Living Well with Diabetes

Top 10 tips to help you stay in control

#1. It’s not about your diabetes, it’s about your life
   Ask yourself these questions:
   □ What do I LOVE to do?
   □ What things about diabetes keep me from doing it?
   □ What are some solutions?

#2. It’s not just about blood sugar
   Heart disease and stroke are the BIG killers for people with diabetes. Lower your chances.
   □ If you use tobacco, QUIT.
   □ Keep your blood pressure under control.
   □ Consider taking a statin drug.
   □ Ask your doctor about ACE-inhibitors.
   □ Is a daily aspirin right for you? Talk to your doctor.
   □ Make healthy lifestyle choices.

#3. Stress makes everything worse
   Stress can get in the way of taking care of yourself and managing your diabetes.
   □ Find out what’s causing stress in your life.
   □ Learn ways to cope with daily stressors.
   □ Schedule something fun for yourself on a regular basis.

#4. Exercise makes everything better
   Exercise gives you more energy, reduces stress, and helps you relax.
   □ Work towards doing at least 30 minutes every day. Ask your doctor if you need help getting started.
   □ Make it fun, not a chore.
   □ Try a pedometer.

#5. Don’t “diet”… make healthier food choices
   Find a healthier way of eating that you can stick with for life.
   □ Instead of thinking “good” or “bad,” think about which foods support good health.
   □ Eat a variety of foods to make you’re getting the vitamins and minerals you need.
   □ Talk to your dietitian to find a meal plan that works for YOU.

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#6. Be smart and use your “flashlight”
Your blood sugar monitor helps you “see in the dark.” Test your blood sugar to get information you can use, for example:

- When you first wake up in the morning.
- Before or after meals.
- Before, during, and after exercise.
- Whenever you feel “odd”.

#7. Be an active partner with your health care team.
Keep regular appointments with your doctor and get tests and screenings on time.

- Know what questions to ask.
- Write them down ahead of time.
- Let your doctor know at the beginning of each visit what specific things you want to talk about.

#8. Make sure you’re not depressed
It’s often hard for people to know they’re depressed. Here are some common signs:

- Feeling down, blue, hopeless, sad, or irritable.
- Not enjoying activities that used to be enjoyable.
- Feeling as though you’re letting other people down.
- Trouble concentrating.
- Tired all the time, no energy.
- No interest in food, or overeating.
- Trouble falling asleep.
- Feeling like life isn’t worth living.

#9. Write down your care plan
Work with your doctor to design a diabetes care plan that’s right for you. Write down:

- What drugs you’re taking and why you’re taking them.
- Your daily targets for the numbers you can control.
- The goals YOU want to achieve.
- Who you should call and when.

#10. Join a group
Groups work magic!

- A problem shared is a problem solved.
- You’ll be amazed at how much you have to offer others.
- Join a Living Well with Diabetes Workshop. Find out more by calling the Resource Line at 1-800-992-2279, or online at kp.org/livingwell.