

Diabetes Information for You and Your Family

Keeping Your Heart Healthy

Keeping your heart healthy and strong is important, especially if you have diabetes. By taking care of your heart, you can lower your chances of having heart disease. Below are some things you can do to keep your heart healthy.



Talk with your health care team about how to take care of your heart.

Blood pressure

- Ask what your goal should be for blood pressure.
- Many people with diabetes will need medicine to help them control their blood pressure.

Commercial tobacco

- If you smoke, chew, or dip commercial tobacco, ask for information on how to quit.
- Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) for free help.
- Avoid being around smoke from others using commercial tobacco.

Cholesterol

- Most people with diabetes will need to be on a type of medicine called a statin to lower their cholesterol.
- Ask if a statin is right for you.



Make healthy food and drink choices.

- Eat healthy foods, such as vegetables, fruits, beans, whole grains, fish, wild game, and other lean meats.
- Select foods that have less salt, fat, and sugar.
- Grill or bake instead of frying.
- Drink plenty of water.



Stay active.

- Any amount of physical activity is good.
- Try walking at least 3-4 times a week. Start with 5-10 minutes and work up to 30 minutes or more.
- Choose an activity you enjoy. Take a walk with family or friends. Go for a bike ride. Dance. Play ball. Work in the garden.



Find healthy ways to reduce stress.

- Take time to relax. Do something you enjoy, such as drawing, reading, crafts, or walking in nature.
- Talk with others about what may be causing stress for you.
- Find a support group at your Tribe, clinic, or community center.



Follow up with your health care team regularly.

I will take care of my heart by doing these things:
