

Common myths about type 2 diabetes



Know your facts about diabetes

There are a lot of myths about diabetes out there. These misrepresentations of diabetes can be harmful and lead to an unfair stigma about the condition. Let's see if we can clear up a few that may be keeping you from taking care of yourself properly.

Myth: I can't eat sweets or chocolate if I have diabetes.'

Sweets are not off limits for people with diabetes, as long as you plan for them. There are no foods that are completely off limits – it's all a question of how much and how often. You can continue to eat sweets and desserts as part of a healthy meal plan, in moderation, and combined with regular exercise. It's best to talk to your healthcare provider to understand the diet that's best for you.

Myth: I'll have to eat special "diabetic food."

You can eat the same foods as other people. "Diabetic" and "dietetic" versions of foods containing sugar offer no special benefit. They still raise blood glucose levels, are often more expensive and can also have a laxative effect if they contain sugar alcohols.

Myth: It's not safe to exercise with diabetes.'

Getting regular exercise is an important part of managing type 2 diabetes. Exercise helps boost your body's sensitivity to insulin. It can also help lower your A1C.

Myth: No one in my family has diabetes, so I won't get the disease.'

Having a parent or sibling with diabetes increases your risk of getting diabetes. In fact, family history is a risk factor for both type 1 and type 2 diabetes. However, many people with diabetes have no close family members with diabetes.

Myth: I can stop taking diabetes medicines once my blood glucose is under control.'

Some people with type 2 diabetes are able to manage their diabetes without medicine by losing weight, eating a healthy diet and getting regular exercise. But, diabetes is a progressive disease and over time, even if you are doing all you can to stay healthy, you may need medicine to keep your blood glucose within your target range.



Sources:

1. National Institutes of Health, U.S. National Library of Medicine. Diabetes Myths and Facts, May 13, 2021. Available from www.medlineplus.gov.

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