

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE ACTIONS TO

MANAGE DIABETES

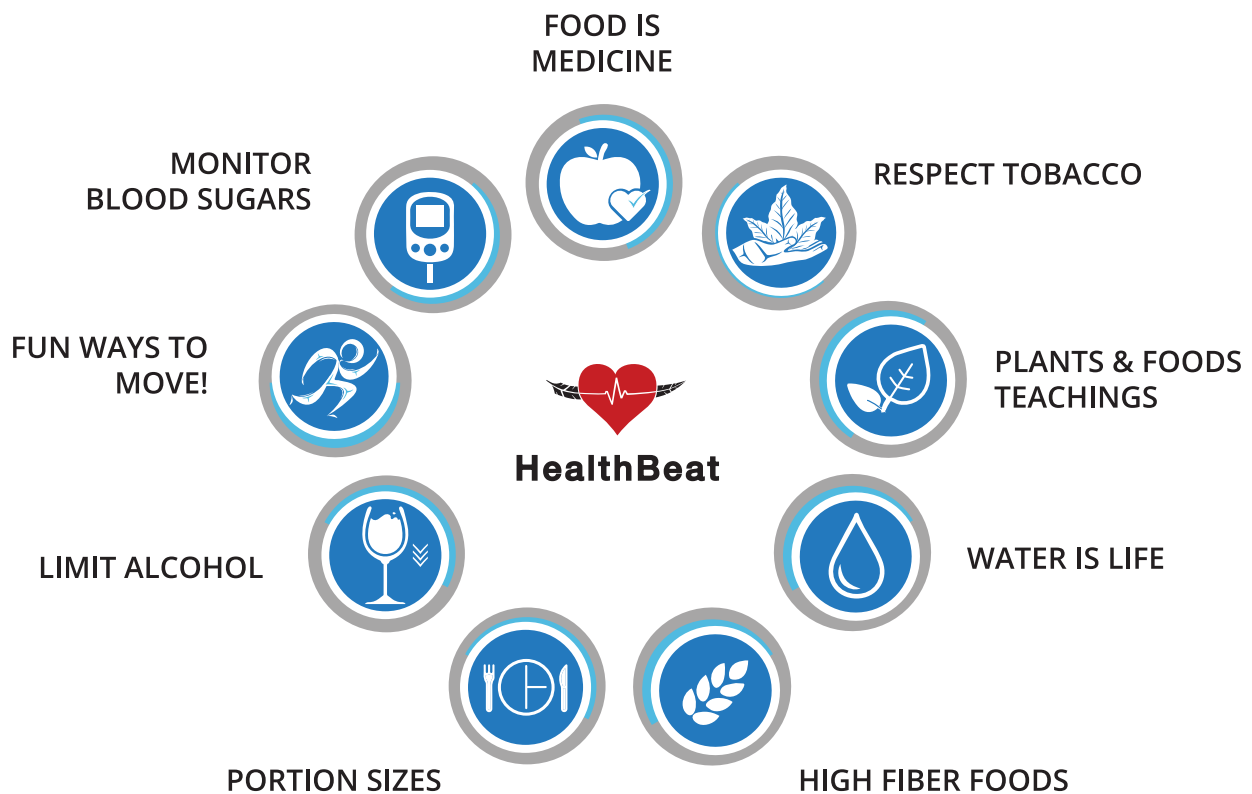
What is Diabetes?

Type 2 Diabetes is a condition in which the body is unable to make enough insulin, or the body is unable to properly use the insulin it makes. Type 2 Diabetes is the most common form of diabetes.

A note on pre-diabetes: If you have your blood sugars checked regularly, your health care team might identify that your blood sugars are slightly high, or at the pre-diabetes level. If slightly high blood sugar levels are identified early and you are able to make some lifestyle change, you have a good chance of not progressing to type 2 diabetes.

How can I support my Wellness when I have Diabetes?

