

Healthy Living

Fact Sheet



Diabetes

Dr John G. Clark, MD

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes (type 2) is a condition where the blood sugar is too high, resulting in a multitude of other complications including heart disease, kidney failure, blindness, cancer, high blood pressure, strokes, dementia, and amputations, just to name a few.

Why are the blood sugars too high in Diabetes?

Sugar from the diet enters the blood stream during digestion and is taken up by the cells with the help of insulin. In type 2 diabetes the cells are not as responsive to insulin as they should be and consequently the sugar, which should be in the cells, instead concentrates in the blood, resulting in high blood sugar.

Why do the cells become resistant to the action of insulin?

The reasons the cells are less responsive to insulin include: dietary deficiencies of minerals and fibre, eating too much fat (such as cooking oil, margarine or butter), and eating refined carbohydrates (such as white pasta, white bread, white rice, or boxed cereals). Obesity and lack of exercise also greatly contribute to insulin resistance.

Dietary Recommendations

Take advantage of everything God put in whole plant foods. Eat an unrefined, whole plant food diet; high in nutrients, minerals, phytochemicals, fibre and vitamins.

Half (50%) of a good breakfast would be fresh fruit, nuts and seeds, and the other half consisting of cooked whole grains (such as muesli or wholemeal oat porridge; adding a little oat bran is beneficial too). Things to avoid include: dairy products, eggs, prepared boxed cereals, fats such as fried foods or prepared foods that have oil as one of the ingredients.

Three quarters (75%) of a good lunch would be fresh vegetables (salads or cut vegetables) served with a natural, fat and vinegar-free dressing or dip. The other quarter (25%) of a "diabetes friendly" lunch would be cooked foods such as potatoes, sweet potatoes, yams, beans, brown rice, quinoa, wholemeal bread, or steamed vegetables.

A diabetic will see better results sooner if they are willing to totally dispense with (omit) the third meal of the day. If a third meal cannot be given up, fresh fruit such as melons, papaya, apples, or berries are the healthiest choices.



Healthy Living

Fact Sheet

Natural lifestyle approach

Exercise

Research shows that exercise in the early morning (before breakfast), and exercise immediately after each meal has the most positive effect on keeping blood sugars normal. Schedule a walk in the morning upon arising, and one immediately following each meal. A helpful practice in overcoming diabetes is to never sit for more than 25 minutes without engaging in some physical activity.

Water

“...take the water of life freely.” Revelation 22:17. Three litres of water a day is recommended for diabetics: one litre when they arise in the morning, one litre mid-morning, and one litre mid-afternoon.

Weight Management

Work toward achieving ideal body weight. Obesity is the biggest risk factor for diabetes.

Encouragement

*“But they that wait
upon the LORD shall
renew their strength;
they shall mount up
with wings as eagles;
they shall run, and not
be weary; and they
shall walk, and not
faint.”*

Isaiah 40:31



Healthy Living

Fact Sheet



Mind - Body Connection

Jenifer Skues
Health Psychologist

How does Diabetes impact your mental and emotional health?

Blood sugar levels play a big part in how you feel and function. If your blood sugars either spike or plummet it has a bipolar effect and you can have the following symptoms: blurry vision; rapid heartbeat; sudden change of mood; sudden nervousness; unexplained fatigue; sugar cravings; headaches; hunger; shaking; sweating; difficulty sleeping; trouble thinking clearly or concentrating.

As you can see these symptoms are typical of anxiety and panic disorders, depression, and mood swings. This is the first area I assess and correct when dealing with anyone who has mental and emotional health problems.

