

3 **NEWLY DIAGNOSED?** keys to managing diabetes



● Thomas W. Oates, MD



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YOU'VE JUST LEARNED that you're one of the 23.6 million people in the United States who have diabetes. Now what?

First, don't let fear, anger or depression overwhelm you. Such emotions are common and understandable but not very helpful.

Those feelings can keep you from making necessary changes, according to the Watson Clinic endocrinology team, Main Clinic. They and the American Diabetes Association (ADA) suggest managing the disease in the following ways:

1 Adjust your attitude. Too many people get their diagnosis and become paralyzed by fear—or decide to ignore the warning they've just received. Others remember friends or relatives who didn't do well with diabetes.

Shift those thoughts.

"You still have some control over how much of an effect the disease has on you," says **Thomas W. Oates, MD.**

Accepting that you have habits that need to change is one of the first steps to changing them, he adds.

2 Gather information. Diabetes is a very complicated disease. Understanding it will take time.

A good place to start is with your health care team. You can learn how to:

- Monitor blood sugar.
- Shed pounds. Nine out of 10 people with diabetes are overweight. Weight loss can help you better manage your disease.
- Begin an exercise program. "If your heart stays healthy, you can reduce the risk of complications linked to diabetes. One way to keep it healthy is to exercise. Even 10 minutes a day makes a difference," says **Khanh T. Pham, MD**, also part of the endocrinology team.

→ Set goals and reach them.

3 Take action. It's up to you to follow through with your own self-care program.

Try breaking big goals into smaller, less overwhelming ones. For instance, this month, learn about healthy breakfasts; next month, tackle healthy snacks.

And remember that diabetes is a serious long-term condition. However, with help, it's still possible to enjoy a very healthy and fulfilling life.

Call our Main Clinic specialists at **863-680-7190** to find out about tools and methods to help manage diabetes. Our staff, which includes a nurse practitioner, diabetes nursing educators and certified dietitians, offers diabetes education courses as part of our practice.

Losing weight: Make a plan to succeed

If you're trying to lose weight, you probably wish you could just snap your fingers and make the pounds melt away.

Unfortunately, losing weight isn't that easy.

Many diets promise fast weight loss, and some do work in the short term because they're low in calories. But it's the long term that counts: You want to both lose weight and not regain it.

Studies show that people who lose weight gradually (about 1 to 2 pounds a week) are more likely to keep it off than are people who lose weight quickly.

That's because healthy weight loss isn't about dieting but about changing your lifestyle.

Also keep in mind that even a modest loss—just 5 to 10 percent of your total weight—can improve your blood pressure, blood cholesterol and blood sugar levels.

CALORIES AND EXERCISE COUNT

Think of your weight as a balance scale. If

your weight is staying the same, then the number of calories you take in is about the same as the number you burn.

If the scale tips one way or the other, you will either lose weight (calories burned exceed calories taken in) or gain weight (calories consumed exceed those burned).

To lose 1 to 2 pounds a week, you need to reduce the calories you consume by 500 to 1,000 a day.

Exercise can further help by increasing the number of calories you burn. And regular exercise can help you maintain your weight loss.

YOU CAN DO IT

Stick to a plan that includes changing your daily eating and exercise habits, and you can lose the weight you need to lose, keep it off and be healthier in the long run.

Work with your doctor or other members of your health care team to draw up a plan that's right for you.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; U.S. Food and Drug Administration

We have registered dietitians (available by physician referral) who can help you with your weight loss plan. Call 863-680-7490 for more information.



If you have diabetes, you need to pay extra attention to your teeth and feet. They're more susceptible to problems caused by the disease.

TO CARE FOR YOUR TEETH:

- ✓ Brush them at least twice a day, and floss between them daily.
- ✓ See your dentist every six months—or more often if you notice signs of gum disease, such as bleeding or sore gums, bad breath, a bad taste in your mouth, or loose teeth.

TO CARE FOR YOUR FEET:

- ✓ Wash them daily, and dry them carefully—especially between your toes.
- ✓ Don't ignore sores, scratches, blisters, cuts or cracks. They can lead to serious complications, including infection or amputation.
- ✓ Trim toenails along the natural curve of the toes, but don't cut into the corners.
- ✓ Avoid using lotion between toes. It encourages moisture and germs.
- ✓ Don't use razor blades or chemicals on corns and calluses. Gently use a pumice stone every day to help keep corns and calluses under control.
- ✓ Never go barefoot.
- ✓ Have your feet inspected by your doctor at least four times a year.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention