

Diabetic Monthly

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Gunnison Valley Diabetes Self-Management Education Program
45 East 100 North Gunnison, Utah 84634

Support Group for January will be Hemoglobin A1C tests

By Angie Merchant, RN,
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It's that time of year again to check A1C levels at support group. Through support group we are able to offer a major reduction in the cost of the A1C test. It will cost \$5.00 for the test, but only cash or checks are accepted. Insurance companies will not be billed for the test. This is a great opportunity to have your blood tested without the high cost. I would also encourage anyone who is concerned that they may be at risk of diabetes to have the test also. Through support group a diagnosis of diabetes is not necessary, which means you can bring friends and family members to have theirs checked as well. Most people have diabetes for quite some time before they are diagnosed.

When you have diabetes, it is recommended that an A1C is checked every 3-6 months. They will be offered through the Diabetic Program in January and June each year to satisfy this requirement. The A1C test measures the amount of glucose that attaches to protein in the red blood cells. Because red blood cells live for about three months, A1C tests show your average blood glucose during that time. The greater the amount of glucose in your blood, the higher your A1C results will be. High blood glucose over a long period of time may cause damage to large and small blood vessels. This may increase your risk of diabetic complications.

I hope that you will be able to make it this month to support group. Everyone is welcome, and I look forward to seeing you here.

Support Group Schedules

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Gunnison Support Group

Gunnison Homecare building at 45 East 100 North Gunnison

January 18, 2011 at 3:00 – 4:00pm

Monroe Support Group

South Sevier Senior Center at 140 West 100 South Monroe

January 25, 2011 at 11:00am – 12:00pm

Do You Want to Conquer Sugar Cravings?

Diabetes Wellness News, Nov.2010,Vol16,Number11, pg5.

When I do health fairs or talk to my diabetes patients, I am frequently asked, “How do I stop these sugar cravings? As I listen to my patients I also tend to listen to the messages that my body is sending me. Why do we crave sweets? Well, for starters, they taste good and we frequently reward ourselves by eating something sweet. Next, they make us feel good and provide a natural high by releasing endorphins that both calm and relax us.

An occasional sweet treat is not a bad thing; however, we frequently overindulge and because sugar is added to many processed foods, we are exposed to much more sugar than we probably realize. Did you know—according to the American Heart Association- that Americans consume 22 teaspoons of sugar a day on average? While the daily recommended intake of sugar by the AHA is six teaspoons for women and nine teaspoons for men.

Following are some tips that may help you conquer those excessive sugar cravings and help you eat healthier.

- 1. MOVE:** when you are craving sweets try getting up and moving—walk around the block, walk up and down the stairs, change your thinking focus and enjoy the scenery.
- 2. CHOOSE FRUIT:** fruit can provide fiber, vitamins, and minerals, and satisfy that craving for something sweet. Stock up on healthy snacks that are high in protein and fiber: nuts, dried fruits (use in small quantities). Bag these in serving sizes so you can grab them and go when the craving strikes.
- 3. EAT SMALL PORTIONS:** choose the snack size; place a small serving in a baggie to have handy, but be sure you don't overindulge by eating multiple servings. If just a taste doesn't do the trick, you don't want to tempt yourself by having more on hand.
- 4. COLD TURKEY:** eliminate the simple sugars totally; it may be difficult for the first 72 hours, but you'll find that the cravings soon diminish and your taste buds can be trained to prefer healthier options.
- 5. COMBINE SUGAR WITH A HEALTHY SNACK:** try trail mix; seeds, nuts, and a few M&M's for that chocolate craving. Dip your apple or banana in a small amount of chocolate sauce.
- 6. CHEW GUM:** when you are craving that cookie or brownie, pop a stick of gum in your mouth; this will provide you with the sweet taste you crave without the calories.
- 7. EVERYTHING IN MODERATION:** don't totally deprive yourself- an occasional sweet treat is not harmful, it is the overindulgence that causes the problem. Remember, if you are going to eat the fancy dessert, eliminate another carbohydrate from your meal.
- 8. EAT SMALL, FREQUENT MEALS:** choose protein and fiber-rich foods: vegetables, whole grains and fruit. By eating every few hours you won't be starving and won't overindulge.
- 9. LIMIT THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS:** even though they do not affect your blood glucose levels they may actually stimulate your cravings. Choosing water over diet drinks may help curb your appetite.
- 10. PLAN YOUR STRATEGY:** behavior change is difficult. Establish a goal and focus on a single item at a time; once that is ingrained move on to the next. For example, identify one time of day when you crave a sweet and be ready with a plan—go for a walk, or have alternate snacks available. Success comes from planning.
- 11. BE PREPARED FOR BARRIERS AND HAVE A CONTINGENCY PLAN:** let family, friends, and co-workers know of your plan. A support system will encourage you with your goals; they will also be cognizant for the need to not tempt you with a tasty dessert. Who knows, you may identify others facing the same struggles and you can support each other.

