
MARCH 2025
VOL 06
REVERSE IT!
Going above and beyond to provide care that truly nourishes and inspires you on your journey to reversing T2 Diabetes.
5 DAY LOW CARB MEAL PLAN
KEEP MOVING
The Imporatance of Movement for Diabetics
GLP1 TREATMENT FOR DIABETICS
Reversing TYPE2 DIABETES you can do it
INSULIN Resistance
ESSENTIAL ELECTROLYTES FOR DIABETICS
RE VIVE DAILY ELECTROLYTES
SUGAR FREE
FREE EASTER RECIPES

WE GO ABOVE AND BEYOND TO PROVIDE CARE THAT TRULY NOURISHES YOU ON YOUR JOURNEY TO REVERSING T2 DIABETES

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Hello Friends..!

As we step into a new season, it's time to challenge the mindset that type 2 diabetes is a lifelong sentence. The truth is, remission is possible. It's not an easy road, but with dedication, habit changes, consistency, and determination, it can be done. The real question is: how badly do you want it?

This Edition, Reverse It! is packed with science-backed strategies to help you reclaim your health. We dive deep into insulin resistance and how to reverse it, the role of GLP-1 medications for type 2 diabetes, the power of hydration and exercise, and, of course, delicious low-carb recipes to support your journey. But beyond the knowledge and practical tools, the real transformation starts with you.
We must move past excuses—yes, the cost of nutritious food is a challenge, but it is also the medicine that drives reversal. Our health is too valuable to be placed on the back burner. Every small step, every conscious choice, every meal prepared with intention is a step towards remission.

As we move into autumn and Easter approaches, it's important to resist the temptation of chocolate and instead choose appropriate alternatives. With colder months ahead, the pull toward carb-heavy comfort foods will be strong, but staying mindful of your choices now will make a world of difference in your journey toward remission.

Type 2 diabetes doesn't define you. Your actions do. Let this be the month you commit fully to change, not just for the short term, but for life. Because when you truly want something, nothing can stand in your way.

Here's to taking control, making empowered choices, and proving that reversal is within reach.

Stay strong, stay committed, stay blessed and ***reverse it!***

Linda ♡


keeping
HYDRATED

PROPER HYDRATION

FOR DIABETICS

This article was contributed by the REVIVE Team

Good hydration is our ability to maintain sufficient water, both inside and outside our cells. But, doing this isn't as simple as drinking water. For one thing, we need enough sodium to hold onto the water. Because our bodies are pretty salty, water alone isn't enough. Contact lens wearers don't put water in their eyes - it burns like hell. They use saline solution, which is basically salt water. Athletes who drink only water during endurance events can get into real trouble with a condition called hyponatremia – literally too-low sodium. This illustrates how important sodium is for hydration.

POTASSIUM FOR INTRA-CELLULAR HYDRATION

There are other important minerals for hydration too. Potassium is next. Most potassium is found inside our cells. As a result, we don't lose it as readily as sodium. When we sweat, for example, we lose mostly water and sodium. Nonetheless, human beings need about 4.7g of potassium per day, which should come mostly from food, but it's a good idea for your hydration to contain some potassium too. Interestingly, you don't want too much potassium in a liquid form, like some supplements contain, as it can disturb your heart rhythm and make you feel jittery.

WHERE DOES THE TERM "ELECTROLYTE" COME FROM?

Sodium and potassium are needed for things other than just maintaining water balance. Both particles carry a positive charge. The movement of sodium and potassium into and out of cells allows nerve signals to be transmitted. This is where the name electrolytes comes from. They are molecules that carry an electrical charge to help us function.

Here's an interesting bit of physiology: our brains have tens of billions of neurons that need electrolytes to fire. That's why one of the first signs of dehydration is confusion, along with loss of coordination, which shows how much our brains need electrolytes. Even if you're a little off with your electrolytes and fluid, it has a big impact on your cognitive performance. Older people face a magnified risk of losing their balance and falling when they are slightly dehydrated.

YOUR BRAIN IS THE ELECTRICAL CENTRE OF YOUR BODY

Magical Magnesium

The third critical electrolyte is magnesium. Not only does magnesium perform an important function in regulating nerve signals, but it is necessary for generating ATP, our body's energy currency. Magnesium is also essential for heart health and it is vital for hundreds of cellular processes in the body. Yet, it is surprising how many hydration products don't contain magnesium. Quick fact - MOST people are deficient in this essential mineral.

One of the important functions of magnesium is to help you relax. Magnesium is sometimes referred to as the relaxation mineral. It's helpful to take magnesium at night for sleep.

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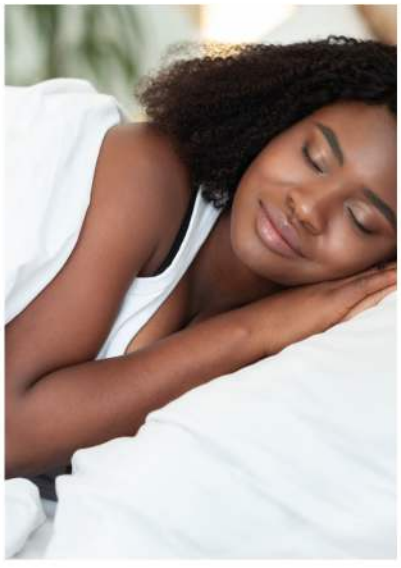
Magnesium has a calming effect on the brain by modulating GABA receptors and increasing their activity. Magnesium also helps to prevent muscle cramps during athletic events and for people on a low carb diet, or for those who practice intermittent fasting.



WHY DO ELECTROLYTE PRODUCTS CONTAIN SO MUCH SUGAR?

One thing that hydration products typically do not lack is sugar. They are usually stuffed with it. One popular hydration product in South Africa contains 93% sugar when you analyse the nutritional label. This presents a conundrum to people with diabetes, and other health conscious folks, who would prefer not having the extra sugar.

So, why do electrolytes contain so much sugar? The answer lies with the traditional formula for oral rehydration therapy which states that glucose helps speed up the absorption of electrolytes. This is true. Both sodium and glucose use a common transporter for absorption through the intestine. The presence of glucose helps activate this transporter. However, the good news is that, unless you are severely dehydrated, you don't need the sugar.

Electrolytes are absorbed just fine without it, albeit slightly slower. Remember, speed of absorption is not the problem that needs solving for everyday hydration and sports performance. For people with diabetes, this is super-important to understand.

