

Preventing Complications of Diabetes

Patients with diabetes rarely have symptoms of the disease itself. However, if it is not treated, diabetes can lead to other serious health problems that can interfere with your family activities, social life, work, and hobbies.

The good news is that there are several life style changes and medications that can help prevent the complications of diabetes. Your health care team can help you set achievable goals in the following categories to help you enjoy life doing the things that are important to you!

{Healthy Eating}

By reducing the amount of sweets and carbohydrates you eat, you can keep your blood sugar closer to a normal level. Even a small change, like drinking water instead of soda, makes a big difference. Your doctor may be able to refer you to a dietician or provide you with additional materials to help you plan healthy meals that work for you!

{Exercise}

Exercise helps to control blood sugar levels and prevent health problems associated with diabetes. Over time, you can work towards a goal like walking for 30 minutes at a time five days a week.

{Quitting Smoking}

Patients with diabetes who smoke are at increased risk of developing health problems associated with diabetes. Quitting, or cutting down on the amount that you smoke can help to reduce your risk of stroke, heart attack, as well as the need for amputation of limbs.

Quitting smoking is not easy. Talk with your health care team for help.

{Vaccines}

Patients with diabetes are at higher risk for developing the flu and pneumonia. It is recommended that you receive yearly flu vaccines and a pneumonia vaccine to prevent these infections.

{Regular Screening}

In addition to regular visits with your primary care physician to monitor your blood sugar levels, it is also important to keep appointments for eye and dental exams and foot inspections.

{Medication}

Taking your diabetes medication consistently significantly lowers your risk of developing health problems associated with diabetes. If you are having trouble filling your prescriptions or remembering to take your medication every day, or if you are experiencing side effects, be sure to talk to your doctor about it.