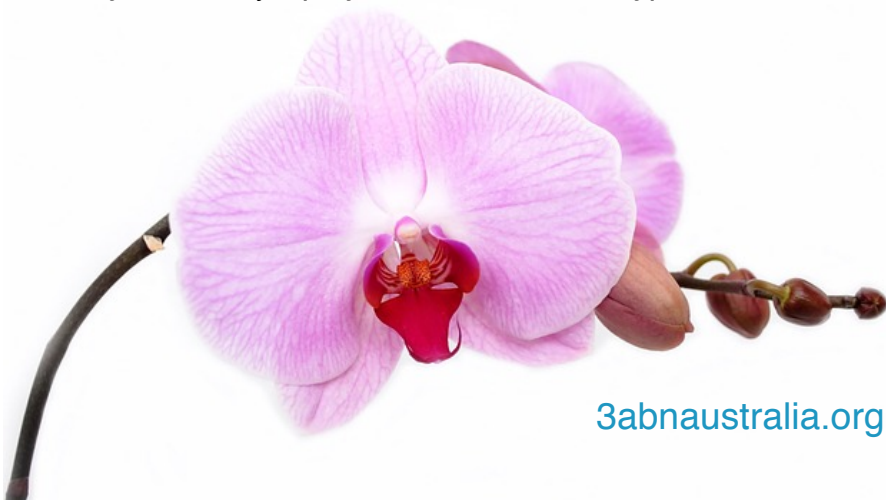
Encouragement

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

Revelation 21:4

What do stress and lifestyle have to do with Diabetes?

Maintaining high stress levels will affect your blood sugar balance because it takes a lot more energy to be stressed than relaxed. Often when stressed you either don't feel like eating or load with sugary foods and refined carbohydrates; hence your blood sugar levels work on extreme highs and lows. This combined with high stress levels can exhaust the pancreas and debilitate the effectiveness of insulin. Ongoing high stress levels combined with poor lifestyle factors such as being overweight, having a nutrient-deprived diet (e.g. too many refined foods including fats and sugars), not getting enough exercise, and not drinking enough fluids (causing dehydration) contribute to the onset of diabetes and exacerbate its progression, especially if you have a genetic predisposition. This means your brain function is impaired, you lose motivation, and anxiety and depression can take over. Stress and lifestyle are major players in the onset of type 2 Diabetes as well as recovery from it.



Healthy Living

Fact Sheet

Diabetes Well-being Tool Kit

Taking care of your blood sugar levels: It's a balancing act

Most people struggle to get a happy and healthy balance in their lives. Because diabetes puts you on an emotional as well as physical roller coaster, you need to take a holistic approach and work on your mental, emotional and spiritual health.

1. Managing your stress levels

First of all you need to recognize that you have high stress levels. Physical symptoms such as rapid heartbeat, muscle tension, sweaty palms, rapid shallow breathing, or holding your breath, as well as an acid stomach are good indicators that you have high stress levels. You need to put the brake on your Autonomic Nervous System to slow down the adrenals, calm your heart and focus your brain. The quickest way to do this is to change your breathing to even out your heart rate. Put your hand over the area of your heart and focus on taking slow and even breaths into the area where your hand is, into the lungs (count of 5 in and 5 out). At the same time try and think of something you appreciate to generate a good heart connection.

2. Exercise: Motivation to move

Motivation takes action. If you do nothing then you will procrastinate, lose energy, become lethargic, feel depressed and probably turn to comfort foods. You need to apply your will and choose to take action (don't think about it just do it). Motivation then comes from action. For example, if you want go for a walk each morning, get your walking clothes and shoes ready to put on when you get up and organize a simple breakfast including fruit and wholegrain. Upon rising focus on the action of getting ready, then go for that walk.

3. Lifestyle changes: Prevention is better than cure

We are what we eat so focus on healthy eating by following Dr John Clark's advice in this fact sheet. Be active, walking is the best exercise. Count your blessings and keep a gratitude diary. The brain can cope with small chunks or steps so choose a small manageable change to start with. The brain works from a use it or lose it principle, so embrace active change from now on.

Disclaimer: This fact sheet presents principles designed to promote good health and is not intended to take the place of personalised professional care. The opinions and ideas expressed are those of the writers. Readers are encouraged to draw their own conclusions about the information presented.