



# diabetes today

HEALTH NEWS AND INFORMATION

## Make a plan

Keeping your blood glucose level under good control may seem like a difficult challenge.

It can help to work with your health care team to come up with a management plan that covers eating, exercising, taking your diabetes medicine and testing your glucose levels.

Remember that no matter how hard you try, your glucose readings will not be perfect all the time. However, if your readings are often too high or too low, your doctor may need to make adjustments to your plan.

*Source: American Diabetes Association*



## Choose a meter

One of the most important things you need in order to manage your diabetes is a blood sugar meter.

A meter is a small, computerized machine that reads your blood sugar level. The display looks like a pocket calculator.

There are many meters to choose from. When selecting a meter, the American Diabetes Association says you should consider how:

- Much it costs.
- Easy it is to use.
- Simple it is to maintain and clean.

Before buying a meter, check with your doctor for recommendations.



**IF YOU HAVE DIABETES, KEEPING your blood sugar level under control could help save your life.**

Good control of your blood sugar can prevent or slow the progress of many serious—some even life-threatening—complications of diabetes, such as nerve, eye, kidney and blood vessel damage, according to the American Diabetes Association (ADA).

What does good control mean?

It simply means keeping your blood sugar as close to a normal, nondiabetic level as you safely can.

You probably won't be able to keep your blood sugar at a normal level

all of the time. And that's OK. Your doctor can help you set realistic goals for your blood sugar.

**Controlling your blood sugar level can help prevent complications.**

To help maintain good control of your blood sugar, the ADA recommends that you:

- Check your level on a regular basis. Your doctor can tell you how often to do so.
- Strive for a healthy weight.
- Be physically active on a regular basis.
- Follow a healthy diet approved by your doctor.
- Take any medications prescribed by your doctor.

# HEALTH facts

## EXERCISE MAY TRIGGER LOW BLOOD SUGAR

If you take insulin or certain types of other diabetes medicines, you may develop low blood glucose—also known as hypoglycemia—when you exercise. Hypoglycemia can cause you to feel shaky, weak, confused, grumpy, hungry or tired. Ask your health care team if you're at risk of developing hypoglycemia while exercising and what steps you can take to help prevent it.

—National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse

## SHOES AND SOCKS A MUST

People with diabetes need to take special care of their feet to avoid serious foot problems that can lead to toe, foot or leg amputation. One way to avoid potential foot problems is to wear shoes and socks at all times. You should not walk barefoot, even while indoors.