There are many ways to support diabetes wellness with healthy eating, physical activity, and medications to help keep blood sugars in a healthy range.



There are many parts of our society that affect our health and lives that are beyond an individual's level of control. We want to acknowledge the social, political, economic, and environmental impacts to the health of the lands, waters, and forests, which in turn affects our health. We want you to know we are here to support you with your wellness goals and will meet you wherever you are at in your wellness journey.



MONITOR BLOOD SUGARS

Type 2 Diabetes: your doctor will request a lab blood test every 3 months (or 6 months for pre-diabetes) and you may not have to check your blood sugars very often at home (note: if you are only on Metformin, checking your blood sugars at home a few times per week can help make sure you are staying on track). If your blood sugars are high, you have a new diagnosis of diabetes, you are on diabetes medications (other than Metformin), or are on insulin, you should check your blood sugars at home more regularly.



HIGH FIBRE FOODS

Enjoy whole foods with fibre. Fibre helps grab extra cholesterol in your bowels and gets it out of your body through healthy bowel movements. Choose: whole-grains (whole-grain bread, brown rice, old-fashioned or steel cut oatmeal); all fruit including berries, apples, bananas, oranges; all vegetables especially non-starchy ones like wild greens, spring shoots, nettle, cauliflower, broccoli, salads, onion, tomato, peppers, celery, cucumber, spinach, carrots, beets, cabbage, garlic, ginger; nuts and seeds (peanut butter, sunflower seeds, walnuts); beans and lentils including rinsed canned or dried beans and lentils.



RESPECT TOBACCO

Even if you have been using commercial tobacco for many years, you can improve your health by quitting. Many people find success if they make a quit plan and gather supports. The First Nations Health Authority's (FNHA) website also has resources available, including a tobacco podcast series!



LIMIT ALCOHOL

If you drink, limit it to 1-2 drinks per day and no more than 5-10 drinks per week depending on your age, gender, weight, and health history.



FOOD IS MEDICINE

Enjoy lots of fresh foods like veggies, fruit, berries, fish, game, and wild foods. Most fruits, sweets, pastries, and drinks contain carbohydrates which breaks down into sugar in your body. Spread out carbohydrates (rice, potatoes, pasta, bread) throughout the day. Estimate about a 'fist size' per meal. Look for carbohydrate foods with fibre: choose old-fashioned or steel cut oatmeal over cereal, brown rice over white rice, and whole-grain bread over white bread. These foods have more fibre and will break down into sugar more slowly.



WATER IS LIFE

Nourish your body with water. Jazz up water with fresh citrus (lemon, orange, lime), cucumber, herbs, berries, etc. Grab our Re-Think Your Drink handout for recipes! Limit high sugar drinks (specialty coffees, soda, juice, energy drinks, iced tea, sports drinks).



PLANTS & FOODS TEACHINGS

Connect with a health care provider, an Elder, traditional knowledge and medicine keeper, or herbalist to learn about plants and foods that can support your journey to take control of diabetes like dandelion leaf and root, devil's club, blueberry and huckleberry, blackberry leaf, omega-3s or oolichan grease.*



PORTION SIZES

On your dinner plate aim for 1/2 plate of vegetables and fruits, 1/4 plate starch such as grains (rice, bread, pasta), or root vegetable (potato, sweet potato), and 1/4 plate protein (fish, meat, eggs, legumes like beans and lentils) and ENJOY!

**Consult with a medical professional to ensure there are no contraindications with medicine you are currently taking.*

Where you can find more information and support



Connect with your doctor, diabetes educator, dietitian, or community health nurse for ongoing support to take control of your diabetes.



Learn about diabetes from
National Indigenous Diabetes Association: nada.ca
Indigenous Diabetes Health Circle: idhc.life/resources



Call HealthLinkBC at 8-1-1 to speak with a registered nurse, a Registered Dietitian, a qualified exercise professional, or a pharmacist to discuss your blood sugar.