

Diabetes Mellitus

Adult Onset (Type II)

Diabetes mellitus continues to be a big problem for Americans. Current numbers from the National Institute of Health estimate the number of diabetics in America to be 18.2 million. The same numbers show that over 18% of patients 60 and older have diabetes. African American, Hispanic, and those of Native American decent are all at higher risk for the disease. Diabetes is listed as the 6th leading cause of deaths, and is considered underreported as a cause of death.

Diabetes essentially means that levels of sugar or glucose (glucose is a type of sugar) in the blood is too high. The body always has sugar in the blood. It is a source of fuel for our tissues and necessary for life. However, with Diabetes Adult onset, or Type II, the body can no longer control the level of the sugar and it starts to run high. This leads to increased risk of hear disease, high blood pressure, eye damage, blood vessel damage, and multiple other problems. Consider the following:

- Death rates from heart disease are 2-4 times higher in diabetics
- Risk of stroke is 2-4 times higher
- Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness in adults aged 20-74
- Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure in adults
- 60-70% of diabetics have some sort of nervous system problem, such as numbness or tingling in the hands or feet
- Diabetes directly and indirectly costs the medical system \$132 billion annually.

What can you do? Prevent the disease. Exercise. Follow the recommendations on the optimal diet sheet. Exercise (yes this is listed twice). If you have already been diagnosed with Diabetes or were told you were in a pre-diabetic situation, do not lose hope. The numbers above are included to motivate you, not scare you. You need to closely coordinate a health regimen with your physician. Diabetics may be first treated with an improved diet. Sometimes medication is needed included insulin. Be aggressive in your diabetic treatment. Educate yourself. You will be confident in your knowledge. Since diabetes raises the risk of heart disease, one must watch heart disease risk factors like cholesterol and high blood pressure closely.

Below is a list of vitamins, supplements and herbs that are beneficial to diabetics. If you take insulin, please consult with Dr. Windley before you start any new supplements, so that you don't lower your blood sugar too quickly.

1. Chromium: helps lower blood sugar
2. Niacin: a B vitamin which assists Chromium
3. Vitamin C: an inexpensive supplement that assists with so many things
4. Vitamin E
5. Magnesium: often needed in greater levels in diabetics
6. Vitamin B6: may help prevent some of the complications of diabetes
7. Gymnema Sylvestre: shown to reduce blood sugar
8. Goat's Rue (*galega officinalis*): also has been shown to lower blood sugar.
9. Contents of Cinnamon have also been shown to have an affect on blood sugar, sometimes working well with insulin.

Diabetes is a common, frustrating disease that requires much effort from the patient. You must continually work to modify those factors you can control; your diet and amount of exercise. Work with you physician, dietician, and fitness trainer to keep your blood sugar levels in check. Remember to check with your physician before you begin a rigorous exercise program.