—National Diabetes Education Program



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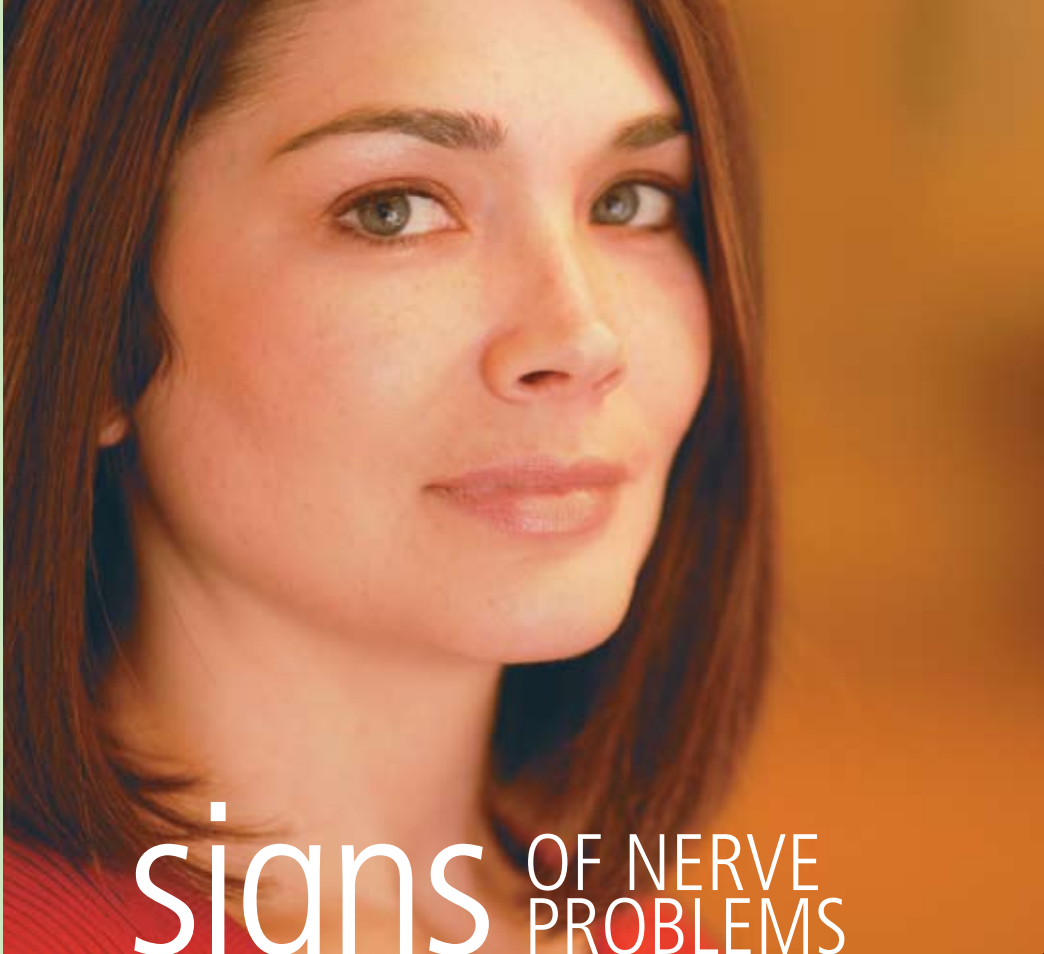
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# signs OF NERVE PROBLEMS

DIABETES CAN AFFECT ALL PARTS of your body, including your nerves.

Nerve damage—called diabetic neuropathy—can cause problems literally from your head to your toes. It can affect your eyes, heart, digestive tract, sexual organs and feet, among other places.

Although up to 70 percent of people with diabetes have some form of neuropathy, keeping your blood glucose level as close to normal as possible can help protect your nerves. So can stopping smoking if you smoke.

## Do I have it?

Symptoms of neuropathy depend on which nerves are affected.

The first signs of nerve damage could be numbness, tingling or pain in your feet.

Other symptoms may include:

■ Dizziness or light-headedness due to a drop in blood pressure after sit-

ting up or standing. ■ Indigestion, nausea or vomiting. ■ Diarrhea or constipation. ■ Problems with urination. ■ Erectile dysfunction if you're a man or vaginal dryness if you're a woman. ■ Numbness in the arms, legs or hands or insensitivity to pain or temperature. ■ Trouble seeing when a light is turned on in a dark room or when driving at night.

Nerve damage can cause problems literally from your head to your toes.

## What can be done?

If you develop neuropathy, medicines to relieve pain, blood pressure problems and indigestion are available. Acupuncture, biofeedback, physical therapy and dietary changes are only a few of the other treatments your doctor may recommend.

Talk to your doctor if you think you have symptoms of nerve damage.

Source: National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse

# LOWER YOUR **stroke** RISK

## MANAGING YOUR DIABETES

Well offers many benefits, including one you may not realize: It reduces your risk of stroke.

People who have diabetes are much more likely to experience a stroke than are people without the disease.

However, you can lower your chances of having a stroke if you take good care of yourself.

Begin by maintaining recommended blood glucose levels: 90 to 130 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL) of blood before meals, less than 180 mg/dL one to two hours after the start of a meal and an A1C level below 7 percent.


