

Diabetes and Weight Loss

There's good news for overweight people with type 2 diabetes: small amounts of weight loss can benefit you in many ways! In fact, losing weight soon after diagnosis may offer better blood pressure and glucose control years down the line, even if the weight is regained.

Research from the Look AHEAD trial shows that losing weight protects the health of people with type 2 diabetes in myriad ways. It...

- Reduces the need for medications for blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol. This comes with a cost savings too!
- Protects against fatty liver disease.
- Improves sleep apnea.
- Decreases symptoms of depression.
- Improves health-related quality of life.
- Decreases the risk of diabetic eye and kidney diseases.

What's the Best Weight Loss Diet for People with Diabetes?

There's good news here too. Research tells us that there are lots of healthful ways to eat. In fact, the American Diabetes Association clearly states that there is no one-size-fits-all diet. When researchers compared various types of diets for weight loss, there were no

significant differences if the diets were low or high in carbohydrate, fat, or protein. One of the most important factors for success appears to be the number of contacts the dieters have with the study personnel. That's not surprising, given how hard it is to lose weight.

What to Do if You Have Diabetes and Want to Lose Weight:

Work with a registered dietitian nutritionist, certified diabetes educator, or other qualified healthcare practitioner to help you individualize a diet that meets your health goals and your preferences. Since people with lots of support and lots of contacts with their nutrition counselor appear to lose the most weight, invest in a program that offers long-term support. Ask if you're at risk for low blood sugar (hypoglycemia) if you change your diet, increase your physical activity, or lose weight. Finally, put your emphasis on healthy behaviors, not just weight loss.

People with diabetes also need to pay attention to the health of their hearts. Eat well and be active to control blood pressure and cholesterol levels too.

By Jill Weisenberger, MS, RDN, CDE, FAND



BROUGHT TO YOU BY: