

# Hints from the Heart



## Diet and Diabetes

Diabetes is on the rise, yet most cases of diabetes are preventable with healthy lifestyle changes. Some can even be reversed. The bottom line is that you have more control over your health than you think. If you're concerned about diabetes, you can make a difference by eating a healthy diet, keeping your weight in check, and getting exercise.

Eating right for diabetes comes down to three things. What you eat, when you eat and how much you eat. **What you eat** should simply focus on vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. A diabetes diet is simply a healthy eating plan that is high in nutrients, low in fat, and moderate in calories. **When you eat** consists of keeping regular meal and snack times to help regulate your blood sugar levels. **How much you eat** is important because portion sizes matter. Even if you eat very healthy meals, if you eat too much you will gain weight, which is a factor in diabetes.

Here are some tips for making the transition easier to change your diet:

**Pamper your senses-** Taste isn't the only sensory pleasure. Look to the other senses—touch, sound, smell, sight—for indulgence. Fill your house with plants and flowers, get a massage, take a long shower, listen to your favorite music, play with a pet, sit in the garden, or light scented candles. When feeling pampered, you are less likely to turn to food for comfort.

**Get enough rest-** If you're tired, your body will crave sugar and other quick energy fixes. This can easily lead to overeating, rising and falling blood sugar levels, and mood swings. Get to bed on time and try taking a short nap if you are overly exhausted.

**Get to the root of your reasons for eating-** Ask yourself, am I hungry for food or am I feeling hunger for something else, such as comfort? If it is the latter, try getting comfort through other means. Ask for a hug from a loved one, curl up with a cup of hot tea and a great book or your favorite movie, light some candles and take a bubble bath, or call a friend who makes you laugh. There are many ways to satisfy your need for comfort that don't involve food. You just need to find what works for you!

For more information or helpful tips, go to [www.helpguide.org](http://www.helpguide.org), keyword: DIABETES.



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