

12 tips for eating right, moving more, and preventing type 2 diabetes



Small steps that support healthy eating, an active lifestyle, and weight management can help you prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

If you're not at a healthy weight, losing as little as 5 percent of your current weight lowers your risk for type 2 diabetes. For a 200-pound person, this would mean losing 10 pounds.

This can be accomplished by shaving calories from your diet and bringing more activity into your day. To shed a few pounds, try taking these steps:



Bring on the vegetables. Vegetables are not only low in calories and fat, but contain fiber that helps you feel full longer. Aim to fill half your plate with vegetables such as carrots, broccoli, green peppers, green beans, kale, and cauliflower. Avoid fried vegetables or those covered with cream or cheese sauces.



Reach for whole grains. Choose brown rice over white rice, and whole wheat bread over white. Strive to make least half your grains whole grains.



Don't skip breakfast. Starting the day without breakfast doesn't save calories in the long run. It leads to mid-morning hunger, and the temptation to grab an unhealthy snack or overeat at lunchtime. Breakfast jump-starts your metabolism and can help you lose weight. Rather than rushing out the door without eating, try oatmeal topped with raisins, walnuts, and milk, or whole-grain cereal with milk and fruit. You could also take along some peanut butter spread on whole-wheat toast or a fruit smoothie made with yogurt.



Look for the healthier choices. When eating out, choose a salad with dressing on the side, or grilled chicken rather than fried. Substitute apple slices for chips.



Take it slow. It takes about 20 minutes for your brain to get the "full" signal from your stomach. Savor what you're eating and pause between bites to make yourself more aware of what you're eating and when you should stop. Using a salad fork, teaspoon, or child-size utensils can help you take smaller bites.



Remember, water is your friend. Water has zero calories, and drinking water about half an hour before a meal can help you eat less. Stay hydrated by bringing a water bottle to work. When you're thirsty, choose water over soda or fruit juice.



Have a smart snack. Bring a small container of carrots, broccoli, celery pieces, peas, or other vegetables to work so you have something to munch on when hunger hits. Add a little hummus dip if you'd like more flavor. A handful of almonds, low-fat popcorn, or a piece of fruit are also healthy choices.



Shop when you're full. Don't go to the grocery store on an empty stomach, as this may increase the temptation to purchase unhealthy snacks. Head there after you're done with your meal, or have a healthy snack before you head out.



Read labels. Packaged or canned foods may take you in an unhealthy direction. Select foods that are lower in saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol, as well as calories, salt, and added sugars.



Find your groove. Work movement into your lifestyle in a new way. Try dancing, Zumba, or yoga. When doing household chores, turn on some energizing music. Who knows? You might be inspired to finish faster than usual.



Walk at work. Park as far away from the entrance as possible, or get off the bus one stop earlier. Take the stairs whenever you can and walk over to a coworker's desk rather than sending an email. Head outdoors for a walk during lunch or break time.



Make it a team effort. Take a fitness class with coworkers, go on a bike ride with your family, or join a running club. Play tennis or soccer, or go for a walk with a friend. Finding an exercise companion or two brings encouragement and support as well as social opportunities.