



Wellness-Fitness Newsletter

Fall 2010

AMERICAN DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

A new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* estimates that about 24 million (or 1 in 10) U.S. adults have diabetes.

If current trends continue, by 2050 the number will likely increase to 1 in 3. Most cases will be attributable to type 2 diabetes, which is largely preventable.

Unless the trends of rising obesity and inactivity slow or reverse, diabetes estimates will continue to skyrocket. Only 10 years ago, the CDC projected 39 million Americans would have diabetes by mid-century. The new CDC report increases that projection to between 76 and 100 million: an unprecedented jump in just 10 years.

Additionally, another 57 million adults likely have pre-diabetes, a condition that places them at increased risk for developing type 2 diabetes and heart disease. These are alarming projections, considering diabetes is the nation's seventh leading cause of death.

Diabetes Defined

Diabetes is a chronic medical condition associated with abnormally high levels of glucose (sugar) in the blood. People with diabetes have trouble converting food into energy.

With normal metabolism, after a meal, food is broken down into simple sugars that enter the bloodstream. As a result, blood glucose rises and triggers the pancreas to produce insulin, a hormone that helps cells absorb glucose. In a diabetic state, there is a build-up of blood glucose levels (hyperglycemia) due to one of two problems: either the pancreas produces too little insulin (type 1); or the pancreas produces sufficient insulin, but the cells are unable to use insulin to metabolize glucose. This is known as insulin resistance (type 2).

What makes diabetes so dangerous is its silent progression. Most people don't realize they have the disease for many years. Unfortunately, those with undiagnosed diabetes may suffer irreversible damage to the heart, eyes, kidneys, and limbs—usually before any symptoms appear.

Prevention

The good news is that you can take steps to delay or halt the progression of the disease. Start with an annual blood test that includes a fasting glucose test to help you identify any problems early. Just losing a bit of weight (5 to 7 percent) can help as well.

*CDC News Release (October 22, 2010)

<http://cdc.gov/media/pressrel/2010/r101022.html>



Diabetes Risk Factors

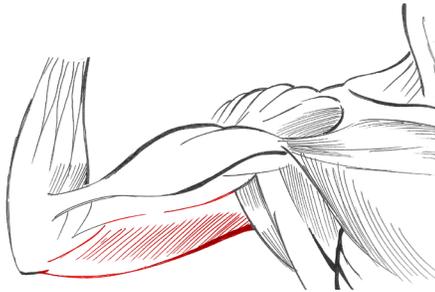
- Being overweight or obese
- High blood pressure: 140/90 mmHg (millimeters of mercury) or higher
- Abnormal cholesterol with HDL ("good") that is 35 mg/dL (milligrams per deciliter) or lower, and a triglyceride level higher than 250 mg/dL
- Physical inactivity (exercising fewer than three times a week)
- A parent, brother, or sister with diabetes
- Of African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander descent
- Glucose levels higher than normal
- Aged 45 years or older

Additional Resources

- Healthy Weight Check
www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi
- Health History
<https://familyhistory.hhs.gov>
- National Diabetes Education Program
<http://ndep.nih.gov>



TRICEP TRAINING



Lifting groceries, shoveling snow, or carrying a child is easier when you have strong, toned triceps.

The tricep is a large three-headed muscle that covers the entire backside of the upper arm. This muscle's primary function is to straighten the arm by contracting to extend the elbow, and it's secondary function is to bring the arms down towards the body.

Tricep Tips

There are many different exercises to tone and strengthen the triceps. When starting a new tricep routine, perform only one set with moderate weight for 10 to 15 repetitions. This serves to develop adequate circulation to the muscles, gently condition joints, and build muscular endurance. The goal is to build up gradually so as to prevent injury when you begin working out more intensely.

Start light and add weight slowly with an emphasis on safety and proper form. Excessively heavy weight leads to a decreased range of motion and minimizes the positive outcomes.

Resistance training is beneficial to people at any age and fitness level. Remember to check with the health professionals at your FOH Wellness/Fitness Center for tips and information. Always consult with your physician prior to beginning any new exercise program.

Strengthen and tone your triceps with these easy but effective exercises.



Cable Triceps Press-down

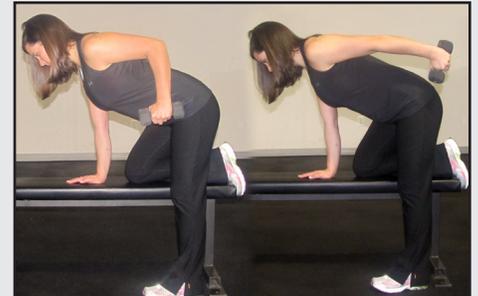
Attach a bar to a pulley. With arms bent at an approximately 90-degree angle, grip the handle with your hands no more than 3-5 inches apart in the middle of the handle. You can also try using a rope handle, which allows for a parallel hand grip.

Keep your upper arms stabilized by your sides throughout the entire movement. Slowly press the bar or ropes toward your thighs (just a few inches short) until your arms are extended. Do not lean or allow your shoulders to hunch forward. Return to the starting position by slowly resisting the weight until your forearms are just above parallel to the floor.



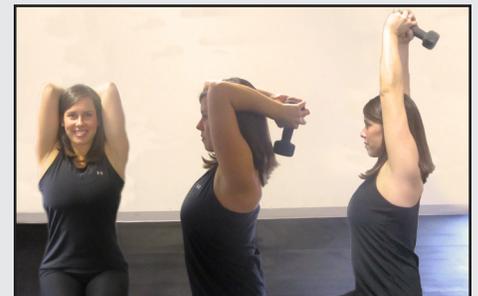
Tricep Push-up

This exercise is a basic pushup, but with hands positioned close together. As you lower your body down, make sure to keep your elbows close to your body to keep all the tension on the tricep muscle. If you let your elbows turn out, you will be working more of the pectoral muscles (chest) than your triceps. For maximum benefit, keep your body parallel to the floor with your bottom pushed down. Push up to the starting position while keeping your elbows in during the entire range of the movement.



Dumbbell Kickbacks

Place one knee and one hand on a bench. Keep your lower back in a neutral position and abdominals tight. Hold a dumbbell in a neutral grip and position your upper arm close/parallel to your side. Bend your elbow to 90 degrees or so that your forearm hangs perpendicular to the floor. Holding the dumbbell, straighten your elbow until your arm is fully extended. Slowly return dumbbell to the initial position. Do not alter shoulder or wrist throughout the movement.



Triceps Extensions

Stand or sit upright, and hold a dumbbell overhead with both hands. Slowly lower the weight behind your head, keeping your arms close to your ears, and then slowly raise the weight back overhead. Repeat with a moderate weight for 10 to 15 repetitions.



MIND/STRESS CONNECTION

Maybe it's in your head, but stress affects every cell in the body. Long-term stress can lead to headaches, stomach aches, sleep problems, backaches, fatigue, illness, and anxiety. Understanding the mind/stress/health connection will help you better manage stress and improve your health and well-being.

Fight/Flight/Fade

The stress response, a survival mechanism that's "wired" into human physiology, is necessary for mobilizing quick reflexes when there is imminent danger, such as swerving to avoid a car crash.

When you perceive a threat, stress hormones rush into your bloodstream increasing heart rate, blood pressure, and glucose levels. Other hormones also suppress "nonessential" functions like digestion and the immune system, which is why chronic stress can leave you more vulnerable to illness.

Danger triggers the stress response but, unfortunately, so can work conflict, overwhelming debt, memories, anticipatory fear, or frustrated goals. Although one bad day at work won't compromise your health, weeks or months of unremitting stress can dampen your immune response and create a risk of disease.

Cruise Control

It's not always possible to remove stress from your life. The bills won't disappear and neither will demands and family responsibilities. This is why stress management, rather than stress elimination, is the key to successful stress reduction. The goal is to keep your nervous system from going into chronic overdrive.

When you can't remove the source of stress, try adjusting your perception to alter your response. To do this, you may need to reassess your expectations or reframe (change the way you view) the situation. It may be challenging but it is achievable.

Take for instance Victor Frankl (1905-1997), the renowned psychologist whose foundational theory grew out of his experiences in WWII concentration camps. His

observations while imprisoned convinced him that people are uniquely capable of transcending even the most extreme physical and psychological stress... but they must choose to do so.

