

National Diabetes Awareness  
Month!

November 2017  
Happy Thanksgiving Everyone!

# Wellness Corner Connection

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## Diabetes Myths

**If I don't take diabetes medicine, my diabetes must not be serious.** Not everyone who has diabetes takes diabetes medicine. If the body produces some insulin, weight loss, healthy eating habits, and regular physical activity can help insulin work more effectively. However, diabetes does change over time, and diabetes medicine may be needed later.

**If I get diabetes, I will never be able to eat any sugar.** To control one's blood sugar, all sources of carbohydrates must be controlled. Carbohydrates include starchy foods like pasta and bread as well as sugary foods like candy. Even juice, milk, and fruit all contain carbohydrates, so they must be eaten in moderate amounts. With careful planning, small amounts of sugar can replace other carbohydrates usually eaten at a meal. Too much sugar is bad for everyone. It provides only empty calories.



## Let's Take Diabetes Seriously

You might have heard people say they have a "touch of diabetes" or that their "sugar is a little high" making it seem like diabetes isn't that serious. This could not be further from the truth! Diabetes can be debilitating but you can prevent many of the complications if you learn to manage it. And with controlling blood sugar through lifestyle changes, people with the risk of diabetes can either prevent or at least prolong the onset of as they get older.

So what is diabetes? We probably all know that it's a disease that occurs when one's blood sugar (or glucose) is high. But many of us may still be in the dark with what it actually can do to our bodies if this high level of glucose remains out of control. Blood glucose is the primary source of energy resulted from food that supplies every part of our body. The only way this blood glucose can do its job is with the help of insulin. Insulin is a hormone produced by the pancreas that allows glucose from food to enter the cells (of our organs, our muscles, our brain, etc.) for energy. When insulin does not do its job, for various reasons which we will discuss, blood sugar remains high causing havoc to our bodily functions.

**Type 1 diabetes**—occurs when a person's pancreas does not make insulin. Individuals with type 1 must inject themselves with insulin to survive. Accounts for about 5% of all diagnosed cases (according to the CDC).

**Type 2 diabetes**—Individuals with this type of diabetes do not make or use insulin efficiently. They may need to take medication to control it; however, much of the control can often come from lifestyle changes and choices. 90-95% of all diagnosed cases of diabetes are type 2 (according to the CDC).

**Gestational diabetes**—can only occur in women when they are pregnant. Most of the time it goes away once the baby is born; however, having it, puts a woman and child at a greater risk for developing diabetes later in life.

**Pre-diabetes**—is a condition where blood glucose or A1C levels are higher than normal but not yet high enough for a diagnosis of diabetes. These individuals are at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease, which can lead to heart attack or stroke.

### Diabetes Facts and Stats:

- ◆ An estimated 30.3 million people in the U.S. have diabetes (9.4% of the population).
- ◆ An estimated 23.1 million people in the U.S. have been diagnosed (7.2% of the population).
- ◆ An estimated 7.2 million adults, ages 18 or older are undiagnosed (23.8% of people with diabetes).

### Pre-diabetes Facts and Stats

- ◆ An estimated 86 million adults ages 18 years or older (over 1/3 of the U.S. population) have it
- ◆ 23.1 million adults over the age of 65 (48.3% of the population) of it
- ◆ More men (36.6%) than women (29.3%) have it
- ◆ 1 in 3 people have pre-diabetes and 90% do not even know it
- ◆ If you have pre-diabetes and do not change your lifestyle, you will have type 2 diabetes within the next five to ten years.
- ◆ People who implement structured lifestyle changes can cut their risk of developing type 2 by as much as 58%! The key...get checked regularly to find out if you have it. Being aware could change and even save your life.

**Insulin** is a hormone made in the pancreas, an organ located behind the stomach. The pancreas contains clusters of cells called islets. Beta cells within the islets make insulin and release it into the blood.

