take better care of myself. So when Dr. Olsen referred me to diabetes education at the Albany hospital, it was a tremendous help."

Chris worked closely with Samaritan Albany General Hospital dietitian Barbara George and diabetes coach Denise Born.



Today Chris is full of energy and in better shape than ever. But before his diagnosis, he was overweight, constantly thirsty and exhausted.



Power up your day with **breakfast**

by Barbara George, RD

You have heard it said that breakfast is the most important meal of the day.

Current recommendations suggest getting at least one-third of your daily protein needs at each of your three daily meals in order to make the best use of it. Experts say the maximum amount of protein that can be used at one time is between 25 to 30 grams. For more specific nutrient needs, ask your doctor for a referral to a registered dietitian.

Many medications for diabetes can result in a low blood sugar if carbohydrates are not eaten on a regular basis. Be sure to include healthy carbs too.

Since it's important to get your protein at every meal and to not skimp on healthy carbs, it's easy to see why breakfast is an important meal to jump start your day.

Here are some healthy breakfast ideas to get you up and at 'em:

- Oatmeal with 1% milk, one ounce chopped walnuts, dried blueberries
- Low-fat yogurt with crunchy cereal, hazelnuts, fresh berries
- Breakfast smoothie made of ½ cup light yogurt, ½ cup low-fat milk, ½ cup frozen fruit, ½ a banana
- Whole grain toast with almond butter, hardboiled egg, fresh fruit
- Flour tortilla with scrambled egg, shredded cheese, pepperoncini and salsa

Storage tips for fresh fruits and vegetables

Whether you are getting your fresh fruits and veggies from the store, farmers' market or your own garden, it's always a challenge to figure out the best way to store them so they don't turn brown or become limp or wilted. Here are some helpful tips on how to store your fruits and vegetables to maximize their freshness and shelf life.

Fresh vegetables remain fresh longest in a moist environment. Store them in the crispers with the control on the "vegetables" setting. If the crispers are full, store vegetables in plastic bags or plastic containers to prevent moisture loss.

Most vegetables should be stored in the refrigerator to preserve freshness. Exceptions include potatoes, sweet potatoes, hard-rind squashes, mature onions, eggplant and rutabagas, which keep well in cool rather than cold storage. Tomatoes

should be refrigerated only after they are fully ripe and only for a short time.

Store vegetables and fruits in separate crisper drawers

The crisper drawers trap moisture inside to help keep foods fresh. Moisture controls on some crisper drawers can be used to regulate the moisture level in the crisper. As a general rule, vegetables require high moisture storage and fruits low moisture. Refer to the User's Guide for directions on setting the crisper control. The crispers in a refrigerator will perform better if they are at least two-thirds full.

Wrap certain vegetables and fruits

Storage in the crispers slows the dehydration of fresh vegetables. In addition, leafy vegetables, such as lettuce and spinach, should be placed in plastic bags or airtight containers (Tupperware, Rubbermaid, etc.) to reduce moisture loss. Odorous foods such as peppers and cabbage should always be wrapped to contain odors. Mushrooms should be stored in paper bags rather than plastic. Some fruits do best in vented storage bags. Check our online storage chart for specifics by visiting www.samhealth.org.



Remove excess moisture

Vegetables and fruits need a certain amount of moisture to remain fresh as long as possible. However, too much moisture can shorten the storage of vegetables, especially lettuce. Brown spots may develop with excess moisture. It is important that lettuce be well drained before storing. It may be helpful to place a layer of paper towels in the bottom of the bag to absorb any excess moisture; replace the toweling occasionally. Some storage containers feature a special drainage device to raise the lettuce off the bottom and keep it from sitting in accumulated moisture. Berries should never be washed before storing.

Maintain proper refrigerator temperatures

The fresh food compartment of a refrigerator should be kept between 34° and 40°F with an optimum temperature of 37°F. Refrigerator temperatures can be checked by using an appliance thermometer. Lower than recommended temperatures could cause vegetables to freeze. Freezing damages cell structure and vegetables can turn brown and become limp.

