

PATIENT EDUCATION HANDOUT

TIPS FOR STAYING AS HEALTHY AS POSSIBLE WITH DIABETES

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Diabetes is a chronic illness that is estimated to impact more than 34 million Americans. It has a wide range of effects and can impact your kidneys, gut, heart, eyes, immune system and more—so it is important to stay as healthy as possible. In addition to taking medications as prescribed by your doctor, different lifestyle factors, including nutrition, exercise, sleep and hydration, can play an important role in keeping you well.

NUTRITION

- A healthy diet with plenty of fresh vegetables, fruit and lean protein is key.
- or weight loss, simple steps include drinking more water, increasing vegetables and fiber in your diet, replacing refined carbohydrates (simple sugars, white bread, processed foods, etc.) with whole grains.
- Consider keeping a food journal: write down what you eat, how you're feeling right before you eat (Are you hungry? Bored? Sad?) and how you feel after eating so you know how certain foods affect you.

EXERCISE

At a minimum, 150 minutes of moderate exercise (walking, biking, swimming) is recommended per week.

HYDRATION

The World Health Organization recommends 4–7 cups (32–56 ounces) of water a day for women and 6–11 cups (48–88 ounces) a day for men.

SLEEP

- Getting enough sleep is essential! Try to get at least 7–8 hours of sleep each night.
- If you have difficulty falling or staying asleep:
 - Try staying off your phone/computer at least an hour before bedtime
 - Avoid eating two hours before bedtime
 - Listen to soothing music

FOOT CARE

- Check the bottoms of your feet regularly for cuts, sores or ulcers.
- Your doctor should be doing a full foot exam at least once a year.

EYE CARE

- See an ophthalmologist once a year for a retinal exam and call your doctor if you experience blurry or decreased vision.

WATCH BLOOD SUGAR

- Monitor your blood sugar at home and see your doctor for regular appointments.



SOURCE(S): American Academy of Family Physicians, The Centers for Disease Control, Diabetes.org, NutritionFacts.org

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