



CITY OF CAPE TOWN
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA
STAD KAAPSTAD

DIABETES INFORMATION BOOKLET

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Making progress possible. Together.

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Introduction

Diabetes is a condition which inhibits the body's ability to produce enough insulin. Insulin allows your body to use the glucose (sugar) which is found in the food you eat by converting it into energy. Without insulin, you will develop a high level of glucose (sugar) in your blood.

There are two major types of diabetes:

- **Type 1 diabetes** is also known as Juvenile Diabetes, because it is usually diagnosed at a very early age-
- **Type 2 diabetes** is also known as Adult Onset Diabetes, because it is often caused by an unhealthy lifestyle.

Type 2 Diabetes is more common and is caused by poor eating habits and not doing enough exercise, which can result in obesity.

Effects of Diabetes: Hypoglycaemia and Hyperglycaemia

Hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar) and hyperglycaemia (high blood sugar) are common complications associated with diabetes. These are serious conditions that can manifest during your sleep.

If you have diabetes, it is important that you let your friends and family know about the symptoms that you display when your blood sugar levels increase or drop and how to treat it, because you may not be able to think clearly when it happens.

HYPO GLYCAEMIA (low blood sugar)	HYPER GLYCAEMIA (high blood sugar)
This is when your blood sugar level drops too low to provide enough energy for the body's activities.	This is when your blood sugar level becomes too high, often over many hours or days and without you becoming aware of it.
Caused by • Exercising without taking the necessary precautions; • Drinking alcohol; • Not eating enough food or missing or delaying a meal; • Taking too much diabetic medication;	Causes • An imbalance of food, activity and insulin or other medication; • During pregnancy • When you are ill or stressed.
Signs and symptoms • Extremely hungry • Fast heart rate • Headache • Nervous, irritable or confused • Numbness or tingling sensation • Seizures or convulsions • Sweaty • Weakness / feeling faint • Coma	Signs and symptoms: • Excessive thirst and a dry mouth • Change in the mental state from mild confusion to extreme lethargy • Dehydration • Urinating often • Vomiting • Weakness / feeling lethargic • Weight loss

Treatment • Take 3 Glucose or Super C sweets or 2-4 teaspoons of sugar with a little water-or 3 teaspoons of honey; • If necessary, repeat every 15 minutes; • Follow by eating a cheese or peanut butter sandwich or six high fibre biscuits such as ProVita; • If the person is unconscious, contact the emergency services immediately or if possible, take the person to the emergency room without delay.	Treatment • See the nurse or doctor if your blood sugar levels remain high. • Wearing an identification bracelet will alert helpers and health care professionals that you have diabetes.
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Long Term Complications of Diabetes

Diabetes that is not controlled causes continuous high blood sugar levels. Over many years, this can cause damage to different parts of your body. If ignored, it can cause problems that lead to blindness, kidney failure, heart attacks, strokes and amputations.

Other complications can include:

- **Eye damage (retinopathy)**
Blurred or hazy vision can cause headaches and, in some cases, blindness.
- **Infections**, itchiness, sores and boils are common. The feet become particularly vulnerable to wounds and infection, often leading to amputation.
- **Kidney damage (nephropathy)**
The blood vessels in the kidneys become damaged and are unable to function properly. Your body will retain more water and salt than it should, which can result in weight gain and ankle swelling. You may also have protein in your urine.
- **Nerve damage (neuropathy)**
Damaged nerves and blood vessels can lead to poor blood circulation, a loss of sensation in the feet and possible amputation. It can also cause you to suffer a stroke, heart attack or kidney failure.
- **Sexual dysfunction**
Nerve damage can affect sexual health, causing impotence or failure to have an erection in men and inability to achieve orgasm in women.
- **Vascular damage**
The main arteries become stiff and blocked, blood pressure increases and the heart becomes stressed. Circulation, particularly to the hands and feet, becomes poor.

Foot care

- **Check your feet every day:**

Check for any blisters, breaks in the skin, swelling or redness.