- ◆ It helps muscle, fat, and liver cells absorb glucose from the bloodstream
- ◆ It stimulates the liver and muscle tissue to store excess glucose (glycogen).

It is a protein that must be taken by injection or insulin pump through the skin if your pancreas does not make its own. There is no such thing as an "insulin pill".

(Diabetes pills help when the body is still making insulin.)

**Insulin Resistance** occurs when muscle, fat and liver cells do not respond properly to insulin preventing the uptake of blood glucose from the bloodstream for energy.

Pancreas, in response, will continue pumping out additional insulin in an attempt to overcome this resistance. In an attempt to "keep up", the blood glucose remains higher than it should and the pancreas may eventually wear out, ceasing to produce insulin all together.

See the next page for causes of insulin resistance.

Resources: NIDDK (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney and CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

## What Causes Insulin Resistance?

The exact cause is not completely understood but scientists note that major contributors are excess weight and inactivity.



**Excess Weight**—Some experts believe obesity (BMI 30-39.9), especially excess fat around the waist, is the primary cause since this belly fat produces hormones and other substances that not only cause insulin resistance but could contribute to high blood pressure, imbalanced cholesterol, and cardiovascular disease.

Chronic or long-lasting inflammation in the body can be caused by belly fat. This inflammation can be damaging to one's body over time, without any signs or symptoms. Studies show that losing this weight can reduce insulin resistance and prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

**Physical Inactivity**—when we exercise glucose stored in our muscles is burned for energy. This is refilled by taking additional glucose from the bloodstream, keeping blood glucose levels in balance. Studies have shown that after exercise our muscle are more sensitive to insulin which helps to reverse insulin resistance and lowers blood sugar. Exercise can also help muscle absorb glucose without the need for insulin, saving the pancreas of extra work. The more muscle you have, the more glucose it can burn to control blood glucose levels.

### Does sleep matter?

Yes. Studies show that untreated sleep problems, especially sleep apnea, can increase the risk of obesity, insulin resistance, and type 2 diabetes. Night shift workers may also be at increased risk for these problems. Sleep apnea is a common disorder in which a person's breathing is interrupted during sleep. People may often move out of deep sleep and into light sleep when their breathing pauses or becomes shallow. This results in poor sleep quality that causes problem sleepiness, or excessive tiredness, during the day. Many people aren't aware of their symptoms and aren't diagnosed. People who think they might have sleep problems should talk with their health care provider.

### What are the symptoms of insulin resistance and prediabetes?

Usually they do not have symptoms. People may have one or both for several years (up to 10 years) without even knowing. (90% of those with prediabetes do not know they have it). However, getting regular check ups is crucial since health-care providers can identify and monitor people with specific risk factors. Anyone who is overweight or obese should be tested for prediabetes (as recommended by the American Diabetes Association—ADA). Not everyone who is overweight will get type 2 diabetes nor are thin people exempt.

### But if you have any of the following risk factors, your chances increase:

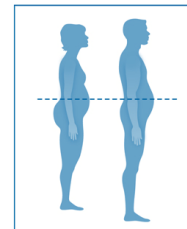
- ◆ Being age 45 or older
- ◆ being physically inactive
- ◆ having a parent or sibling with diabetes
- ◆ having a family background that is African American, Alaska Native, American Indian, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino, or Pacific Islander American
- ◆ giving birth to a baby weighing more than 9 pounds
- ◆ being diagnosed with gestational diabetes—diabetes that develops only during pregnancy
- ◆ having high blood pressure—140/90 mmHg or above—or being treated for high blood pressure
- ◆ HDL cholesterol level below 35 mg/dL or a triglyceride level above 250 mg/dL
- ◆ having polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)
- ◆ having prediabetes, impaired fasting glucose (IFG), or impaired glucose tolerance (IGT) on an earlier testing
- ◆ having other conditions associated with insulin resistance, such as obesity or **acanthosis nigricans**\*
- ◆ having CVD (cardiovascular disease)

**Location of excess fat** is important. Waist circumference (WC) may be linked to insulin resistance and increase one's chances of developing type 2 diabetes.

