

## ACHIEVING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES

People with diabetes often have many questions regarding the best way to control their blood sugar, and reduce the risk of the complications associated with this disorder. A straight forward answer is to focus on controlling the “A, B, C’s” of diabetes: **A1C** (a measure of your blood sugar control over a 3 to 6 month period), **B**lood pressure and **C**holesterol. The really good news is that taking care of the A, B, C’s is all about making healthy lifestyle changes...and when it comes down to it, everyone of us, whether we have diabetes or not, would greatly benefit from these lifestyle changes!

Yes, small steps ***do*** lead to big rewards! Remember the “law of accumulation”: each and every small change you make toward **eating healthy, losing excess weight, exercising regularly and controlling your stress** will accumulate into many...and before you know it, you will see a big difference in your blood sugar and your overall health and well-being!

The guidelines presented are primarily for people with type 2 diabetes, but several do apply to type 1 diabetes. As always, it is best to follow the advice of your healthcare providers; this is especially true if you have gestational diabetes (diabetes brought on due to pregnancy) and/or if you are taking diabetes medications.

### *Why is Healthy Eating Important?*

Eating a balanced, nutritious diet can help you:

- Control your blood sugars, blood lipids and blood pressure.
- Maintain a healthy weight or lose weight if you are overweight.
- Take less diabetes medication or even avoid taking medication for your blood sugar, blood cholesterol and blood pressure.
- Prevent the complications from diabetes, such as heart, nerve, kidney, circulatory, skin and vision problems.

The really great news is that healthy diabetes eating doesn’t have to be about a very rigid, restricted meal plan! The nutritional management of diabetes involves dietary changes that focus on:

☞ Balancing three key “macronutrients” (those that contain calories) in each meal:

- Carbohydrate
- Protein
- Fat

☞ Choosing foods more often that contain these healthy nutrients:

- Vitamins
- Minerals
- Fiber (especially soluble fiber)
- Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats
- Omega 3 fatty acids

- ⌘ Limiting certain foods and nutrients that can contribute to the complications of diabetes:
  - Sodium
  - Dietary cholesterol
  - Saturated fat
  - Trans fat
  - Alcohol
  
- ⌘ Eating 3 portion-controlled meals daily, and small snacks if required.

***Your health is your wealth! Protect it as if it were gold!***

These guidelines are not meant to replace the medical care and advice of your physicians and/or other healthcare providers. See your doctor regularly.