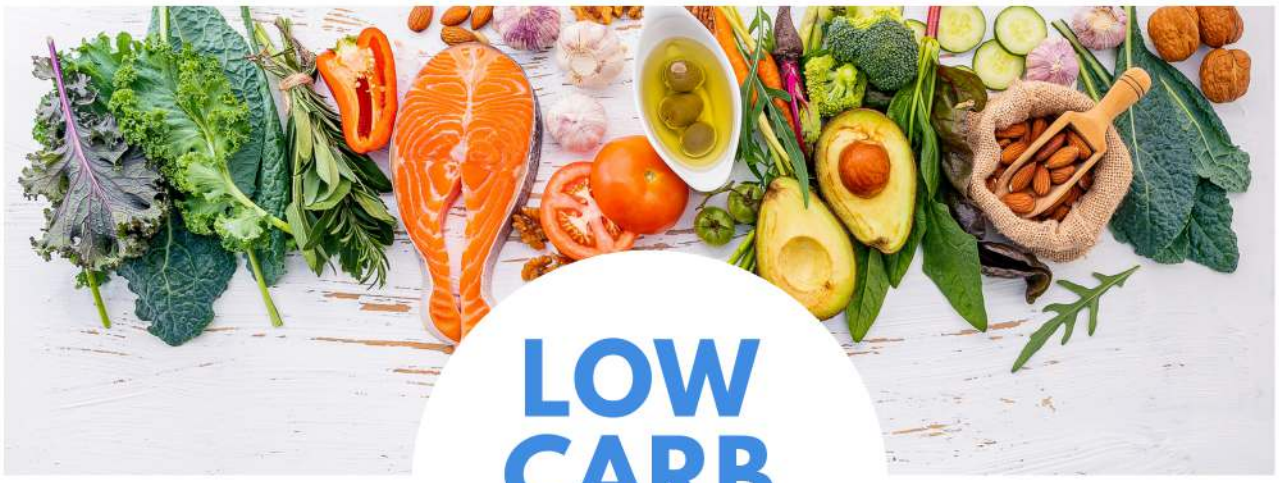
Stevia is a good substitute for sugar in a hydration product because it is a natural sweetener, unlike say, erythritol or sucralose. It is easy on the gut too, it doesn't have calories and it won't increase your glucose or insulin. Stevia also pairs well with the saltiness of the electrolytes, creating a palatable blend, like a good wine pairing. It is well tolerated by both Type 1s and Type 2s.

HYDRATION DURING EXERCISE

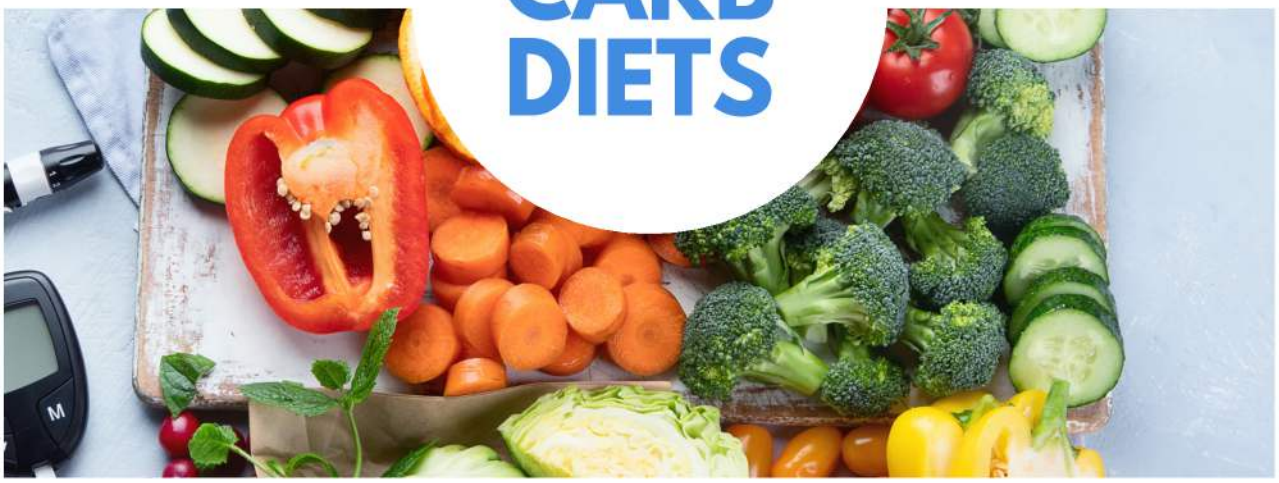
When exercising, diabetics need to replace lost fluid and electrolytes. However, the last thing a diabetic person needs is excess sugar. A well-formulated electrolyte, that doesn't contain sugar or chemicals, taken with sufficient water, goes a long way to maintaining exercise performance and keeping you healthy. The same is true when using a sauna, when faced with diarrhoea, or, on occasion, during alcohol consumption. Pregnancy and breast-feeding are other good use cases for electrolytes.

WHY DIABETICS NEED TO PAY ATTENTION TO HYDRATION

It is well known that excess blood glucose puts additional stress on the kidneys. These amazing organs are the filtration system of the body. They are the main mechanism for regulating fluid and sodium. When a person is slightly dehydrated, kidneys have to work harder. A hormone called aldosterone gets raised when sodium is in short supply and vasopressin increases when fluid levels are too low, in order to maintain blood pressure. However, when chronically elevated, these hormones cause metabolic problems. Maintaining good hydration levels and ensuring you aren't mineral deficient will help maintain overall metabolic health and allow your kidneys to do their job better.



LOW CARB DIETS



IF YOU ARE FOLLOWING A LOW CARB LIFESTYLE, ELECTROLYTES ARE AN ESSENTIAL TOOL TO KEEP YOU HYDRATED AND FEELING YOUR BEST.

Many people with diabetes are now following a lower carbohydrate approach to eating, something we believe in strongly. (It makes sense for non-diabetics too). Not only does this have the potential to reverse type 2 diabetes, but it provides the best chance for a Type 1 to maintain excellent glycemic control and avoid some of the long term complications that come with too much glucose volatility and excess insulin.

We think fasting is too risky for Type 1s. It presents additional challenges and goes against the idea that routine is a Type 1's best friend. However, fasting can be an effective tool for Type 2, especially if medically supervised. While fasting, a well-formulated electrolyte (without calories, sugars or additives) can provide the missing support and may be the answer to feeling good, managing hunger and not breaking your fast.

A LITTLE ABOUT REVIVE

REVIVE Daily Electrolytes is a functional hydration product, formulated specifically for people who put their health first. It is ideal for diabetics. REVIVE has higher sodium (than most other products), not too much potassium and sufficient magnesium, without the sugar, colouring and additives so common in the supplement industry. It is suited to both Type 1s and Type 2s.

If a diabetic person also has hypertension, existing kidney disease or is taking diuretic medication, we urge caution and input from a physician or endocrinologist. It is wise for diabetics to use any electrolyte conservatively, starting with half the dose diluted in a little more water than the usual product recommendations, and titrating up over time to a full dose, if well tolerated.

For REVIVE, this means 1 sachet per 1 litre of water and drinking only half (ie 500ml) per day. It's a good idea to monitor sugar levels and blood pressure if necessary. Check with your healthcare practitioner before changing your diet or introducing any supplement.

