Anthem

Wellness News

DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

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This issue



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"The best way to build a future is to take good care of the present moment."
— Thich Nhat Hanh

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KNOW YOUR RISK

Understanding Diabetes and Prediabetes



Diabetes affects how the body uses glucose (blood sugar) for energy. It occurs when the body does not produce enough insulin—the hormone that helps regulate blood sugar, or cannot use insulin effectively. As a result, glucose can build up in the bloodstream and, over time, damage tissues and organs.

There are three main types of diabetes. **Type 1 diabetes** involves little or no insulin production, while **Type 2 diabetes**, the most common form, develops when the body cannot use insulin effectively or produce enough to meet its needs. **Gestational diabetes** develops during pregnancy.

Prediabetes occurs when blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not high enough for a diabetes diagnosis. Identifying prediabetes provides an opportunity to take action: regular physical activity, healthy eating, and weight management can help prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

Risk factors for prediabetes and type 2 diabetes

- Being overweight or physically inactive.
- Being age 45 or older.
- Having a family history of type 2 diabetes.
- Having a history of gestational diabetes.

Recognize the symptoms

Ask your doctor about blood sugar testing if you notice:

- Frequent urination, especially at night
- Increased thirst or hunger
- Weight loss without trying
- Blurred vision
- Fatigue or dry skin
- Numbness or tingling in your hands or feet
- Sores that heal slowly
- More infections than usual

Preventive care — including **A1C, cholesterol, and blood pressure screenings** — can lower your risk of health conditions like diabetes and improve your well-being.

Use the **Find Care** tool on the **Sydney℠ Health app** or **anthem.com** to locate a nearby doctor in your plan's network and save on costs.

Source: Anthem, Understanding prediabetes and diabetes risk factors.

NUTRITION FOR BETTER HEALTH

Make Room for More Fiber

A daily ally for blood sugar, heart health and digestion

When it comes to healthy eating, fiber is easy to overlook. Yet most U.S. adults get only about half the amount they need. Dietary fiber is a type of carbohydrate that is not digested in the small intestine. Found in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts, and seeds, fiber does more than support regularity, it can help manage blood sugar and cholesterol while supporting long-term health..

Blood sugar, cholesterol and digestive health

Blood sugar support. Soluble fiber dissolves in water, and some types form a gel that slows digestion and carbohydrate absorption. This can help moderate the rise in blood sugar after meals, making fiber beneficial for people with prediabetes or type 2 diabetes. Because many fiber-rich foods also contain carbohydrates that affect blood sugar, choosing appropriate portions remains an important part of meal planning.

Heart health. Some soluble fibers help carry bile acids out of the body instead of allowing them to be reabsorbed. The liver uses cholesterol to replace these digestive substances, which can help lower LDL ("bad") cholesterol in the blood.

Digestive health. Insoluble fiber adds bulk to stool and supports regular bowel movements. Some fibers also nourish beneficial gut bacteria.

Simple ways to add more fiber

Choose whole grains. Swap white rice for barley, quinoa or brown rice.
Boost breakfast. Add berries, soaked chia or ground flaxseed to oats or yogurt.
Add beans and lentils. Stir chickpeas, black beans or lentils into soups and salads.
Keep edible skins. Enjoy washed apples, pears and potatoes with their skins.

Start gradually. Increase fiber slowly and drink enough water, following any fluid restrictions.