Men WC = 40 inches or more

Women WC = 35 inches or more

These measurements put you at risk.



### To measure the waist, a person should

- ◆ place a tape measure around the bare abdomen just above the hip bone
- ◆ make sure the tape is snug but isn't digging into the skin and is parallel to the floor

### Acanthosis nigricans:

People with severe insulin resistance may have dark patches of skin that typically appear around elbows, knees, knuckles, armpits or as a ring around a person's neck.

**Know your ABC's**—**A** is for A1C test which measures your average blood sugar over the past 3 months. An A1C level of 6.5% or higher on 2 separate days may be diagnosed as diabetes. A level of 5.7—6.4% are increased risk for diabetes should be treated with lifestyle changes and follow up. **B** is for blood pressure. If too high your heart will work too hard which could lead to heart attack, stroke or damage to kidney and eyes. Have yours checked regularly. **C** is for cholesterol. Since everyone is different, it's important to check with your doctor to determine where your numbers are and where they should be. Good practice to get your blood lipids checked annually.

Resource: NIDDK (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)  
Joslin Clinical Guidelines for Adults with Diabetes

Note \*: all individuals are different so it's recommended to see a doctor for follow up visits

## Tips For Surviving Holiday Parties

The holidays are upon us and for many it's either the dreaded fear that they will overeat or for some it's a reason to overeat! Whatever it is it's always smart to approach the holiday's with some smart tactics for surviving the many opportunities to indulge. Here are a few to keep in mind so you can still enjoy all your favorite holiday treats just with more control:

**Where's the beef?** Protein helps to stabilize your blood sugar and make it easier to avoid hunger cravings, so eat a small amount of lean protein like turkey or chicken before you head out to a party. An apple with peanut butter might do or some vegetables and hummus. A glass of skim milk has 8.5 grams of protein. Greek yogurt is also a great choice, coming in with 17 grams of protein!



**Crack up.** Dips that are creamy or cheesy are already high in calories and fat, but if you just can't skip them, dip with vegetables instead of higher-calorie crackers or breads. Just a taste may be enough to satisfy that craving.

**Chew on it.** Gum may be a good way to keep yourself from picking at foods when you're really hungry. Plus, chewing gum before you walk into a party will give you fresh breath and may delay your first bite or beverage.

**The glass is half full.** Most social gatherings offer high-calorie alcoholic beverages like egg nog, cordials, margaritas and martinis. Wine and beer are lower-calorie options; mixers like club soda and water and condiments like lemons and limes can also help lower calorie totals. Even better: Alternate each alcoholic drink with a large glass of water to cut calories in half and keep you feeling full.



**Plan ahead.** Consider what you eat earlier in the day or even the day before a big celebration. Planning a lighter lunch or breakfast can help balance out the calorie overload from an upcoming celebration.



**Get in some extra workouts.** Knowing that this time of year is busy, it can be easy to justify skipping your workouts. But keeping them consistent or adding in an extra workout may be just what you need to stick to your health goals. Even 20 minutes of walking can burn off an extra 100 to 150 calories, which may be enough to help keep extra pounds from creeping on during the holidays.

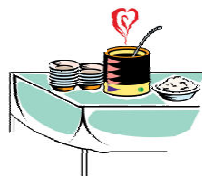
**Sleep in.** Sleep deprivation can have a huge impact on your waistline. That's because lack of sleep increases ghrelin, which is a hormone that makes you hungry and limits the secretion of leptin, which helps burn fat. Be sure to get enough sleep following late-night celebrations by sleeping in just a bit (too long will throw off your schedule) or taking a short 20-minute catnap to catch up.