REVIVE
DAILY ELECTROLYTES

POWERED BY SALT
NOT SUGAR

NO SUGAR. NO CARBS. NO CALORIES. NO ADDITIVES.

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Use the code: **REVERSEIT** at check-out. Offer expires **31 March 2025.**

KEEP MOVING!

THE IMPORTANCE OF EXERCISE IN REVERSING INSULIN RESISTANCE

For many people living with type 2 diabetes or prediabetes, insulin resistance can feel like an uphill battle. But did you know that regular exercise can play a vital role in reversing it? The good news is that you don't need expensive gym memberships or fancy equipment to make a difference. With some creativity and determination, you can start exercising at home and improve your health without breaking the bank.

How Does Exercise Help?

Insulin resistance occurs when your body's cells stop responding effectively to insulin, leading to elevated blood sugar levels. Your muscle cells act l a vacuum cleaner. In order for the vacuum cleaner to work, it needs to be turned on. The same applies to your cell muscles; they are only activated when they are working. Exercise helps in two significant ways:

Improved Insulin Sensitivity: Physical activity encourages your muscles to absorb glucose from your bloodstream, lowering your blood sugar levels and making your body more responsive to insulin.

Weight Management: Maintaining a healthy weight reduces the strain on your body's insulin-regulating system

Simple Weight-Bearing Exercises for Home

Here are some easy, low-cost exercises to help you build strength, improve insulin sensitivity, and boost your overall health. All you need are items you likely already have at home.

SQUATS

Squats are excellent for working your legs and core. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, keep your back straight, and bend your knees as if sitting in a chair. Hold onto a sturdy chair for balance if needed. Aim for 10 to 15 squats and gradually increase as you get stronger.

WATER BOTTLE BICEP CURLS

Use 5-litre water bottles or any weighted object for this exercise. Hold a bottle in each hand and curl your arms upwards, keeping your elbows close to your body. This works your biceps and helps build upper body strength.

Wall Push-Ups

If traditional push-ups feel too challenging, try wall push-ups. Stand an arm's length away from a wall, place your palms against it, and push your body towards the wall and back. This is great for your chest, shoulders, and arms.

STEP-UPS

Use a sturdy step or a low stool for this cardio and strength-building exercise. Or steps in your home! Step up with one foot, bring the other foot up, then step down. Alternate legs and repeat for 1 to 2 minutes. This exercise strengthens your legs and gets your heart rate up.

CHAIR TRICEP DIPS

Sit on the edge of a sturdy chair, place your hands on the seat beside your hips, and move your hips forward off the chair. Lower your body by bending your elbows, then push back up. This targets your triceps and can be done with no extra equipment.

TIPS TO STAY MOTIVATED

- Start Small: Even 10 minutes a day can make a difference. Gradually increase the time and intensity as you feel stronger.
- Set Goals: Write down your goals, such as “I will do 10 squats every morning.”
- Track Progress: Keep a log of your exercises to see how far you’ve come.
- Make It Fun: Play your favourite music or exercise with family members to stay engaged.

Exercise doesn’t just help with insulin resistance; it also improves your mood, boosts energy levels, and supports overall health. By incorporating these simple exercises into your routine, you’re taking a powerful step towards reversing insulin resistance and living a healthier life. Remember, consistency is key, and every small effort adds up.

You have the tools and the power to transform your health—starting today, right from your home!

This 5-day low-carb meal plan is designed to help you stay within a maximum of 30g total carbs per day while enjoying balanced, satisfying meals. Each day includes nutrient-dense, whole foods that support stable energy levels, reduce cravings, and promote overall health.
This plan will help you maintain steady blood glucose while keeping meals simple and delicious. Whether you're new to low-carb eating or looking for fresh ideas, this guide will set you up for success.
Let's get started!

DAY 1

Breakfast (6g carbs)

- Scrambled eggs with spinach and a side of cherry tomatoes (1/2 cup cherry tomatoes: 3g carbs)
- 1 small avocado (3g carbs)

Lunch (12g carbs)

- Grilled chicken salad with mixed greens, cucumber, and a few olives (1/2 cup cucumber: 2g carbs, 1/4 cup olives: 3g carbs)
- 1 medium tomato (7g carbs)

Dinner (12g carbs)

- Grilled salmon or hake with a side of roasted broccoli (1 cup broccoli: 6g carbs)
- 1/2 cup cooked green beans (6g carbs)

DAY 2

Breakfast (6g carbs)

- Omelette with mushrooms, cheese, and a side of sliced cucumber (1/2 cup cucumber: 2g carbs)
- 1/4 cup raspberries (4g carbs)

Lunch (12g carbs)

- Tuna salad with mixed greens, cherry tomatoes, and avocado (1/2 cup cherry tomatoes: 3g carbs, 1/4 avocado: 2g carbs)
- 1 medium bell pepper (7g carbs)

Dinner (12g carbs)

- Baked chicken thighs with a side of sautéed spinach (1 cup spinach: 1g carb)
- 1/2 cup cauliflower rice (6g carbs)
- 1/2 cup cooked zucchini (5g carbs)

DAY 3

Breakfast (6g carbs)

- Greek yogurt with a few almonds (1/4 cup plain Greek yogurt: 2g carbs)
- 1/2 cup blueberries (4g carbs)

Lunch (12g carbs)

- Cobb salad with mixed greens, bacon, boiled egg, and avocado (1/4 avocado: 2g carbs)
- 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes (3g carbs)
- 1/2 cup cooked broccoli (7g carbs)

Dinner (12g carbs)

- Grilled steak with a side of roasted Brussels sprouts (1 cup Brussels sprouts: 8g carbs)
- 1/2 cup sautéed mushrooms (4g carbs)

DAY 4

Breakfast (6g carbs)

- Smoothie with spinach, avocado, and a few berries (1/4 avocado: 2g carbs, 1/4 cup mixed berries: 4g carbs)

Lunch (12g carbs)

- Chicken Caesar salad (no croutons) with mixed greens and Parmesan cheese (1/2 cup romaine lettuce: 1g carb)
- 1/2 medium cucumber (5g carbs)
- 1/2 medium tomato (6g carbs)

Dinner (12g carbs)

- Grilled pork chops with a side of asparagus (1 cup asparagus: 5g carbs)
- 1/2 cup cooked bell peppers (7g carbs)

DAY 5

Breakfast (6g carbs)

- Poached eggs with a side of sautéed spinach and mushrooms (1 cup spinach: 1g carb, 1/2 cup mushrooms: 2g carbs)
- 1/2 small avocado (3g carbs)

Lunch (12g carbs)

- Tuna lettuce wraps with mixed greens, cheese, and avocado (1/4 avocado: 2g carbs)
- 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes (3g carbs)
- 1/2 cup sliced bell peppers (7g carbs)

Dinner (12g carbs)

- Baked hake with a side of steamed green beans (1/2 cup green beans: 6g carbs)
- 1/2 cup roasted cauliflower (6g carbs)

ESSENTIAL SUPPLEMENTS

Berberine is often compared to Metformi. Both berberine and Metformin work through similar mechanisms, including enhancing insulin sensitivity, reducing glucose production in the liver, and improving lipid metabolism. Some studies suggest that berberine can be as effective as Metformin in lowering blood sugar levels, making it a potential alternative or complementary option for managing Type 2 diabetes. Berberine can be taken with Metformin, but its important to tell you doctor you're taking it, as they may want to reduce the Metformin dosage.