- **Avoid walking barefoot:**

When you walk barefoot, you risk injuring your feet, stubbing your toes and standing on sharp objects, which can damage the skin.

- **Wash your feet every day:**

Wash your feet with lukewarm water and a mild soap. Test the temperature of the water with your elbow or ask some else to test it before you put your feet in the water to prevent burns (People with Diabetes ~~suffers~~ may not be able to feel hot and cold very well). Do not soak your feet as this may damage your skin. Dry your feet thoroughly especially between the toes. Apply a moisturising cream every day, avoiding the areas between your toes.

- **Shoes:**

Wear comfortable supportive shoes. Check the bottom of your shoes before you put them on to make sure there is nothing sharp piercing the outer sole. Run your hand inside each shoe to check that no small objects such as small stones have fallen in.

- **Socks, stockings and tights:**

Change your socks, stockings and tights every day. They should not have bulky seams and the tops should not be elasticated.

- **Toenails:**

Clip toenails straight across. Do not attempt to remove hard skin or corns yourself. Do not use over-the-counter corn remedies as it can damage the skin and create ulcers.

- **Avoid extreme temperatures:**

If your feet are cold, wear socks. Never sit with your feet in front of a fire to warm them up. Always remove water bottles and heating pads from your bed before getting in.

- **Minor cuts, blisters and bruises:**

If you discover minor cuts or blisters in the skin, cover it with gauze or a plaster. Do not burst blisters. Seek medical attention for any wounds, cuts and sores that show no signs of healing after one day.

- **Ulcers:**

If you have had an ulcer or an amputation, you are at high risk for developing more ulcers. If you look after your feet carefully, with the help of a doctor/nurse, you will reduce the risk of more problems.

Getting help:

If you experience any of the symptoms below, you should visit your clinic or doctor without delay:

- changes in your eye sight;
- continuous high blood glucose;
- decrease in your sex drive;
- itchininess, sores or boils;
- problems with your feet

Managing diabetes

Food is important in keeping your body healthy. A healthy diet is one of the best ways to control blood sugar and reduce the risk of developing complications.

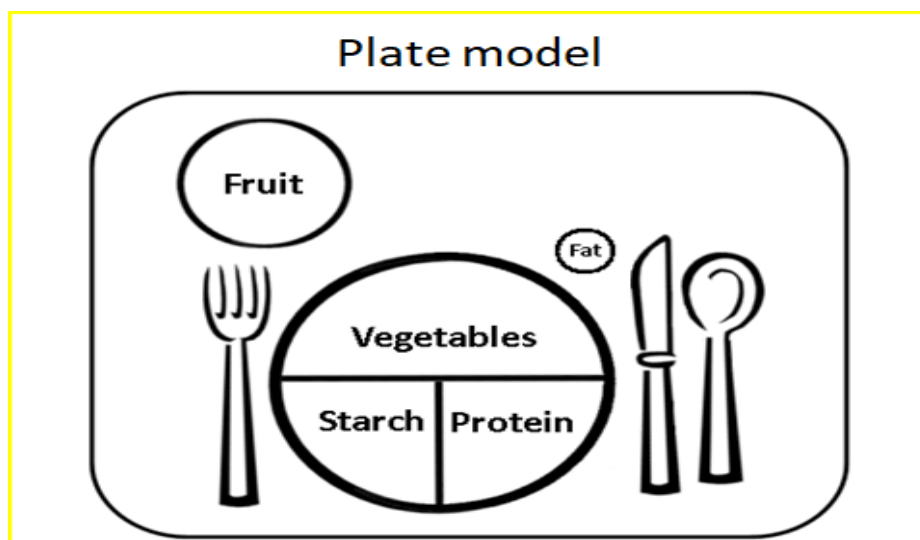
If you have Diabetes, a healthy diet can help you:

- achieve and maintain good control of your blood glucose levels;
- prevent or delays onset of long term complications of diabetes; and
- regulate your body weight.

