

Step 3: Learn how to live well with diabetes

Cope well with your diabetes.

- Stress can raise your blood sugar. Learn ways to lower stress. Try deep breathing, gardening, taking a walk, meditating, working on your hobby, or listening to your favorite music.
- Ask for help if you feel down. A mental health counselor, support group, member of the clergy, friend, or family member who will listen to your concerns might help you feel better.

Eat well.

- Make a diabetes meal plan with help from your health care team.
- Choose foods lower in calories, saturated fat, trans fat, sugar, and salt.
- Eat foods with more fiber, such as whole grain cereals, breads, crackers, rice, or pasta.
- Choose foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat or skim milk, and cheese.
- Drink water instead of juice and regular soda.
- When eating a meal, fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetables, one-quarter with a lean protein, such as beans, chicken, or turkey without skin, and one-quarter with a whole grain.
- Be physically active.
- Set a goal to be physically active for 30 minutes most days of the week. Start slow by taking 10 minute walks, 3 times a day.
- Twice a week, work to increase your muscle strength. Use stretch bands, do yoga, or heavy gardening (digging and planting with tools).
- Stay at healthy weight by using your meal plan and moving more. Talk with your health care team about what a healthy weight means for you.

Know what to do every day.

- Take your medicines even when you feel good. Tell your doctor if you cannot afford your medicine or if you experience any side effects.
- Check your feet every day for cuts, blisters, red spots, and swelling. Call your health care team right away about any sores.
- Brush your teeth and floss every day to keep your mouth, teeth, and gums healthy.
- Keep track of your blood sugar and keep a record of your numbers if your health care provider says this is appropriate. Check with your health care team on how often and when to check your blood sugar.
- Check your blood pressure if your doctor advises and keep a record of it.
- Don't smoke. Ask for help to quit. Call 1-800-QUITNOW (1-800-784-8669).

Step 4: Get routine care to stay healthy

- See your health care team at least twice a year to find and treat any problems early.
- Follow the schedule of tests and checks listed on the Diabetes Care Record on the next page.
- If you have Medicare, check to see how your plan covers diabetes care.