Magnesium Glycinate offers several benefits for individuals with Type 2 diabetes, including improved insulin sensitivity, which enhances insulin action and helps regulate blood sugar levels. Its anti-inflammatory properties can combat chronic inflammation linked to insulin resistance, while its calming effects help manage stress and anxiety, which are important for maintaining stable blood sugar levels and overall emotional well-being. It also promotes better sleep quality by regulating neurotransmitters involved in sleep and alleviates muscle cramps by supporting proper muscle relaxation, making it a well-rounded supplement for overall health.

Vitamin B12 is crucial for individuals with Type 2 diabetes, especially those taking Metformin, because Metformin depletes B12 in our bodies. This deficiency can result in symptoms like fatigue, weakness, and neuropathy, worsening diabetes-related complications. Adequate vitamin B12 levels support nerve health, helping to alleviate nerve pain and reduce the risk of diabetic neuropathy. Additionally, B12 is vital for energy production, which can combat fatigue—a common issue in diabetics. Some studies even suggest that vitamin B12 may positively influence insulin sensitivity and glucose metabolism, aiding in blood sugar control alongside Metformin therapy.

Inulin, a prebiotic fibre, offers several benefits for managing Type 2 diabetes by stabilizing blood sugar levels through slowed digestion and carbohydrate absorption, thus reducing post-meal spikes. It also promotes a healthy gut microbiome by serving as food for beneficial bacteria, which enhances metabolic health and insulin sensitivity. As a soluble fibre, inulin increases feelings of fullness, aiding in weight management—a crucial factor in improving insulin resistance. Additionally, studies suggest that inulin may lower total and LDL cholesterol levels, supporting overall cardiovascular health.

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WHAT IS INSULIN RESISTANCE?

- We eat food or drink – any meal containing carbohydrates, proteins, or fats.
- Food is converted into glucose in the blood, raising blood sugar levels.
- The pancreas releases insulin, which is meant to unlock insulin receptors on cells.
- Insulin's job is to open the glucose channel so that glucose can enter the cell for energy.
- Due to insulin resistance (caused by inflammation and excess fat around the cell), insulin cannot unlock the glucose channel.
- Glucose remains in the bloodstream, leading to high blood sugar.
- Excess glucose is stored as fat, contributing to weight gain and worsening insulin resistance.
- We feel tired and hungry because the cells are not receiving enough energy.
- We eat again, often craving carbohydrates, and the cycle repeats.

INSULIN *resistance*

The Real Problem Behind Type 2 Diabetes

Reversing insulin resistance, the root cause of Type 2 diabetes, involves addressing the underlying metabolic dysfunction rather than simply managing blood sugar levels. While controlling blood sugar is a symptom-focused approach, tackling insulin resistance targets improved overall metabolic health.

Here are five evidence-based strategies to help reverse insulin resistance:

LOW-CARB, HIGH-FIBRE DIET

- **Why:** Excessive carbohydrate intake (especially processed and refined carbs) increases insulin production, perpetuating insulin resistance. A low-carb, nutrient-dense diet lowers the demand for insulin, allowing cells to regain sensitivity.
- **How:**
  - Base meals on non-starchy vegetables such as broccoli, spinach, and cauliflower.
  - Replace processed carbohydrates (e.g. bread, rice, and pasta) with healthy fats (e.g. avocados, nuts) and proteins.
  - Incorporate high-fibre foods like chia seeds, flaxseeds, and leafy greens.

REGULAR EXERCISE!

- **Why:** Physical activity improves insulin sensitivity by increasing glucose uptake in muscles independently of insulin.
- **How:**
  - Combine resistance training (e.g. weightlifting) 2–3 times per week with aerobic activities (e.g. brisk walking, cycling) for 30–45 minutes daily.
  - Stay active throughout the day, such as walking or stretching after meals.

INTERMITTENT FASTING

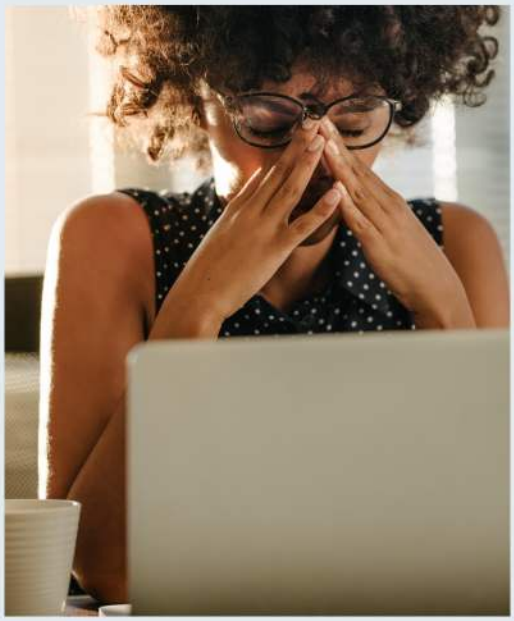
- **Why:** Fasting periods allow insulin levels to drop, giving the body time to burn stored fat and improve sensitivity.

- **How:**
  - Start with a 12-hour eating window (e.g. 8 am to 8 pm) and gradually narrow it to 8 hours.
  - Avoid eating late at night to allow for a longer fasting period.

OPTIMISE MICRONUTRIENT INTAKE

- **Why:** Deficiencies in nutrients like magnesium, Vitamin D, and chromium are linked to insulin resistance. Supporting mitochondrial function and reducing oxidative stress can improve insulin sensitivity.

- **How:**
  - Consider a high-quality magnesium supplement (the **Willow Wellness** brand is made from whole foods and contains no synthetic ingredients).
  - Ensure adequate sunlight exposure or supplement with Vitamin D3 as needed.
  - Include antioxidant-rich foods like berries, nuts, and green tea to reduce oxidative stress.



ADDRESS CHRONIC STRESS

- **Why:** Stress triggers the release of cortisol, which raises blood sugar and insulin levels, worsening insulin resistance.

- **How:**
  - Incorporate stress-reducing activities like mindfulness, meditation, or yoga into your routine.
  - Ensure sufficient sleep (7–8 hours per night) as poor sleep raises stress hormones and contributes to insulin resistance.

EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF TYPE2 DIABETES

Type 2 diabetes is a condition that often develops gradually, with subtle symptoms that can easily be overlooked. However, early detection is key to managing the disease and preventing serious complications. In this issue, we're shining a spotlight on the early warning signs of type 2 diabetes—those telltale signals your body sends when something isn't quite right. From unexpected changes in weight to persistent fatigue and frequent thirst, recognizing these symptoms early can make all the difference in your health journey. Let's explore what to watch for and why it's so important to take action sooner rather than later.

INCREASED THIRST AND FREQUENT URINATION:

- **Why It Happens:** As blood sugar levels rise, the body tries to remove excess glucose through the urine. This can lead to dehydration, making you feel unusually thirsty.
- **What to Watch For**: Drinking more than usual and needing to urinate more frequently, especially at night.

UNEXPLAINED WEIGHT LOSS

- **Why It Happens:** Despite eating normally, your body may start breaking down muscle and fat for energy because it can't effectively use glucose.
- **What to Watch For**: A sudden, unintentional drop in weight, even if your appetite remains the same.

FATIGUE

- **Why It Happens:** When your body can't use glucose properly for energy, you may feel unusually tired or fatigued, even after adequate rest.
- **What to Watch For**: Persistent tiredness or lack of energy, making daily activities feel more exhausting.

NUMBNESS OR TINGLING IN HANDS OR FEET:

- **Why It Happens:** High blood sugar will damage nerve endings, leading to symptoms of neuropathy, such as tingling or numbness.
- **What to Watch For:** A persistent tingling or numbness in your hands, feet, or legs.

UNEXPECTED weight gain

- **Why It Happens:** Insulin Resistance: In type 2 diabetes, the body becomes resistant to insulin, the hormone responsible for regulating blood sugar levels. As insulin resistance worsens, the body may produce more insulin in an attempt to keep blood sugar levels normal. Insulin is also a hormone that promotes fat storage, particularly around the abdomen. Increased insulin levels can lead to weight gain, especially if your body starts storing more fat.

- **Fluid Retention:** High blood sugar levels can cause the body to retain fluid, leading to bloating and weight gain. This can happen even if your diet and activity levels haven't changed significantly.

- I**ncreased Appetite:** Insulin resistance can sometimes cause the brain to send signals that increase hunger, particularly for carbohydrates, which can contribute to weight gain.

- **What to Watch For:** Gradual Weight Gain: If you notice that you're gradually gaining weight, especially around your midsection, without a significant change in diet or physical activity, this could be a sign of insulin resistance. Increased Cravings: Pay attention to any increased cravings for sugary or starchy foods, as these can be linked to the body's difficulty in regulating blood sugar levels. Swelling or Bloating: Watch for signs of swelling or bloating, particularly in the lower extremities or abdomen, which could indicate fluid retention. Fatigue with Weight Gain: If your weight gain is accompanied by fatigue, it may be more than just a simple change in body weight. Fatigue combined with weight gain can indicate your body is struggling to manage blood sugar levels effectively.

BLURRED VISION

- **Why It Happens:** High blood sugar levels can cause the lenses of your eyes to swell, leading to temporary changes in vision.
- **What to Watch For:** Sudden or recurring episodes of blurry vision, which may improve when blood sugar levels stabilize.

SLOW-HEALING SORES OR FREQUENT INFECTIONS:

- **Why It Happens:** High blood sugar can impair circulation and the body's ability to heal, making it easier for infections to develop.
- **What to Watch For:** Cuts, bruises, or sores that take longer to heal than usual, or frequent infections like urinary tract infections or yeast infections.

INCREASED HUNGER

- **Why It Happens:** Without proper insulin function, glucose doesn't enter your cells effectively, leaving you feeling hungry even after eating.
- **What to Watch For:** Feeling unusually hungry, especially soon after meals.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SPOT ANY OF THESE SIGNS

Early detection and proactive management are key to living well with type 2 diabetes. Take action if you notice any warning signs.

- **See a Doctor:** If you notice any symptoms, consult a healthcare professional for blood tests and a diagnosis.
- **Change your diet & lifestyle:** Focus on whole foods and cut out processed, refined carbs and sugars to help manage blood sugar.
- **Exercise Regularly:** Aim for 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days to improve insulin sensitivity.
- **Monitor Blood Sugar:** If diagnosed, track your blood sugar to understand how lifestyle choices affect your levels.
- **Educate Yourself:** Learn about type 2 diabetes to make informed health decisions. Read as much as you can on the topic and ask as many questions as you like!

GLP-1 MEDICATIONS

HOW THEY CAN TRANSFORM TYPE 2 DIABETES MANAGEMENT

Sources: PubMed | Relief Web | Yale School of Medicine |Forbes Africa
Grandview Research
Article verified by: Dr Karla Foster-Pedley

WHAT IS GLP-1?

GLP-1, or glucagon-like peptide-1, is a hormone naturally made by the body. It plays an important role in controlling how the body manages food, especially sugar.

When you eat, the GLP-1 hormone helps slow down the movement of food through your stomach, so you feel full longer. It also tells your pancreas to release insulin, which helps move sugar from your blood into your cells for energy. This hormone is especially helpful for people with diabetes, as it supports balanced blood sugar levels and can even reduce appetite to aid in weight management.
GLP-1 injectables are medications that mimic the actions of the natural GLP-1 hormone in the body. These medications are commonly used to manage Type 2 diabetes and support weight loss.

There are several types of medications, each with unique characteristics. Some include:

Semaglutide (e.g., Ozempic, Wegovy):
Ozempic is mainly used for managing Type 2 diabetes, while Wegovy is used for weight management. Both are taken weekly and help lower blood sugar by improving insulin function and reducing appetite. These are often the first choice due to their effectiveness and longer-lasting results

Liraglutide (e.g., Victoza, Saxenda):
Victoza is prescribed for Type 2 diabetes, and Saxenda is a higher-dose version used for weight loss. Both are injected daily and help control blood sugar while also reducing hunger. Saxenda is typically used for people with obesity or those who need significant weight management support

Dulaglutide (e.g., Trulicity):
This medication is administered once a week and is effective for both controlling blood sugar levels and supporting weight management. It is popular because of its ease of use and relatively fewer injections compared to daily options

Exenatide (e.g., Bydureon, Byetta): Bydureon is a long-acting version that is injected weekly, while Byetta is taken twice a day. Both help manage Type 2 diabetes by promoting insulin release and slowing stomach emptying, which helps with blood sugar control.

Each of these medications has its own set of benefits, side effects, and administration schedules, but all work in similar ways by mimicking the action of GLP-1 to help control blood sugar and support weight loss.

Ozempic, a brand name for semaglutide, has been shown to significantly improve blood sugar control in individuals with type 2 diabetes. Clinical studies reveal that when combined with lifestyle changes, Ozempic helps to reduce HbA1c levels, a key indicator of long-term blood glucose control, by up to 1.5% over a 6-month period. Additionally, it has been associated with weight loss, which is beneficial for people with type 2 diabetes, as excess weight can worsen insulin resistance.

