

DON'T FREAK OUT!

10 Things to Know When Diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes



1

No, it probably isn't a mistake

When first diagnosed, many people find it difficult to believe. They think it must be a terrible mistake, believing that perhaps another test is needed or thinking maybe it will just go away. This is a very natural response to the shock of receiving the diagnosis.

Unfortunately, it is very likely that your diagnosis is real and diabetes is here to stay. You're now part of the very large and growing club of people with diabetes: a club, we understand, that you would prefer not to join!



2

This isn't your grandmother's diabetes

With 21st century technology and care, we now know you can live a long, healthy life with diabetes. The diagnosis of diabetes is NOT a death sentence. Terrible outcomes, like blindness, amputations and kidney problems, are largely preventable.

Thanks to modern medicine, people developing diabetes today have an excellent chance of living long, healthy lives, free from serious complications. With good care and attention, you can be one of those people.



3

Diabetes is not your fault

Don't blame yourself for developing type 2 diabetes, and don't let anyone else blame you either. It is not caused by laziness or a lack of willpower. Eating sweets didn't do it. Type 2 diabetes is a genetic disease. And when you have these genes, certain factors – like being overweight – can trigger it.

More and more people are becoming heavier and developing type 2 diabetes because most jobs now require little physical activity, life is more stressful, and too many foods tempt us that are high in calories, large in size and much too convenient.

Your genes and the environment are the major culprits, but that doesn't mean you are now helpless to protect your health. So read on!



4

Ignoring diabetes after being diagnosed is a very bad idea

You can't feel diabetes when it is out of control, so you may think you don't need to worry about it. But diabetes ignored and left unmanaged can cause damage to your body. Yes, odds are good that you can live a long, healthy life with diabetes, but only if you are working to control it **now**, not sometime later.

So see your doctor regularly, take all your medications, stay active, and learn more about the foods you eat. For your health, get involved in your own diabetes care.



5

Knowing your numbers should be your first step

To manage diabetes, there are so many things you will be advised to do and change. No wonder it can feel so overwhelming. You can't do everything at once, so where should you start? Begin by making sure the critical diabetes tests are being done and that you, not just your doctor, know the results. After all, you can't know what to do differently if you don't first know how you're doing.

At the least, find out about your blood pressure, cholesterol and A1C numbers. You need to know what your numbers mean and what you and your doctor can do to get, or keep, those numbers in a safe range.



6

No, you won't be limited to eating nuts, twigs and birdseed

You can still eat your favorite foods, just not all at once. Boring diets are no longer necessary and there is no need to deprive yourself. However, attention to the size of your meals is critical.

You will also need to learn more about the contents of the food you typically eat (carbohydrates, fat and calories), which foods you should eat more or less of, and how those foods affect your blood glucose and overall health.



7

Not taking your prescribed medications is a dangerous thing to do

From the first day of diagnosis, most people require medications to keep diabetes in check and maintain good health. Many people worry that taking medications might be bad for their health as well as too costly. Yes, there are diabetes medications that have negative side effects, but these are typically outweighed by the positive benefits to your long-term health. To stay healthy, your goal shouldn't be to take fewer medications, but to make sure your numbers (A1C, blood pressure, and cholesterol) are in a safe range.

Talk about the pro's and con's of medications with your doctor, and ask about other options, especially if they are too bothersome or expensive. Then you can make an informed decision.



8

Protecting your heart should be your first concern

Heart disease is **the** major health concern for people with type 2 diabetes. Attention to lowering the risk for heart problems is the main reason why people with diabetes are living longer than ever.

According to scientific studies, the most important areas to address, in order of importance, are smoking, blood pressure, cholesterol, A1C, and fitness.

Talk to your doctor about your risk and what you can do.



9

Focus on developing a healthier lifestyle, not weight loss

Increasing your fitness and choosing healthier foods (for example, more fruits and vegetables, smaller portions, and less saturated fats) will have a bigger impact on your diabetes and heart health than losing weight. This is good news, since weight loss can be frustrating and difficult.

Of course, exercising more and making smarter food choices may lead to a lower weight over time. But keep the focus on improving your health, not just improving your weight.



10

Don't do diabetes alone

Good diabetes care takes attention and effort, and you may at times feel overwhelmed, discouraged, isolated or even burned out. Your motivation can be sapped by the stresses of daily life or even problems with depression, which are common in people with diabetes.

To protect yourself, make sure you identify at least one person in your life who will support you and your efforts to manage diabetes. It could be anyone: a family member, good friend, trusted health care professional, or support group.

Also, find a doctor you really trust, can be honest with, and feel is on your side. Living well with diabetes is always easier when someone you like and respect is cheering for you.



Discovering that you have type 2 diabetes can be a stressful, scary and overwhelming experience.

- How could this have occurred?
- How worried should you be?
- How much will your life have to change?

Perhaps you have already read a few things or have heard stories from friends and family. What to believe and what to do?

To get started, make sure you are well armed with this short list of important facts you need to know. Based on the latest scientific research, the news is better than you might think!



Because we understand

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