


You've just been diagnosed with DIABETES... Now What?

Vipra Rai, MS, RD, LD, CDE, Elliot Diabetes and Education Resource (DEAR) program

When you first heard from your doctor that you have diabetes, it may have been difficult to accept. Most of the time, it is almost unbelievable because you might not feel any different unless the disease is totally out of control. The hard fact is that you have diabetes, but the good news is you can actually do something about it and control it. Think about those 6.2 million people who have no clue that they have diabetes. They might be exposed to some very serious complications such as heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney disease, dental disease, eye problems, etc. Follow a few simple tips and you'll be on the road to successfully managing your diabetes and maintaining a high quality of life:

- First of all, accepting the fact that you have diabetes is very important. It is important to set realistic goals, such as improving blood sugars to slow down the progression of diabetes instead of "I want to get rid of diabetes."
- Find a support person who can help you through the ups and downs of dealing with diabetes.
- Knowledge is power. The more you learn about it and act on it sensibly, the better you will be in managing your diabetes. Sometimes it can be very overwhelming to try to absorb everything you need to know about the disease. So go slow but be steady!
- To get the right information about your diabetes management and how to go about it, find your team members who can help you with diabetes education. Besides your doctor, you will also benefit from a recognized diabetes program where you can learn about blood sugar monitoring, eating healthy, physical activity, medications, stress management, and devise a personal plan of care for diabetes.
- Take small positive steps: eat small portions, avoid skipping meals, avoid simple sugars like juices, regular soda, sweets, and desserts, and choose whole grains, fresh fruits, vegetables, light yogurts, light cheese, lean meats, 1% or skim milk. You can also follow a plate method until you get your personalized meal plan. Half of your small plate should be filled with vegetables, 1/4 plate can be a starch (potato, rice, peas, corn, sweet potato) and 1/4 plate can be lean protein (chicken, turkey, fish, lentils or beans)
- The willingness to make gradual changes will come handy in the long run for managing diabetes.

If you are ready to take control of your diabetes instead of diabetes taking control of you, please call the Elliot DEAR program at 663-3130. We're ready to be a part of your team and help you manage your diabetes successfully. 

We are proud to be a recognized program by the American Diabetes Association (ADA) since 2001.

 **The Elliot.**

Live Better!

*This article was first printed in
Your Wellness Matters, Spring 2008 issue.*