In terms of safety, most participants experience mild side effects, such as nausea or gastrointestinal issues, particularly when starting treatment. However, these side effects typically subside over time, depending on the individual.

Ozempic is often well-tolerated, and its long-term use has been linked to a reduced risk of cardiovascular events, such as heart attacks or strokes, which are common concerns for people with type 2 diabetes.
Studies highlight that higher doses of Ozempic, used once a week, can further enhance the benefits of controlling blood sugar and managing weight in patients who need additional support.

However, like all medications, it should be prescribed with caution, particularly for those with a history of certain conditions, such as pancreatitis. Always consult your doctor. They will know which tests to run if you are concerned about this.

For those with type 2 diabetes looking for an effective injectable treatment, Ozempic remains a highly regarded option. Once again, your doctor will determine if it is the right choice based on your individual health needs.

SIDE EFFECTS

GLP-1 medications, like Ozempic and others, are generally well-tolerated, but they can have side effects and, in rare cases, pose certain risks. Here's an overview of common side effects, potential dangers, and ways to manage them:

Gastrointestinal Issues:
Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, and constipation are the most frequently reported side effects, especially when starting treatment. These symptoms tend to decrease over time as the body adjusts to the medication
How to manage: Start with a lower dose and gradually increase it to allow your body to adjust. Eating smaller, more frequent meals can help reduce nausea

Loss of Appetite:
GLP-1 medications work by reducing appetite, which can be beneficial for weight loss, but it may also cause some individuals to feel too full or lose interest in eating
How to manage: It's important to ensure you're still getting enough nutrients. If you're losing too much weight or feeling uncomfortably full, consult with your doctor to adjust the dosage or discuss dietary changes.

Headaches:
Some people report headaches, particularly when starting the medication
How to manage: Staying hydrated and taking over-the-counter pain relief (under medical advice) can help. If headaches persist, consult with your doctor.

Fatigue:
A sense of tiredness is another common effect of GLP-1 medications
How to manage: Ensuring you get adequate sleep, manage stress, and engage in regular, gentle exercise can help manage fatigue. If fatigue is severe, a dose adjustment might be necessary

RARE BUT SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS:

Pancreatitis:
Though rare, GLP-1 medications may increase the risk of pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas), which can cause severe abdominal pain, nausea, and vomiting
How to manage: If you experience severe stomach pain, especially with nausea or vomiting, seek immediate medical attention at the first signs. Ensure that your doctor is aware of any history of pancreatitis.

Thyroid C-cell Tumours:
Animal studies have shown a potential risk of thyroid C-cell tumours with GLP-1 medications, although this has not been conclusively proven in humans. People with a family history of thyroid cancer or multiple endocrine neoplasia type 2 should avoid these medications
How to manage: Discuss your family medical history with your doctor before starting treatment. Regular monitoring is crucial to detect any signs early.

Kidney Issues:
In some cases, GLP-1 medications can cause kidney problems, particularly in those with pre-existing kidney conditions
How to manage: Monitor kidney function regularly, especially in individuals with kidney disease. If there are signs of kidney problems (e.g., reduced urine output), treatment may need to be adjusted.

TIPS FOR MANAGING SIDE EFFECTS:

- **Start Slowly**: Begin with a lower dose to help your body adjust and gradually increase it as advised by your doctor
- **Dietary Adjustments**: Eating smaller, lighter, low carb meals can help with nausea and digestive discomfort. Avoiding fatty or greasy foods may also reduce the risk of gastrointestinal side effects
- **Hydration:** Drink plenty of fluids, especially if you experience vomiting or diarrhoea
- **Regular Check-ups**: Regular blood tests and health check-ups are essential to monitor any long-term effects, particularly on kidney and thyroid function

It's important to communicate any side effects you experience with your doctor to ensure that the treatment is appropriate for you and to adjust the dosage or explore alternative options if necessary.

You may be wondering why humans do not typically experience the same side effects from their naturally-produced GLP-1 hormone as they might when using GLP-1 injectable medications like Ozempic .. well it is primarily due to the difference in how the hormone functions in the body versus its external administration.
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IMPORTANT!

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Why Natural GLP-1 Differs from Injectable Medications

You may be wondering why humans do not typically experience the same side effects from their naturally-produced GLP-1 hormone as they might when using GLP-1 injectable medications like Ozempic. Well it is primarily due to the difference in how the hormone functions in the body versus its external administration.

NATURAL REGULATION VS. EXTERNAL ADMINISTRATION:

- Natural GLP-1: The GLP-1 hormone is secreted by the intestines in response to food intake, particularly after meals. It is released in controlled amounts, and the body carefully regulates its actions. It stimulates insulin release, reduces glucagon secretion (which helps to lower blood sugar), slows gastric emptying, and reduces appetite. The body's regulatory systems keep it balanced, preventing overstimulation or side effects like nausea or digestive issues

- Injectable GLP-1 Agonists: When injected, medications like Ozempic or Wegovy provide a higher, more direct concentration of GLP-1, which may overwhelm the body's normal processes, especially in the gastrointestinal system. This can lead to side effects like nausea, vomiting, or other digestive disturbances, as the body isn't used to the more concentrated, continuous presence of GLP-1 in the system.

DOSING AND CONTINUOUS EFFECT:

- Body's Natural Release: The natural secretion of GLP-1 happens in bursts, typically following meals. The body's ability to regulate its release ensures it is not present at elevated levels for prolonged periods, which helps prevent negative side effects. This gradual, short-term increase is much easier for the body to handle without causing discomfort.

> *"The responsible use of GLP-1 medications is not just about weight loss or blood sugar control—it's about informed choices, sustainable habits, and long-term health. Medication is a tool, not a solution."*

WHY NATURAL GLP-1 DIFFERS FROM INJECTABLE MEDICATIONS

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Injectables: GLP-1 injections deliver a constant, sustained level of the hormone. Since the medication works for up to a week (depending on the specific drug), the prolonged exposure can sometimes lead to discomfort and side effects, as the body isn't accustomed to such a steady flow of GLP-1

Individual Sensitivity:

Not everyone produces GLP-1 in the same way, particularly those with conditions like type 2 diabetes or obesity. These individuals may have impaired GLP-1 responses or lower levels of GLP-1, meaning their bodies might not react the same way to natural GLP-1 as a healthy individual would. When they use injectable GLP-1, the body might not regulate it as effectively, leading to side effects. In these cases, the injectables can restore the function of GLP-1 but at higher levels than the body is used to.

While GLP-1 is a naturally occurring hormone in everyone, the side effects seen with injectable GLP-1 medications are mainly due to the external, concentrated doses that the body is not accustomed to. The body's natural GLP-1 release is more controlled and balanced, which prevents the digestive and other side effects that can occur with artificial administration.