Frankl wrote, "...everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way." (from *Man's Search for Meaning*).

Combat Your Stress

If you suffer from chronic stress and can't influence or change the situation, then change your approach. Be flexible. You may have to try various options.

Remember these guidelines:

- You have the ability to choose your response to stressors.
- Recognize when you don't have control, and let it go.
- Don't get anxious about situations that you cannot change.
- Take control of your own reactions, and focus on what makes you feel calm and in control. This may take some practice, but it pays off in peace of mind.
- Develop a vision for healthy living, wellness, and personal-professional growth. Set realistic goals to help you realize your vision.

Relax and Recharge

Be sure to make time for fun and relaxation so you'll be better able to handle life's stressors. Carve at least 15 minutes out of your busy day to take care of yourself. Also, remember that exercise is an excellent stress reliever as it produces endorphins, which are brain chemicals that counteract stress.

While you can't avoid stress, you can minimize it by changing how you choose to respond to it. The ultimate reward for your efforts is a healthy, balanced life, with time for work, relationships, relaxation, and fun.



HUNGER REDEFINED

It's been said that weight control is a function of diet and exercise: calories in/calories out. But anyone who has tried to apply that logic to "real life" knows that it's tough to maintain a healthy weight based simply on a formula. After setting goals, planning menus, and scheduling exercise, the biggest obstacle continues to be appetite, defined as an instinctive physical desire, especially for food or drink.

Continuum of Craving

When restricting calories, hunger is particularly hard to manage. Clearly, hunger doesn't turn on and off like a light switch. Instead, it seems to be a continuum of varying intensities. At one end of the continuum is the vague ache of hunger that initially creeps into our awareness and quickly becomes distracting. At the other end of the continuum exists the feeling of complete satisfaction that comes after we have eaten the right amount of just what we wanted.

New Rules

Controlling hunger via "calories in" goes beyond eating when you're hungry and stopping when you're full. If you are restricting calories, and thereby eating less food, you will need to be prepared to manage inevitable hunger.

To get an edge on curbing your appetite, try redefining hunger by examining its roots, and always check where your hunger exists on the continuum.

- Before giving in to hunger, ask, "Am I eating because I'm legitimately hungry, or because I'm bored, or am I just eating out of habit?"
- Is it something else? Are you dehydrated? Make sure you don't mistake thirst for hunger and be sure to drink plenty of fluids.
- Is your hunger situational or physiological? Are you physically hungry or responding to social cues that signal that it's mealtime?
- Don't allow too much time to elapse between meals. If over three hours have elapsed since your last meal, you may be legitimately hungry — just be sure you make a healthy snack/meal choice.
- Adopt the Japanese principle of *hara hachi bunme*: eat only until you are 80 percent full. *Hara hachi bunme* is one of several habits associated with better health, according to the book *The Blue Zones: Lessons for Living Longer from the People Who've Lived the Longest*.

When trying to control weight, hunger can feel like your worst enemy, but it is only a signal from your body that requires attention. It's risky to ignore hunger. If you deprive yourself for too long, when you finally do eat something, there is a greater chance you'll overeat. Instead of starving yourself, head off hunger by planning to eat healthy low calorie snacks approximately every three hours throughout the day.

When you do feel hunger pangs, check that they are not just food cues making you hungry. And during a meal, remember the *hara hachi bunme* rule— if you're not sure you can gauge when you're about 80 percent full, start by leaving behind 20 percent of the meal (assuming normal sized portions).

FOH provides a variety of health and wellness promotion services including weight management programs and nutritional information. For more information about these resources, contact your Wellness/Fitness center.



Weighty Decision: Pumpkin Pie

While pumpkins are rich in vitamin A and fiber, pumpkin pie is a high-calorie dessert. One slice (1/8 of 9" pie) is about 350 calories.

For a lower fat pumpkin filling, use an egg substitute, light cream, or low-fat evaporated milk in the recipe. For a healthier crust, try a crispy crumb crust using corn flakes or nuts. Better yet, go crust-free and save up to 200 calories!

More Light Recipes and Tips

- Center for Disease Control
http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/energy_density.html
- Health and Human Services
http://www.smallstep.gov/step_2/step2_recipes.html

Wellness within your reach.

800.457.9808

www.FOH.hhs.gov