It's also important to:

- Control your blood pressure. A person with diabetes should strive to keep pressure below 130 systolic and 80 diastolic (130/80 mm Hg).
- Maintain healthy levels of cholesterol. LDL (bad) cholesterol should be less than 100 mg/dL of blood; HDL (good) cholesterol, above 40 mg/dL for men and above 50 mg/dL for women; and triglycerides (another type of blood fat), below 150 mg/dL.
- Say goodbye to cigarettes if you smoke.
- Eat a healthy diet. That includes filling your plate with lots of fiber-rich foods, such as fruits, vegeta-

bles, and whole-grain breads and cereals. Limit foods containing saturated fats (including meats, shortening and high-fat dairy products) and trans fats (snack foods, baked goods and some margarines, for instance). Keep cholesterol—found in meats, dairy products and eggs—to no more than 300 milligrams a day.

- Aim for 30 minutes of exercise on most days of the week.
- Shed extra pounds if you're overweight.
- Ask your doctor about taking aspirin to help prevent stroke. It's helpful for some people, dangerous for others.

*Source: National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse*



High blood pressure is a risk factor for stroke.

## All about stroke

Many things can happen inside your body to set the stage for a stroke.

For example, about 80 percent of all strokes are ischemic strokes. They are caused when blood flow to the brain is blocked or slowed by a blood clot or a buildup of plaque inside an artery.

The other 20 percent of strokes are

hemorrhagic. They occur when an artery in the brain bursts, allowing blood to enter the brain or spaces around the brain. In some cases, a vessel inside the brain leaks blood.

Strokes are frightening, potentially disabling and sometimes deadly. But brain cells may be saved and your chances of recovery improved if you get medical help soon after symptoms begin.

Do not wait—call 911 immediately if you experience signs of a stroke, such as: ■ Sudden numbness or weakness of your face, arm or leg, especially on one side. ■ A severe headache with no known cause. ■ Trouble speaking or understanding. ■ Confusion. ■ Trouble walking. ■ Dizziness. ■ Loss of balance or coordination.

*Source: National Institutes of Health*



# online

## RELIABLE HEALTH INFORMATION

FINDING INFORMATION ON JUST about any health topic is easy when you go online. The problem is finding reliable websites and knowing whether you can believe what you read.

The next time you go exploring for health information online, keep these tips in mind for finding trustworthy sites.

■ Know who runs the website and why. Take a look at the “About Us” page. If the site is trying to sell you something, it pays to be cautious. Look for sites that end in *.gov* (government sponsored), *.edu* (run by universities or medical schools) or *.org* (run by nonprofit groups, such as the American Diabetes Association).

■ Look for the source. Was the information written by a medical professional or reviewed by medical experts? Are there references and citations for the facts and figures presented? Is it clear which information is evidence-based and which is given as opinion or advice?

■ Take note of the most recent update or review, often listed near the bottom of the page. A reliable, well-run website will have information that is current.

*Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration*

A reliable, well-run website will have information that is current.

## Baked Greek tomatoes

### Ingredients

- 2 large, ripe tomatoes, halved
- 1 slice whole-wheat bread, crust removed
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 garlic clove, finely minced
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon dried basil
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Gently squeeze tomatoes or use a spoon to remove the seeds.
2. In blender or food processor, make crumbs of bread. In small bowl, combine bread crumbs, cheese, garlic, oil, oregano, basil, thyme, and salt and pepper to taste.
3. Spoon crumb mixture into each halved tomato. Place tomatoes in casserole dish.
4. Bake uncovered 25 to 30 minutes, until tomatoes are soft—but not mushy—and topping is golden brown.

### Nutrition information

Makes 4 servings.

Per serving: 62 calories, 3g total fat (<1g saturated fat), 8g carbohydrates, 3g protein, 2g dietary fiber, 103mg sodium, 84mg potassium

*Source: American Institute for Cancer Research*