BE CAUTIOUS

BE CAUTIOUS OF PRODUCTS MARKETED AS "NATURAL OZEMPIC"

Be cautious of products marketed as "natural Ozempic"—there is no such thing!. These claims are a misleading marketing strategy aimed at vulnerable individuals with diabetes or those seeking weight loss solutions. The only “natural” occuring Ozempic is the the GLP1 hormone made in your gut. Ozempic is a synthetic medication that mimics the GLP-1 hormone, a naturally occurring compound in the human body, but it is developed through rigorous scientific processes. Any product claiming to be a "natural alternative" is not backed by credible scientific research and may be ineffective or even harmful. Always rely on approved medications prescribed by your doctor, and be wary of unregulated products promising similar effects. Your health and safety should never be compromised by misleading advertising.

The GLP-1 hormone is naturally produced by everyone and plays a crucial role in managing blood sugar levels and regulating appetite. However, in individuals with obesity or type 2 diabetes, the body’s response to GLP-1 is impaired, which can lead to issues with blood sugar control and weight management. This is similar to how people with type 1 diabetes cannot produce insulin and require injections to manage their blood sugar levels. For individuals with type 2 diabetes, GLP-1 injectables work by mimicking the effects of this hormone, helping to restore its functions, improve insulin sensitivity, and aid in weight loss. These injectable medications, such as Ozempic and others, offer an effective solution for managing type 2 diabetes by addressing the underlying hormonal dysfunction, much like insulin injections do for those with type 1 diabetes.

Notes on Ozempic:

- Target Group: Primarily recommended for individuals managing Type 2 diabetes.
- Dosage and Cost: Costs vary based on dosage, ranging between R2,600 and R3,500 per month for standard prescriptions
- Shortages: South African pharmacies often face stock limitations due to high global demand, especially after its popularity for weight management

It is crucial to remember that only a qualified doctor can determine whether a GLP-1 medication is appropriate for a diabetic patient. Self-prescribing or buying GLP-1 drugs from unofficial sources, particularly those offering cheaper prices, can be risky. You may not know where the medication comes from or what it contains, potentially compromising your health. Always consult with your doctor before starting any new medication and discuss any side effects you experience. If side effects become severe, your doctor can help manage them, possibly by adjusting your dosage, or prescribing something for the nausea and constipation. Additionally, while GLP-1 medications are effective in managing blood sugar and supporting weight loss, they are not a free pass to eat without consideration. These medications work best when combined with healthy lifestyle changes, including a balanced diet and regular exercise.

ORDER NOW

Get your diabetes resources on line, instantly!
Shop at our Stan Store for downloadable food journals, blood glucose trackers, and low-carb guides designed to help you take control of your health. No delivery hassles. Just instant access to the tools that support your journey!

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SUGAFREE Your Guilt-Free, Tasty Lifestyle

TYPE 2

LOW CARB

EASTER RECIPES

Easter is a time for celebration, family gatherings, and indulging in delicious treats. However, for those living with diabetes, it's essential to be mindful of what we eat. This Easter, let's focus on enjoying festive flavours while keeping our blood sugar levels in check. Remember to balance your meals with healthy choices and regular exercise to maintain your wellbeing.

To help you celebrate this special occasion without compromising your health, I've curated three delightful low-carb recipes that are perfect for the Easter weekend: Sugar-Free Hot Cross Buns, Chocolate Truffles, and a Lemon Almond Flour Cake. These treats are not only delicious but also diabetic-friendly, allowing you to enjoy the festivities guilt-free. Happy Easter, and enjoy these tasty recipes!

HOT X-BUNS

FOR THE BUNS:
200g almond flour
50g coconut flour
20g psyllium husk powder
2 tsp baking powder
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
1/2 tsp ground allspice
1/4 tsp salt 3 large eggs
120ml unsweetened almond milk
60g unsalted butter, melted
1 tsp vanilla extract 2
tbsp powdered erythritol or preferred sweetener

FOR THE CROSS PASTE:
2 tbsp coconut flour
2 tbsp water

FOR THE GLAZE:
2 tbsp powdered erythritol
1 tbsp water

- Preheat the oven to 180°C (160°C fan). Line a baking tray with parchment paper.
- In a large bowl, combine almond flour, coconut flour, whey protein isolate, psyllium husk powder, baking powder, spices, sweetener, and salt.
- In a separate bowl, whisk together eggs, melted butter, almond milk, vanilla extract, and orange zest.
- Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and mix until a dough forms. If using, fold in the dried cranberries or currants.
- Divide the dough into 12 equal portions. Roll each portion into a ball and place them onto the prepared baking tray, spacing them evenly.
- Prepare the cross paste. Mix coconut flour and water to form a thick paste. Transfer the paste
- Bake the buns for 20-25 minutes, or until golden brown and firm to the touch.
- While the buns are baking, prepare the glaze by mixing powdered erythritol with water until smooth.
- Once the buns are out of the oven, brush them with the glaze while they're still warm.
- Allow the buns to cool on a wire rack before serving.

SUGAR-FREE CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES

200g sugar-free dark chocolate (at least 70% cocoa)
100ml heavy cream
1 tsp vanilla extract
2 tbsp powdered erythritol or your preferred sweetener
Cocoa powder, chopped nuts, or desiccated coconut (for rolling)

- In a heatproof bowl, combine the sugar-free dark chocolate and heavy cream. Melt in the microwave in 20-second intervals, stirring until smooth.
- Stir in the vanilla extract and powdered erythritol until well combined. Allow the mixture to cool to room temperature.
- Cover the bowl and refrigerate for about 1-2 hours or until the mixture is firm enough to scoop.
- Once the mixture is firm, use a teaspoon to scoop out portions. Wet your hands with warm water and roll them into balls with your hands.
- Roll the truffles in cocoa powder, chopped nuts, or desiccated coconut to coat.
- Place the truffles on a plate and refrigerate until ready to serve. Enjoy!

LEMON CAKE

For the Cake:

- 250g almond flour
- 150g powdered erythritol (or your preferred sweetener)
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 4 large eggs
- 120ml unsweetened almond milk (or any low-carb milk)
- 60ml melted coconut oil or unsalted butter
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- Zest of 2 lemons
- Juice of 1 lemon

For the Lemon Glaze:

- 100g powdered erythritol
- 2-3 tbsp lemon juice (adjust for desired consistency)

- Preheat your oven to 180°C (160°C fan) and grease a 9x5 inch (23x13 cm) loaf tin.
- In a large bowl, combine the almond flour, powdered erythritol, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Mix well.
- In another bowl, whisk together the eggs, almond milk, melted coconut oil (or butter), vanilla extract, lemon zest, and lemon juice until well combined.
- Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and stir until just combined. Do not overmix.
- Pour the batter into the prepared loaf tin and smooth the top. Bake for 45-55 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the centre comes out clean.
- Allow the cake to cool in the tin for about 10 minutes, then transfer it to a wire rack to cool completely.
- For the glaze: In a small bowl, mix the powdered erythritol with enough lemon juice to create a smooth glaze. Adjust the consistency to your liking by adding more lemon juice or erythritol as needed.
- Once the cake is completely cool, drizzle the lemon glaze over the top. Let it set for a few minutes before slicing.
- Slice and enjoy your delicious lemon almond flour cake!