Tip of the Month

Question: Does honey have the same effect as sugar on people with diabetes? What about brown sugar versus white sugar?

Answer:

Honey, brown sugar, and white sugar all have a similar effect on your blood glucose. These three sweeteners provide both calories and carbohydrates in the form of simple sugars. They do not provide any protein or fat on their own. The carbohydrates in them will raise your blood glucose after being digested. It is okay for people with diabetes to use them sparingly. Just consider portion sizes and the amount of carbohydrate in each when planning meals:



1 tablespoon honey = 64 calories, 17 grams carbohydrate (glycemic index = about 55)
1 tablespoon packed brown sugar = 52 calories, 13 grams carbohydrate (glycemic index = about 68)
1 tablespoon white/granulated sugar = 49 calories, 13 grams carbohydrate (glycemic index = about 68)

Notice that each of these has a different glycemic index, which is one tool you can use in diabetes meal planning. Honey has a slightly lower glycemic index than white or brown sugar. This means that white sugar and brown sugar will raise blood glucose a little faster than if you were to have an equal amount of honey. However, the rate at which these sweeteners increase blood glucose changes depending on what foods they are eaten with.

Changes being made at Gunnison Valley Homecare

I wanted to take this time to let you know that things are changing a bit right now in our Home Care and Diabetic office. I will be taking over as the Home Care Manager, and will be finding someone to help with the diabetic program. I have every intention of staying involved in the diabetic program. I have loved teaching support group classes, writing newsletters, organizing the health fair, doing individual education sessions, and all the other fun stuff that goes with diabetic education. It has been a great experience, and I want to stay involved. That being said, I will be finding a replacement for myself for many of these day-to-day responsibilities. I will still be doing the individual teaching sessions for awhile, and I will make sure that the diabetic program is well taken care of.

As Home Care Manager, I will have the opportunity to serve you when you need it the most. The nurses and staff here at Gunnison Home Care are such great people to work with. I know that when they are out in your homes, they are providing top rated nursing and therapy services. I wish you the best of health this coming year, but know that you can count on us if the need arises.

Thank you so much for your support of the diabetic program. I hope you will stop in and say "Hello" when you get the chance.

Sincerely,

Angie Merchant



Recipe of the Month: Pumpkin Seed and Cluster Snack Mix

Serves 8; serving size: about 1/3 cup per serving

Ingredients:

- ½ cup salted pumpkin seeds.
- ¼ cup unsalted peanuts
- 2 cups (about 4 oz) high-fiber cluster style cereal
- ¼ cup golden raisins, or dried cranberries
- 2 Tbsps mini chocolate chips

Preparation:

1. Place a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until hot.
2. Cook the pumpkin seeds and peanuts 2 to 3 minutes or until beginning to lightly brown, stirring frequently.
3. Set aside on paper towel in a thin layer to cool quickly, about 5 minutes.
4. Combine the pumpkin seed mixture with the remaining ingredients.

Nutrition information:

Calories: 110

Calories from fat: 35

Total Fat: 4 g

Cholesterol: 0 mg

Sodium: 175mg

Total Carbohydrates: 19 g

Dietary Fiber: 5 g

Sugars: 6 g

Protein: 3 g

Thought of the Month:

If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there. - Lewis Carroll



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