**Back off.** A good way to eat less at a party is to stay away from the food. Simply stay out of the kitchen and choose to socialize away from the buffet. Walking just a few steps away can help prevent you from the mindless grazing that often adds up to lots of extra calories.

**Opt in.** It is good form to bring a holiday hostess gift, so why not bring the gift of healthy appetizers? Great options include shrimp cocktail, hummus with green and red peppers, and a plate filled with fresh berries, grapes and hard cheeses.

**Take just one bite.** It can be hard to pass up those holiday treats, cookies and pies, so take a smaller slice or just a bite. It will give you the satisfaction that you're looking for and the first bite usually tastes much better than the last.



Resource: American Council on Exercise

### How Much Are You Gobbling on Thanksgiving?

a healthy diet deal-breaker, it's smart to keep an eye on what you're consuming so you don't go *too* crazy with that fifth slice of pie. According to the [Calorie Control Council](#), the average American chows down on **4,500 calories** and about **229 grams in fat** during a typical holiday gathering from snacking and eating a traditional Thanksgiving dinner with turkey and all the trimmings. A typical dinner alone can carry a load of 3,000 calories. If that data is tough to visualize, here's a breakdown of what 3,000 calories looks like in a few non-holiday foods:

Each worth  
3,000 calories

- ◆ 12 Turkey Sandwiches
- ◆ 9.9 classic Caesar salads
- ◆ 15 Kind Bars
- ◆ 11.5 Pumpkin spice Lattes from Starbucks
- ◆ 17.7 Crunchy Tacos from Taco Bell
- ◆ 17.7 servings of Guacamole from Chipotle (that's 62 ounces!)

Many of us will figure that we've blown our diet and the holidays are to be enjoyed, so why worry about weight? But even if you start the holiday season off with gastronomical excess, you can quickly get back on the right track by watching your calories.

Thanksgiving Day is not a time to be counting calories—enjoy yourself! But while consuming a rich meal once a year isn't exactly

First, identify where the calories are coming from. Visit the Council's list of the [most common holiday foods](#) or its [calorie calculator](#). Secondly, make over your meal for health. You can enjoy many of the same dishes while still reducing calories by using lower calorie ingredients. (Some popular makeover recipes are offered on this site.) Reducing the amount of fat and calories in your snacking and main holiday meals can help prevent weight gain over the holidays (from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day). Also, try these "Low-Fat Holiday" tips from the American Heart Association:

- ◆ Eat lower-fat and reduced-calorie foods for days in advance of the holiday feast, and for days after.
- ◆ Prepare for handling your worst temptations; if you want both pecan and pumpkin pie, take a tiny slice of each, instead of a full serving.
- ◆ If cooking, provide low-fat foods, or ask if you can bring a low-fat dish.
- ◆ After the meal, start a tradition — a holiday walk, for instance.
- ◆ Remember, you can lighten your holiday feasting and still have a jolly good time!



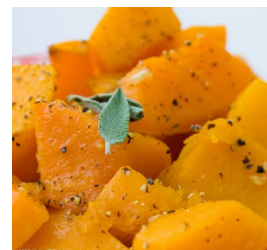
Resource: Calorie Control Council

## Sage Citrus Roasted Butternut Squash

If you have never had butternut squash, I highly recommend you try it this season. Just as it's name suggests, it's like butter, delicious! But this, unlike butter, is actually good for you! The recipes below are diabetic and vegan-friendly. Butternut squash is super high in Vitamin A, rich in fiber, Vitamins B6, C and E, potassium, manganese and magnesium. It is fat free and contains about 80-100 calories per cup of cubes.

