



	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 20mg	1%
Potassium 170mg	5%



DIABETES AND STROKE



How to REDUCE YOUR RISK

If you have diabetes, you may already know that you're at higher risk for complications such as blindness, amputations and kidney trouble. ♦ But what you might not know is that diabetes' destructive effect on blood vessels in the eyes, feet and kidneys can also have an impact on the brain.

And that impact increases your risk for stroke, according to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke.

In fact, two out of three people with diabetes die from stroke

or heart disease, reports the American Diabetes Association.

"Most people realize that diabetes can cause blindness, can lead to the need for dialysis and can increase the risk of amputation," says **Khanh T. Pham, MD**, an endocrinologist

at Watson Clinic. “But not everyone recognizes that heart attack and stroke are also great risks.”

DIABETES AND BLOOD VESSELS

Most strokes are caused by fatty deposits or clots that narrow or block blood vessels in the brain or neck and prevent blood flow. Having high blood sugar can lead to an increase in these fatty materials.

And while having diabetes on its own increases the chances of a stroke, that risk is even greater if you also: ♦ Smoke. ♦ Have high blood pressure. ♦ Have abnormal blood cholesterol levels. ♦ Have a family or personal history of stroke or transient ischemic attacks (also known as TIAs or mini-strokes).

IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES

Dr. Pham says there are specific steps you can take to help lower your risk for stroke: Manage your blood pressure and cholesterol, stop smoking, and keep your diabetes under control.

You can lower your risk of stroke by keeping your diabetes under control, giving up smoking, and managing your blood pressure and cholesterol.

It’s particularly important to stop smoking. Carbon monoxide and nicotine in cigarette smoke further narrow and damage blood vessels. Talk to your doctor if you need help quitting.

Proper diet, exercise and, if necessary, medications can also help reduce stroke risk.

For example, make sure your diet includes enough fiber, fruits and vegetables, and cut down on salt, saturated fats and cholesterol.

Also get at least 30 minutes of exercise most days of the week to help the heart and blood vessels work better and to help maintain a healthy weight. Walking, biking and swimming can be good choices. If you haven’t been active for a while, talk to your doctor before starting.

If lifestyle changes are not enough, your doctor may recommend medications to help control blood pressure and cholesterol.

RECOGNIZE YOUR RISKS

Above all, if you have diabetes, it’s important to realize the full extent of possible complications—including stroke—and to take steps to stay healthy.

“It is important to know that your diabetes, along with your blood pressure and cholesterol, are all under control,” Dr. Pham says.



Khanh T. Pham, MD

MORE >> To learn more about diabetes and stroke, visit the American Diabetes Association website at www.diabetes.org/heart-disease-stroke.jsp.



Diabetes plus illness equals need for TLC

If you have diabetes, getting what would otherwise be a routine illness can drive your blood sugar levels sky high. Without proper treatment, that can be dangerous—even life-threatening.

“If you have diabetes, it is very important to know how to take care of yourself when you get sick,” says **Thomas W. Oates, MD**, an endocrinologist at Watson Clinic.

SIDE EFFECTS OF SICKNESS

When you’re sick, your body releases disease-fighting hormones. But these hormones can also raise blood sugar and interfere with how your body uses insulin.

For some people, especially those with type 1 diabetes, a low insulin level can cause the body to use fat for energy, triggering the liver to produce chemicals called ketones. A buildup of these waste products can result in coma or sometimes death.

Likewise, people with type 2 diabetes are prone to a similar condition called hyperosmolar nonketotic coma.

Preventing serious complications while you’re sick requires advance planning and some extra care.

Common instructions may include:

- Take your diabetes pills or insulin, even if you’re throwing up. Your doctor may recommend extra insulin when you’re sick.
- Stick to your normal diet if possible. If you can’t keep food down, try to get the same number of calories with easier-to-digest foods, such as gelatin, crackers, soup or applesauce.
- Since vomiting and diarrhea can lead to dehydration, drink lots of sugar-free liquids—at least a cup every hour.
- Keep a written record of blood sugar and urine ketone levels when you’re sick. If you have type 1 diabetes, you may need to check both every four hours. If you have type 2, it may suffice to check glucose four times a day and ketones only if blood sugar rises above 300.

Dr. Oates recommends you call your doctor if you:

- Can’t keep foods down for more than six hours.
- Have severe diarrhea.
- Have a fever over 101 degrees.
- Have moderate or high ketone levels.
- Have high blood sugar levels.
- Have trouble breathing or thinking clearly.



Thomas W. Oates, MD

Source: American Diabetes Association