

REDUCING THE RISK OF TYPE 2 DIABETES



Many people are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes but the good news is there are positive steps you can take to reduce the risk. In fact, by making positive lifestyle changes the risk of developing diabetes may be halved.

Type 2 diabetes is often triggered by being inactive or carrying excess weight, especially around the waist.

WHAT IS TYPE 2 DIABETES?

It is the most common type of diabetes. In type 2 diabetes the body has trouble keeping blood sugar levels low enough. This is either because the body is less responsive to insulin (one of the main hormones that control blood sugar levels) or because the body no longer makes enough insulin.

Some of the risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes include: a family history, being overweight, smoking and being inactive.

If you are at risk of developing diabetes take action with the three important steps below:

- 1 Eat a healthy balanced diet
- 2 If you are overweight, try and lose some weight
- 3 Participate in regular exercise.

Eat a healthy balanced diet

A healthy, balanced diet includes a wide variety of nutritious foods from these five food groups every day:

- Plenty of vegetables, of different types and colours, and legumes/beans
- Fruit
- Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain, and/or high cereal fibre varieties such as breads, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles, polenta, couscous, oats, quinoa and barley
- Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and/or alternatives
- Milk, cheese, yoghurt and alternatives.

More information on healthy eating can be found at eatforhealth.gov.au

While it's great to include lots of foods from the five food groups it is best to limit or avoid discretionary foods also known as 'junk foods'. The Australian Health Survey found that on average, adults get just over one-third of their total daily energy from 'junk foods and drinks'. The main contributors were cakes, muffins and scones, pastries (e.g. meat pies and sausage rolls), wines, beers, soft drinks, sweet biscuits, chocolate and chips.

Dairy foods and a healthy diet

Australian Dietary Guidelines advise that milk, cheese and yoghurt are linked to a reduced risk of type 2 diabetes. More recent research has confirmed that people with higher intakes of dairy foods, particularly yoghurt and cheese, tend to have a lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes. There is evidence that both regular fat and reduced fat dairy foods are linked to a reduced risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Unfortunately, most Australians are missing out on the health benefits that come from consuming milk, cheese and yoghurt as they don't include enough in their diet. It is estimated that eight out of ten Australian adults need to increase their intake of the dairy food group in order to meet the Australian Dietary Guidelines.

Minimum recommended number of serves from the dairy food group

	Age (years)	No. of serves per day
Men	19–70	2 ½
	70+	3 ½
Women	19–50	2 ½
	50+	4

*Adapted from: 2013 Australian Dietary Guidelines. The dairy food group includes milk, cheese, yoghurt and/or alternatives.**



*Alternatives include: 250ml soy, rice or other cereal drink with at least 100mg of added calcium per 100ml.

For more information on dairy foods, tips and recipes to help you include them in your diet refer to dairy.com.au/health

A HEALTHY DIET AND REGULAR EXERCISE ARE THE BEST WAYS TO LOSE WEIGHT. LIMIT JUNK FOODS AND DRINKS AND PORTION SIZES MAY ALSO NEED TO BE REDUCED.

If you are overweight, try and lose some weight

Being overweight significantly increases the risk of type 2 diabetes. However, just small reductions in weight can make a difference, helping insulin work more effectively.

Restrictive and fad diets that don't include the five food groups are not recommended.

Some people mistakenly cut back on dairy foods when they are watching their weight. Contrary to popular belief, enjoying three to four serves of milk, cheese and yoghurt every day is not linked to weight gain. In fact, for people looking to lose weight, including three to four serves of milk, cheese and yoghurt in a reduced-kilojoule diet can actually help accelerate weight and fat loss, and shrink waist lines.

Participate in regular exercise

Be active on most, preferably all days of every week. Aim for 30 minutes of moderate activity every day. If this is not possible, then try three, ten minute sessions. Examples of moderate activity include brisk walking, dancing, gardening or housework. Also try to be active in your everyday life and reduce the amount of time you spend sitting down.

Everybody benefits from regular exercise. If you are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes, being active can help you to lose weight and may delay the onset of type 2 diabetes.

TIPS TO GET YOU STARTED



- Enjoy a bowl of wholegrain breakfast cereal with milk every morning.
- Eat slowly and savour every mouthful.
- Be physically active every day in as many ways as you can.
- Find a friend or family member to support you to eat healthily and be active.
- Drink water or milk instead of soft drink, cordial, fruit drinks, vitamin waters, energy drinks, sports drinks or alcoholic drinks.
- Instead of snacking on chips or a muffin have a yoghurt instead.
- Try a cheese and salad sandwich on wholemeal bread rather than meat pies or sausage rolls.

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