### Ingredients

- ◆ Butternut Squash \*20 ounce pre-cubed pack) OR 1 medium butternut squash sliced in half, deseeded
- ◆ Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO)
- ◆ Maple Syrup
- ◆ Apple Cider Vinegar
- ◆ 1 Orange, juiced
- ◆ Fresh Sage Leaves generous sprinkle of fresh black pepper
- ◆ sprinkling of sea salt
- ◆ optional: cinnamon and/or cayenne



<http://kblog.lunchboxbunch.com/2009/10/roasted-butternut-squash-sage-citrus.html>

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Prep whole butternut squash by slicing in halves or quarters and removing seeds. Or open pack of pre-cut cubes. (Pre-cut cubes are easier, but sometimes it's nice to use a real whole squash! Try it at least once. A whole squash is usually cheaper too and easy to cut up. Peel and de-seed before cubing.)
3. Drizzle a bit of EVOO in the bottom of a large casserole dish. Tear a few (4-6) sage leaves and place them in the bottom of the dish as well. Place the pre-cut squash cubes in dish. Swirl them around in the oil a bit.
4. Squeeze fresh juice from one orange and drizzle it over top the squash. About 1/3-1/2 cup of juice.
5. Drizzle about 1-3 Tbsp of maple syrup over squash (depending on how sweet you want it and the squash size).
6. Drizzle about 1-3 Tbsp of olive oil over the squash, again depending on how decadent or how light you want your squash to taste.
7. Drizzle a small amount of apple cider vinegar over the squash. About 1 Tbsp.
8. Sprinkle salt/pepper on top of squash flesh, to taste. Add optional cinnamon and/or dash of cayenne here as well.
9. Cover dish lightly with foil-air vent. Place in 400 degree oven for 25 minutes. After 25 minutes are up, remove foil, turn oven to broil and lightly stir squash cubes. Broil on high for 5-7 minutes, or until top starts to caramelize. Do not let broiler 'dry out' your squash. Watch it closely.
10. Remove squash. It should be tender and easily breakable with a fork.

Serve in a bowl with a drizzle of the baking juices. Garnish with fresh sage leaves and pepper.

*Note: not all the oil/juice/syrup/vinegar will be absorbed by the squash, but rather it is used as a heating liquid and flavor-adding ingredient in the bottom of the pan. With it, you will be left with a lovely squash drizzle sauce for your end result dish.*

## Cranberry Sauce with Pear & Pomegranate



As your Wellness Director, I'm not proud to admit it but I love canned cranberry sauce with my turkey. However, knowing how much sugar this "stuff" contains I was determined to find another option and try making "the real stuff" this year. This recipe caught my eye. I love pears and pomegranate so it has to be good. I'm willing to try it this holiday...what about you? Let me know if you do and what you thought. Have a Happy Thanksgiving!

### Ingredients:

- 12 ounces, weight Fresh Or Frozen Cranberries
- ¼ cups Orange Juice (1 Orange Yields About 1/4 Cup)
- 1 whole Pear - Cleaned, Cored, Cubed, Skin Left On
- ¼ cups Water
- 1 pinch Ground Cinnamon
- 1 pinch Ground Ginger
- 1 pinch Stevia Or Your Favorite Natural Sweetener To Taste
- 2 ounces, weight Pomegranate Seeds (Fresh Or Frozen), Plus Extra For Garnish

Found on Calorie Control Council Holiday Tips. Recipe on Tasty Kitchen.

The directions seem easy enough...basically simmering some fruit and spices on the stove. Rinse fresh cranberries. Place cranberries, orange juice, pear, water and spices in a medium saucepan. Heat on stove top over medium heat until boiling. Reduce heat to a simmer, partially cover with a lid and cook for about 10 minutes. The cranberries will burst and the sauce will thicken a bit. Add more water or orange juice if you want a thinner sauce. Stir occasionally so your sauce does not burn. Add sweetener to taste and adjust spices if needed. Add pomegranate seeds at the end and gently stir them into the sauce. As this sauce cools it will continue to thicken a bit. Serve topped with fresh pomegranate seeds and grated orange zest.

*Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgivings, turn routine jobs into joy, and change ordinary opportunities into blessings.*

*William Arthur Ward*

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