



## YOUR DIABETES CARE TEAM

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### The Diabetes Nurse Practitioner

If you or a family member are diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, you will be introduced to a number of different medical professionals in addition to your primary-care physician. A nurse educator or diabetes nurse practitioner is a registered nurse (RN) with special training and a background in caring for and teaching people with diabetes. Many are Certified Diabetes Educators (CDEs) and some may have a masters degree. Nurse educators and diabetes nurse practitioners often help patients learn the day-to-day aspects of diabetes self-care. They can teach you:

- How to check your blood sugar
- How to keep track of your diabetes
- Symptoms of low and high blood glucose
- How to take care of an insulin reaction
- How to handle sick days
- How to stay healthy if you are pregnant

— Source: American Diabetes Association

- What diabetes is
- How to cope with diabetes and to make changes in your health habits
- How to use diabetes medications
- How to work with insulin and give yourself shots



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## Senior Health Update

### What Is a Cataract?

A cataract is a clouding of the lens in the eye that affects vision. The lens is a clear part of the eye that helps to focus an image on the retina. The retina is the light-sensitive tissue at the back of the eye. In a normal eye, light passes through the transparent lens to the retina. Once it reaches the retina, light is changed into nerve signals that are sent to the brain. A cataract can occur in either or both eyes. It cannot spread from one eye to the other. By age 80, more than half of all Americans either have a cataract or have had cataract surgery. Regular eye exams are important, and protecting eyes from the sun can help slow cataract development.

— Source: National Institutes of Health

## Kids' Safety Update

### Protect Your Child from Burns

Every day, more than 300 U.S. children are treated in emergency rooms for burn-related injuries. Younger children are more likely to sustain injuries from hot liquids or steam, while older children are more likely to sustain injuries caused by direct contact with fire.

#### To help prevent burns from fires:

- Install and maintain smoke alarms in your home, on every floor and near all bedrooms. Test smoke alarms monthly.
- Create and practice a family fire-escape plan. Make sure everyone knows at least two ways out of every room and identify a central meeting place outside.
- Never leave food unattended on the stove. Supervise or restrict children's use of stoves, ovens or microwaves.

#### To help prevent burns from scalding water:

- Infants can't get out of water that may be too hot. Set your water heater's thermostat to 120 degrees or lower.

— Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



## Your Healthy Heart

### Have a Tasty Thanksgiving — with Less Salt

It's easy to cut salt — without sacrificing flavor — this Thanksgiving. Try these tips from the American Heart Association.

- **Turkey.** Look for a bird that hasn't been injected with a sodium solution. Check the fine print on the packaging and look for terms such as "broth," "saline" or "sodium solution." Sodium levels in unseasoned fresh meats are around 100 mg or less per 4-ounce serving.
- **Stuffing.** Compare nutrition labels and choose the bread with the lowest amount of sodium you can find. Use sage, thyme, oreg-

ano, basil and other savory herbs for flavor.

- **Mashed potatoes.** Replace some or all of the salt in your traditional recipe with roasted smashed garlic, garlic powder or onion powder.
- **Green bean casserole.** Rinse and drain canned beans to remove up to 40% of the sodium.
- **Vegetables.** Cook veggies with less salt (or none) and instead pair them with herbs and spices.

— Source: American Heart Association

## Time to Quit?

### The Great American Smokeout Is Nov. 19

Quitting smoking can be hard, so a good plan can help you get past symptoms of withdrawal.

1. **Set a quit date.** Choose the Great American Smokeout date or another day within the next two weeks.
2. **Tell your family and friends you plan to quit.** Share your quit date and ask for support. A daily email, text or phone call can help you stay on course. Plan a smoke-free lunch date or game night to distract yourself. Or gather your family to cook a special meal together.
3. **Plan for challenges.** Each urge to smoke is short — usually lasting only 3 to 5 minutes. But these moments can feel intense. Before your quit day, write down healthy ways to cope: drinking water, taking a walk, listening to a favorite song, playing a game or calling a friend.
4. **Remove cigarettes from your home, car and workplace.** Throw away cigarettes, matches, lighters and ashtrays. Clean your car, home and workplace. Old cigarette odors can cause cravings.
5. **Talk to your pharmacist, doctor or quitline coach (800-QUIT-NOW) about quitting options.** Nicotine patches, gum or other approved medicines may help with cravings.



— Sources: American Cancer Society; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## DID YOU KNOW?

### What Is Gestational Diabetes?

Gestational diabetes is a type of diabetes that develops only during pregnancy. Diabetes means your blood glucose, also called blood sugar, is too high. Your body uses glucose for energy. Too much glucose in your blood is not good for you or your baby. Gestational diabetes is usually diagnosed during late pregnancy. Treating it can help both you and your baby stay healthy. You can protect your baby and yourself by taking action right away to control your blood glucose levels. If you have gestational diabetes, a diabetes healthcare team will likely be part of your prenatal care. Your team might include a doctor who treats diabetes, a diabetes educator and a dietitian to help you plan meals. Blood-sugar levels may return to normal after delivery, but you may be at increased risk of developing diabetes later if you had gestational diabetes.



— Source: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases



## Ask the Experts

### How Can I Cut Down on Stress During the Holiday Season?

**Q:** The holidays are coming, and I'm already feeling stressed. What can I do to make the season a more relaxed one?

**A:** Try to prevent undue stress in the first place, especially if the holidays have taken an emotional toll on you in the past. Be realistic. The holidays don't have to be perfect. As families change and grow, traditions and rituals often change as well. Choose a few to hold on to, and be open to creating new ones. Set aside differences. Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all your holiday expectations. Stick to a budget. Before you go gift and food shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend. Don't try to buy happiness with an avalanche of gifts. Try these alternatives: Donate to a charity in someone's name, give homemade gifts or start a family gift exchange.

— Source: Mayo Clinic



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**DRY WINTER SKIN?**

**These Tips Can Help**

During the coldest months of the year, dry skin is often caused by a loss of skin oils. But there are ways to help your skin retain its natural oils:

- Skip the long, hot soapy showers and baths. Water should be as cool as is comfortable. Baths and showers should be as short as possible — just long enough to accomplish soaping and rinsing. Choose a moisturizing soap.
- After getting out of the bath, blot (do not rub) your skin to dry off. There is an almost microscopically thin layer of protective skin that will be rubbed off with vigorous towelings.

- While the skin is still wet, apply a moisturizer to trap the moisture in the skin.
- Do everything possible to keep the air in your home moist. A cold-steam vaporizer is your best bet, and it should run constantly. Other ways to help keep a room moist include adding potted plants, pans of water on the radiator or wet towels hung on a clothesline in the bathroom. These may help somewhat in relieving the dry conditions.

— Source: Brown University

**Carpal Tunnel Syndrome  
 Non-Surgical Treatments  
 Are Available**

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is a condition brought on by increased pressure on the median nerve at the wrist. When the pressure from the swelling becomes great enough to disturb the way the nerve works, numbness, tingling and pain may be felt in the hand and fingers. Symptoms may often be relieved without surgery. Changing the patterns of hand use or keeping the wrist splinted may help reduce pressure on the nerve. Wearing wrist splints at night may relieve symptoms that interfere with sleep. A steroid injection into the carpal tunnel may help relieve the symptoms. When symptoms are severe or don't improve with treatment, surgery may be needed.

— Source: American Society for Surgery of the Hand

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