Improving and strengthening your immune system as a type 2 diabetic requires a balanced approach tailored to your condition and age.

BOOSTING YOUR AMMUNITY

OPTIMISE YOUR DIET

Your diet is crucial for immunity, especially when managing diabetes:

Focus on low-carb, nutrient-dense foods: Stick to your Banting Green List and include plenty of leafy greens, broccoli, cauliflower, bell peppers, and mushrooms.

Incorporate immune-boosting nutrients:

- Vitamin C: Found in citrus fruits, strawberries, and bell peppers.
- Vitamin D: Get sunlight exposure or consider a supplement if your levels are low.
- Zinc: Found in seeds, nuts, and legumes.
- Antioxidants: Add colorful veggies and berries for their anti-inflammatory properties.

Cut out processed carbs and sugars: This helps manage blood sugar and reduce inflammation, which is critical for immunity.

Maintain Healthy Blood Sugar Levels

- Monitor your blood glucose closely to prevent fluctuations that can weaken your immune system.
- Continue following your low-carb meal plan and maintain consistency with your insulin management.

STAY ACTIVE

- Regular, moderate exercise like walking, yoga, or light cardio helps improve circulation and supports immune function.
- Avoid overexertion, as it can temporarily suppress the immune system.
- Engaging in hobbies or spending time with your dogs can help reduce stress
- Resistance and light weight training will help to build and strengthen muscles.

KEEP HYDRATED

Drink plenty of water throughout the day. Proper hydration supports the lymphatic system, which is part of your immune defense. (Read mor about this on Page 6)

MANAGE STRESS

Chronic stress can weaken immunity. Practice relaxation techniques such as meditation, deep breathing, or mindfulness exercises.

Engaging in hobbies or spending time with your dogs can help reduce stress levels.

PRIORITISE SLEEP

Aim for 7-8 hours of quality sleep per night. Sleep is critical for immune system repair and regeneration.

Develop a bedtime routine to signal your body it's time to rest.

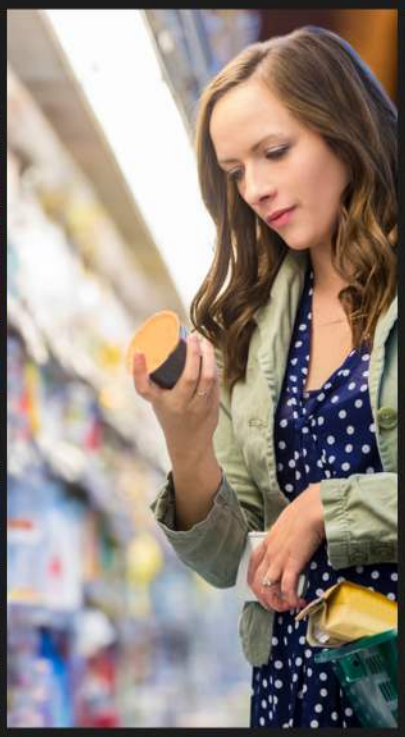
SUPPORT GUT HEALTH

Your gut microbiome plays a significant role in immunity. Include fermented foods like kimchi, sauerkraut, or unsweetened almond milk yogurt in your diet. Consider a probiotic supplement, and it you're unsure consult your doctor.

AVOID SMOKING & ALCOHOL

Smoking and excessive alcohol consumption weaken the immune system.

If applicable, reduce or eliminate these habits.



DECODING FOOD LABELS

A SIMPLE GUIDE

When managing type 2 diabetes, one of the most powerful tools at your disposal is the food label. These labels are more than just numbers and lists; they're a roadmap to better health. Understanding how to read and interpret them can help you make smarter, healthier choices that keep your blood sugar levels in check.

Food labels contain essential information to help you make informed dietary choices.

There are two main parts to food labels:

The Ingredients List: This section lists all the ingredients in the product, ordered from the highest to the lowest by weight. It helps you identify what the product is made of and avoid unwanted additives, excessive sugars, or unhealthy fats.

Nutritional Information: This section provides detailed data on the product's macronutrients (carbohydrates, fats, and proteins), micronutrients (vitamins and minerals), and calorie content. It allows you to assess how the food fits into your dietary needs.

FOOD LABEL CHECKLIST

Understanding food labels is key to making informed choices about what you eat. Here's a simple guide to help you prioritise the most important information:

Check the Ingredients List

- Ingredients are listed in descending order by weight, meaning the first few make up most of the product.
- Avoid foods high in added sugars, refined grains, and unhealthy fats. Look for whole, natural ingredients.

Look at the Carbohydrate Content

- Focus on the total carbohydrates, not just sugar, as all carbs affect blood sugar.
- Pay attention to fibre content – higher fibre can slow sugar absorption and improve blood sugar control.
- Type 2 diabetics should aim for products containing no more than 5g of carbohydrates per 100g serving.

Identify Added Sugars

- Check for terms like glucose, fructose, syrup, honey, or any word ending in '-ose'.
- The lower the added sugar, the better – ideally less than 5g per 100g.

Assess the Fat Content

- Prioritise unsaturated fats (olive oil, nuts, seeds) over saturated and trans fats.
- Avoid hydrogenated oils, which indicate trans fats, even if not explicitly listed.

Check the Protein Content

- Protein is essential for maintaining muscle and keeping you fuller for longer.
- Choose products with a good protein-to-carb ratio, especially for snacks and meals.

Monitor Sodium (Salt) Levels

- Aim for products with less than 120mg sodium per 100g for a low-salt option.

Understand Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) and Calories

- RDA indicates the daily intake levels of nutrients needed for overall health.
- Check the percentage of RDA for key nutrients like fibre, protein, and vitamins.
- Calories measure the energy content of food. Consider portion sizes and balance daily intake based on activity levels.

Be Wary of Health Claims

- 'Low-fat', 'sugar-free', or 'natural' doesn't always mean healthy.
- Always check the full nutrition label and ingredients for hidden sugars and additives.

Consider Portion Sizes

- Labels often display nutrition per serving – ensure you check the total portion size you consume.
- A small packet may contain multiple servings, increasing total intake.

Total Carbs vs. Net Carbs

- Type 2 diabetics should focus on total carbohydrates, not net carbs.
- Net carbs subtract fibre and certain sugar alcohols, but these still impact blood sugar.
- Relying on total carbs ensures better blood sugar management and avoids misleading claims on packaging.

By following these steps, you can make informed choices that support your health and well-being. Remember, fresh, whole foods with minimal processing are usually the best options!

REVERSE IT!

Type2Health

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