

3 Reasons to Reduce Blood Sugar

If you have diabetes, prediabetes, or blood sugar on the high side of normal, we have some sound reasons why it's essential to reduce blood sugar.

No doubt you already know about diabetes' scary complications, from heart disease to blindness and nerve damage. But did you know that diabetes can take a huge toll on your personal life, too? According to data we analyzed from 1 million people, it can impact your life in three key ways:

- 1. Relationships.** Diabetics are far less likely than nondiabetics to spend time with friends or relatives. They're also more than twice as likely as those without diabetes to say they're unhappily married. That's not surprising. Diabetes can make you prone to depression and anxiety, both of which are hard on relationships.
- 2. Depression.** Diabetics were twice as likely as the general population to suffer from depression. Diabetes may cause changes in the brain that contribute to depression, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. The stress and expense of managing an all-encompassing condition like diabetes also can make you more vulnerable to depression.
- 3. Finances.** Diabetics are three times more likely than nondiabetics to report severe financial stress. This may be because type 2 diabetes hits low-income communities especially hard, but diabetes is expensive no matter where you live. According to the American Diabetes Association, newly diagnosed diabetics spend \$4,174 a year more on medical costs than those who don't have diabetes. That figure goes up another \$158 every year after that.

The bad news: Diabetes can affect more than your physical health. The good news: You can reduce blood sugar and manage your condition. What if you *don't* have diabetes, but are at risk for it? A diagnosis of prediabetes represents both good news and bad news. It's bad news because prediabetes can plant your feet firmly on the road to full-blown type 2 diabetes. But it's also good news, because you've found out at a stage when you can do something about it -- maybe even reverse it! Yep, you practically get a do-over. With a few big changes, you could get your blood sugar levels back down to normal and even get your type 2 diabetes risk back down to the level of someone who has never had prediabetes.

People with diabetes who adopt an aggressive disease-management program can make their feel age as much as 8 years younger.

Whole-Grain Foods for Diabetes Prevention

Preventing diabetes could be as easy as eating whole-grain foods, including breads, cereals, pastas and pilafs.

Not only are whole-grain foods much more nutritious and fiber-rich than processed white-flour products, but a new study shows they could be beneficial in preventing diabetes, from blood sugar spikes to overeating. If you're even remotely at risk for diabetes, aim for about 6 servings of whole grains daily. Yes, tuna salad on whole wheat counts -- 2 servings.

Whole-grain foods are crammed with fiber, B vitamins, and minerals (selenium, magnesium, potassium, phosphorous, manganese, iron, and zinc). This potent combination of nutrients helps regulate blood sugar and insulin, curb appetite, control cholesterol, and lower homocysteine, a substance strongly linked with heart disease, according to a major new study of almost 1,000 men and women. No wonder nutritionists have been chanting the whole-grain mantra for years. But now diabetes experts are chanting along with them.



Serving Centre County residents with food needs.

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Food Pantries of Centre County



Newsletter—Winter 2014

Mashed Potato Casserole

INGREDIENTS:

6 medium potatoes, peeled and quartered (can substitute with instant potatoes)

1 tablespoon salt (potato water)

1/4 cup butter, melted

1 cup sour cream

1 cup sharp cheddar cheese, shredded

2 tablespoons chives, chopped

1 teaspoon salt (mashed potatoes)

1/2 cup french fried onions (optional)

2 tablespoons cooked bacon pieces

DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat oven to 325 degrees F. Butter 1 1/2-qt casserole dish.

2. Cook potatoes in 1 tablespoon salted water until tender. Drain and mash potatoes. Add butter, sour cream, cheese, chives and 1 teaspoon salt.

3. Spoon mixture into casserole dish. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes until heated through. Remove from oven and sprinkle with onions and cooked bacon pieces. Return to oven and bake for an additional 5 minutes.

Centre County Fuel Bank

THE CENTRE COUNTY FUEL BANK, managed by Interfaith Human Services, is a cooperative effort of county agencies, organizations and vendors who seek to provide emergency heating assistance to eligible low-income households in Centre County.

The fuel bank opens on the first business day of January and closes on the last business day of March. The amount of assistance available to each eligible household is significantly impacted by the level of donations received, number of requests, price of heating product and the State of Pennsylvania's budgeted funds allocated to the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP.)

Currently, the fuel bank requires that at least one person from a requesting household attends a home energy efficiency class every two years. These classes are offered through a partnership between Interfaith Human Services and Pennsylvania Interfaith Power & Light.

2014 CLASS SCHEDULE:

Jan 9 (11:30 a.m.) - St. Mark Lutheran Church (Pleasant Gap)

Jan 23 (6:00 p.m.) - Trinity Lutheran Church (State College)

Feb 4 (11:30 a.m.) - Catholic Charities (Bellefonte)

Feb 19 (12:00 p.m.) - St. Andrew's Episcopal Church (State College)

March 4 (5:30 p.m.) - CenClear Child Services (Philipsburg)