

Reducing Your Risk for Diabetes: A Resource Guide¹

Linda B. Bobroff, Marcia Brown, and LaToya J. O'Neal²

The number of people with diabetes is rising at an alarming rate in the US, as it is worldwide. Persons with “prediabetes” have elevated blood glucose (sugar), but their levels are not high enough for a diagnosis of diabetes. If you have prediabetes, you are at increased risk for developing diabetes.

The two most used tests to determine if you are at risk for diabetes are the fasting plasma glucose (FPG) test and the hemoglobin A_{1c} test. The FPG test measures glucose in the plasma (the liquid part of blood) at a specific point in time. The A_{1c} test is an indicator of average blood glucose levels over the previous two to three months. Table 1 shows the values for each test that are normal and those that indicate prediabetes and diabetes.

Table 1. Sample test results for the two tests commonly used to determine risk for diabetes.

	Fasting Plasma Glucose (mg/dL)*	Hemoglobin A_{1c} (%)
Normal	Less than 100	Less than 5.7
Prediabetes	100–125	5.7–6.4
Diabetes	126 or higher	6.5 or higher

*mg/dL = milligrams of glucose per deciliter (100 milliliters) of blood.

All adults should have their blood glucose checked on a regular basis. This will allow people who are diagnosed with prediabetes or diabetes to begin treatment early. The key to preventing severe health complications of this disease is early diagnosis and treatment. Research has shown that people with prediabetes can **significantly** reduce their risk of getting diabetes through lifestyle changes. Two simple

healthier lifestyle changes are eating a healthy diet and being physically active. These changes can help people with prediabetes lose weight and lower their blood glucose. For example, a 200-pound person who loses 10 pounds (5% of their body weight) will significantly reduce his or her risk for diabetes.

There are many free resources to help people of all backgrounds lead healthier lives and reduce their risk for diabetes. Here are a few resources to help you take steps to improve your health.

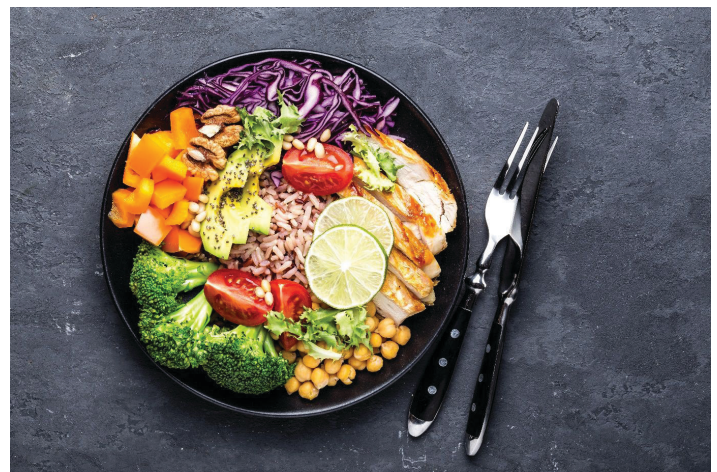


Figure 1. Eating a diet rich in protein, vegetables, legumes, and other healthy foods in amounts that promote a healthy weight helps reduce your risk for diabetes.

Credits: Adobe Stock

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2. Linda B. Bobroff, PhD, RDN, professor; Marcia Brown; and LaToya J. O'Neal; Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

This website has a variety of helpful topics to help you manage your diabetes. <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

The CDC website provides information on diabetes prevention, lifestyle change programs, and shares stories from real people on their journey to health. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention-type-2/>

Tips for Preventing Type 2 Diabetes

These tip sheets were created to help people of all ages prevent diabetes.

Choose More than 50 Ways to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes

This resource focuses on what/how much you should eat and how to increase your physical activity. <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/preventing-type-2-diabetes/50-ways>.

Preventing Type 2 Diabetes

This resource provides steps and recommendations to help you get started in improving your lifestyle and reducing your diabetes risk. <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/preventing-type-2-diabetes/game-plan>.

Movimiento Por Su Vida (Movement for Your Life)

A CDC production of a podcast and music video series aimed at promoting physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices in Spanish.

Podcast: <https://tools.cdc.gov/medialibrary/index.aspx#/media/id/733345>

Video: https://tools.cdc.gov/podcasts/media/mp4/Diabetes_112407_Movimiento.mp4

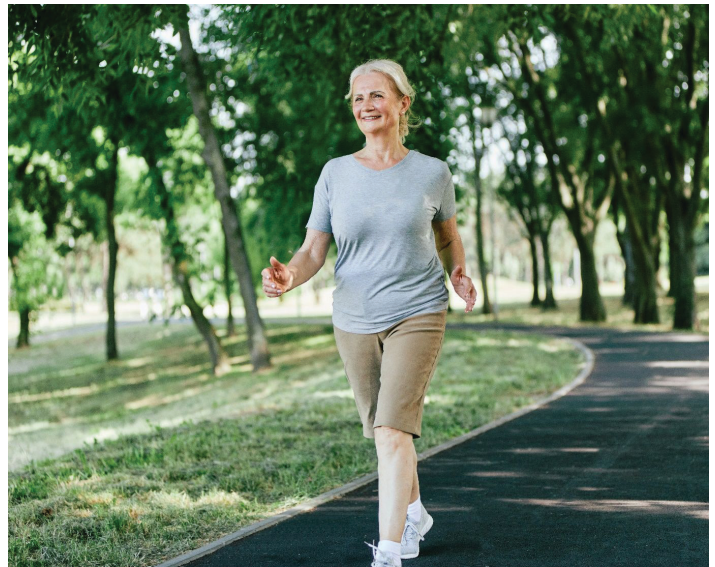


Figure 2. If you are at risk for diabetes, lifestyle changes, such as becoming more physically active, can help prevent the disease. Credits: Adobe Stock

Other Resources

MyPlate

MyPlate is the food guide icon introduced in 2011. The MyPlate website offers a wealth of information about healthy eating, which, along with physical activity, is a cornerstone of diabetes prevention. Visit <https://www.myplate.gov> and design an eating and physical activity plan that's right for you.

Tools to Know Your Risk

The American Diabetes Association website offers information related to nutrition and fitness, as well as self-assessment tools such as the diabetes risk calculator. <https://www.diabetes.org/tools-support/tools-know-your-risk>

Food & Fitness

A useful website for food and meal planning that promotes healthy eating for diabetes prevention. <https://www.diabetes.org/healthy-living/recipes-nutrition>

Prediabetes and Me

This website offers detailed information about prediabetes and how to prevent type 2 diabetes. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention-type-2/prediabetes-prevent-type-2.html>

University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) Extension

The UF/IFAS Extension website has information on health and well-being, health and nutrition, disease prevention and management, health care, mental health, and physical activity. Feel free to begin your search in the health and nutrition section. <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/family-resources/healthy-living/>

American Diabetes Association Online Store

For additional resources, you can check out the American Diabetes Association online store for a variety of items like books about diabetes, cookbooks, and meal planning guides for both consumers and professionals. All purchases support diabetes research. <https://shopdiabetes.org/>