Consider vegetable and fruit quality

Vegetable and fruit quality affects the length of storage. Quality can vary from item to item, variety to variety, and season to season. For example, a rainy growing season can cause lettuce to be brown when

purchased, or become brown more quickly. Sort vegetables and fruits before storage and use bruised or soft vegetables and fruits first. Discard those showing evidence of decay. Wilted vegetables can be used to make broths, and wilted fruits can make sauces.

Follow length-of-storage guidelines

Following the guidelines should help to keep vegetables and fruits fresh and maximize their storage time in the refrigerator. Consult the storage chart and use items within recommended storage time. Vegetables stored longer than recommended will also turn brown and lose their crispness. Fruits can lose their crisp sweet flavor if stored too long or in improper conditions.



To view a complete **Fresh Vegetable and Fruit Storage Chart** visit us online at www.samhealth.org. You'll learn how long vegetables can be refrigerated or frozen, as well as additional storage tips.

Grilled summer squash and zucchini

Adapted from the "Diabetes Meals in 30 Minutes or Less" cookbook by Jeana VanDyke, RD, CDE

Ingredients

3 small summer squash (combination of zucchini and yellow squash) or other garden vegetables of your choice (carrots, peppers, onions)
Parmesan cheese to sprinkle on grilled veggies (optional)

Basting sauce:

1 clove garlic, minced
½ tsp paprika
½ tsp cumin
2 Tbsp olive oil
1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice

Directions

Halve or cut squash and other vegetables into large chunks. Combine all ingredients for sauce.

To grill (using barbecue or oven) place the squash on a rack over medium heat with the rack set 6 inches from the heat source. Baste veggies with some of the sauce. Grill the vegetables for 5 minutes on each side, basting frequently with sauce.

Optional grilling method: Place veggies in a grill basket and grill for 10 minutes turning occasionally. Toss grilled veggies with basting sauce sprinkle with parmesan cheese. If you don't have a grill basket, cover the grill grate from your barbecue with heavy duty foil and spread veggies onto the foil. Grill as directed above, stirring occasionally.

Nutrition facts for one ½ cup serving: Calories 29, total fat 2g, saturated fat 0g, cholesterol 0, sodium 1mg, total carbs 2g, dietary fiber 1g, sugar 1g, protein 0



Diabetes education and support

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Corvallis: (541) 768-6973

Diabetes foot clinic

Albany: (541) 812-4072
Corvallis: (541) 768-6973
Lebanon: (541) 451-6313

Diabetes support

Albany: (541) 812-4839
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Waldport: (541) 265-6611 ext. 2432

Diabetes management

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Lincoln City and Newport: (541) 574-4682

Diabetes prevention: A guide to better health

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Samaritan Diabetes Education earns accreditation

Samaritan Diabetes Education, was recently named an accredited diabetes education program by the American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE).

Samaritan Diabetes Education was previously accredited by the American Diabetes Association. In 2009, the group decided to pursue accreditation with AADE because it felt AADE was more aligned with their goals and philosophies for community diabetes education.

Samaritan Diabetes Education believes the education process requires more than simply giving information and teaching self-care skills. It requires educators to work with each individual to define specific goals that they are comfortable with and help give them the strategies to achieve their goal. The AADE program provides a logical framework that encourages realistic goal setting and evaluation.



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“Working with the diabetes people really helped me to understand exactly what diabetes is, how it affects me and how I can control it,” he says. “They gave me the education and the tools to change my life.”

And that’s exactly what Chris decided to do. Calling his previous eating habits “atrocious,” he got rid of all the junk food in his home. With the support of his wife, Tina, he now uses smaller plates to help with portion sizes and eats more vegetables and sugar-free foods.

In addition to dietary changes, Chris has added exercise to his life. He joined the YMCA and works out three times a week before work.

The results are impressive. At his heaviest, Chris weighed 310 pounds. Today he’s at 175,

full of energy and in better shape than ever. His most recent tests showed he’d lowered his cholesterol and that his blood glucose numbers were normal.

“People who saw me before I lost weight often ask me what I’ve done,” says Chris. “I tell them I was blessed to have been diagnosed with diabetes. I think it saved my life. It was the wake-up call I needed.”

Chris says some of those inquisitive people have expressed concerns about their own risks of diabetes.

“I tell people ‘go get tested,’” says Chris. “And if you have it, get the education that you need. The hospital offers amazing help. I’ve never been in better health.”

Contributors

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