There is no special Diabetic diet and a person living with Diabetes doesn't need special products. The plate model is a healthy diet recommended for all.

Using your dinner plate, imagine a line drawn through the middle of it. Then imagine another line dividing the one half into quarters.

- The largest portion of the plate - non-starchy vegetables like spinach, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower or salad.
- Sections labelled starch - vegetables high in starch such as potatoes or sweet potatoes, mealies, sweetcorn, pumpkin and butternut, samp, pap, rice or bread.
- Sections labelled starch – food high in protein such as lean meats, lentils, eggs and beans.
- You can add a small amount (one tablespoon) of fat to the meal and one serving of fruit.



General guidelines:

- Eat three regular meals at regular intervals each day with one bedtime snack. Some people with diabetes may need a mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack too.
- Cut back on salt and limit your fat intake.
- Drink plenty of water and limit your alcohol intake.
- Include a food from each of the food groups at each meal.
- Limit your sugar intake.

Exercise and physical activity

Physical activity and exercise is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. Any type of physical activity is good as long as it makes you move your body and increases the amount of energy (kilojoules) your body uses.

The benefits of regular physical activity and/or exercise are:

- A reduced need for insulin due to an improved glucose tolerance
- Cuts blood pressure
- Decreases total body fat, and abdominal fat
- Enrich mood and relieves stress
- Increases good cholesterol
- Improves cardiovascular and respiratory function
- Reduces aches and pains
- Strengthens muscles and joint flexibility and keeps bones strong

Physical activity recommendations for adults and seniors

Adults should be doing at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity physical activity. This should include at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity every day for 5 days or at least 25 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity 3 days per week.

Muscle-strengthening activity should occur on at least 2 or more days per week for additional health benefits.

Examples of light to moderate intensity physical activities are:

- a slow to brisk walk (walking your dog)
- cycling,
- dancing,
- housework,
- gardening
- general building tasks (e.g. painting).

Examples of vigorous intensity physical activities include:

- aerobic exercises;
- competitive sports and games
- cycling – long distance;
- fast-paced dancing;
- hiking uphill
- jogging,
- long distance running,
- martial arts.
- power walking,
- strenuous gardening;

Physical activity recommendations for children 5 to 17 years of age

- Encouraging regular physical activity in childhood can promote healthy behaviours that will continue into adulthood.
- Children should accumulate at least 60 minutes of enjoyable moderate-to-vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity every day.
- This can be spread across the day e.g. 20 minutes during first break, 20 minutes during second break and 20 minutes after school.
- Watching television, playing computer games, and using cellphones should be limited to no more than 1 or 2 hours per day.

A word of caution:

- Always start slow and increase duration and intensity as you get fitter.
- **Do NOT** exercise to the point of being out of breath, feeling faint or vomiting.
- If you are overweight, have a medical condition or are older than 50 years, speak to your doctor before starting an exercise routine.
- Listen to your body and don't overdo it.

Tips to get more active in everyday life

Doing some physical activity is better than doing nothing at all. Here are some ways to help you start getting active, or keep you active.

- Find a friend or family member to exercise with.
- Choose a fun activity or try listening to music while you exercise.
- Start slowly and set realistic goals that you can work towards.
- Remember to wear comfortable clothes and proper shoes.
- Walk as much as you can – to the shops, to visit a friend, to your child's school, with your dog or just in your area.
- Get off the bus, taxi or train one stop earlier and walk the rest of the way.
- Take the stairs instead of the lift.
- Park further away from the entrance to the shopping mall or get off the bus one stop earlier and walk.
- Make sure you stand more often - when speaking on the phone, cooking, reading and watching TV.
- If you spend all day at your desk, take regular breaks and go for a short walk
- Play outdoors with your children or grandchildren.
- Adopt a dog and take it for regular walks.
- Join a dancing group.
- Take up a new hobby or sport, such as a regular ball game with friends, or hiking, swimming or fishing.

SOURCE: Diabetes SA Focus eMag-Summer 2018