FIBER STANDOUTS, BY SERVING

FOOD	PORTION	FIBER
Navy beans, cooked	1/2 cup	**9.6 g**
Artichoke, cooked	1 cup	**9.6 g**
Chia seeds, dry	2 tablespoons	**8.2 g**
Split peas, cooked	1/2 cup	**8.2 g**
Raspberries	1 cup	**8.0 g**
Lentils, cooked	1/2 cup	**7.8 g**
Black beans, cooked	1/2 cup	**7.5 g**
Chickpeas, cooked	1/2 cup	**6.3 g**
Pear, with skin	1 medium	**5.5 g**
Ground flaxseed	2 tablespoons	**~4 g**

Approximate fiber amounts; brands and preparation vary. Portions are shown for comparison. [4,5]

Your daily fiber target

AGE	MEN	WOMEN
19-50 years	**38 g**	**25 g**
51+ years	**30 g**	**21 g**

Adult Adequate Intakes; individual needs may vary.
Pregnancy: 28 g/day; breastfeeding: 29 g/day. [7]
FDA label reference: 28 g / 2,000 calories. [3]

Sources: [1] CDC | [2] Harvard | [3] FDA | [4] USDA food data | [5] Mayo Clinic | [6] NIH | [7] Dietary Reference Intakes

SMALL HABITS, BETTER METABOLIC HEALTH

A Short Stroll, Better Blood Sugar

A simple after-meal habit inspired by the Italian passeggiata.

After a meal, it may be tempting to settle onto the couch. A short, comfortable walk offers another way to unwind—and can help moderate the rise in blood sugar after eating.

Why even brief movement matters

Walking activates your leg muscles, helping them use glucose (blood sugar) for energy. Muscle contractions can increase glucose uptake even without insulin.

A 2022 research review found that breaking up long periods of sitting with short walks helped lower blood sugar and insulin levels after meals. In some studies, participants got up every 30 minutes, walked at an easy pace for five minutes, and then sat back down. They repeated this pattern over several hours rather than remaining seated the entire time

A small study of 10 older adults also found that three 15-minute post-meal walks lowered after-dinner glucose more than one 45-minute walk earlier in the day.

Start your own passeggiata

Italy's Passeggiata (pah-seh-JAH-tah) is a leisurely social stroll, often in the evening. Borrow that relaxed spirit after a meal: enjoy the surroundings and catch up with a friend or family member.

Choose your moment
Make lunch or dinner your cue for a walk.

Keep it gentle
Choose a comfortable, conversational pace.

Start with 5–10 minutes
Build from there as your abilities allow.



Relax. Connect. Keep moving.

DIABETES SAFETY: Insulin and some medicines can cause low blood sugar. Ask your care team about glucose checks and safe activity.

Sources: [1] ADA: exercise | [2] Buffey et al., Sports Medicine (2022) | [3] DiPietro et al., Diabetes Care (2013) | [4] ITALY Magazine: passeggiata (2025)

AI-generated illustration of an Italian stroll.

RECIPE: A COZY FALL FAVORITE

Stuffed Delicata Squash

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 45 minutes | Total: 50 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

2 small delicata squash
4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 cup yellow onion, diced
1 1/3 tablespoons garlic cloves, minced
1 pound ground turkey
1 medium apple, diced
1 teaspoon fennel seeds
2 teaspoons dried sage
2 large eggs, beaten
1 pinch freshly ground pepper, to taste
1 pinch sea salt, to taste

Author's preference: organic ingredients when possible.

Directions

1. Set the oven to 400°F. On a cutting board, halve the squash and remove the seeds. Reserve the halves on a baking sheet.

2. In a sauté pan, warm 2 tablespoons oil over medium heat. Cook onion, garlic and turkey until no pink remains, 5–7 minutes. Stir in apple, fennel and sage; cook another 4–5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

3. Remove the pan from the heat before mixing in the eggs. Fill the squash halves; brush their tops with the remaining oil.

4. Bake 30–35 minutes, checking that a fork easily pierces the squash.

5. Serve one filled squash half per person.

Food safety: Check the turkey filling with a thermometer; it must reach 165°F.



A seasonal source of nutrients

Delicata squash provides fiber, potassium, and vitamin's A and C, making it a nutritious addition to fall meals. Its fiber supports healthy digestion, while vitamin A helps maintain healthy vision and immune function. The thin skin is edible when cooked, so there is no need to peel it.

Sources: [1] Food Babe: recipe | [2] Colorado State University: delicata nutrition | [3] FoodSafety.gov