

Guidelines for improving your health, vitality and quality of life.

HEALTH GUIDELINES FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

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# **HEALTH GUIDELINES FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY**

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## INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been adapted from my previously published book *Maintaining Your Health and Vitality: A Health Guide for Seniors and Their Families*. The guidelines in the booklet provide a quick reference of practices or specific ways that can help you improve and maintain your health and the health of your loved ones.

The guidelines in this booklet are based on information from a number of reliable health resources, such as the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of Agriculture, The Food and Drug Administration, the World Health Organization, national and state departments of public health and voluntary health organizations, with supportive references from selected universities, schools of public health, schools of medicine, medical journals and other learned publications.

Specific guidelines are provided on each of the following topics:

- Facts and fallacies about extending life
- Nutrition and dietary practices
- Preventing overweight and obesity
- Components of a well-rounded exercise program
- Protecting your eyes and your vision
- Preventing skin diseases and disorders
- Getting a good night's sleep
- Preventing and treating high blood pressure, heart attack and stroke
- Preventing and controlling arthritis
- Reducing the risk of osteopenia and osteoporosis
- Reducing the threat of diabetes
- What you can do about Alzheimer's disease
- Preventing the flu and other communicable diseases
- How to handle stress
- Using and storing medicines wisely
- Sources for evaluating health information

Also included with each set of guidelines is a list of primary sources, additional references and sources of additional of information.

While the guidelines provided in this booklet are important, don't make them obsessions that have to be followed religiously. It's OK if you happen to "fall of the wagon" once in a while. Treating yourself to a piece of pie with ice cream on aunt Martha's birthday, not making it to one of your scheduled workouts in the gym or your daily walk, or having an extra glass of wine or champagne on a special occasion will not doom you

to poor health. In other words, don't be afraid to indulge yourself once in a while. Just don't over indulge.

It is important to note that the guidelines provided in this booklet are not intended as a substitute for consultation with a health care professional. Nor is any part of this book intended to be a specific prescription, diagnosis or treatment for specific health problems. Indeed, to help maintain your health and vitality, you should establish a relationship with health care providers and consult with them before making any diagnostic treatment or other health care decisions. Become a participating partner of your health care team.

For further detailed information on each of the topics discussed in this booklet, see (Fodor, J.T., (2007). *Maintaining Your Health and Vitality: A Health Guide for Seniors and Their Families*. Bangor, Maine: Booklocker.com, Inc).

## **REDUCING THE THREAT OF DIABETES**

Diabetes is defined as a disease that doesn't allow the body to use insulin to process glucose (sugar) in the blood, which, in turn, causes sugar levels in the blood to remain too high. Simply put, if you have diabetes, there is too much sugar in your blood. This prevents the body from getting the fuel it needs that can result in serious health consequences. There are, however, things you can do to help prevent and control diabetes. The following are helpful guidelines from the National Diabetes Information Clearing House (*Diabetes a-z topics and titles*, 2006).

### **Warning signs of diabetes**

1. Frequent urination
2. Being hungry or thirsty all the time
3. Blurred vision
4. Unexplained weight loss
5. Cuts or bruises that heal slowly
6. Being tired all the time
7. Being irritable
8. Tingling or numbness in the hands or feet

### **Exercise and diabetes**

1. Talk with your doctor about what types of exercise are safe for you.
2. Make sure your shoes fit well and your socks stay clean and dry. Check your feet for redness or sores after exercising. Call your doctor if you have sores that do not heal.
3. Warm up and stretch for 5 to 10 minutes before you exercise. Then "cool down" for several minutes after you exercise. For example, walk slowly at first, stretch and then walk faster. Finish up by walking slowly again (See Components of a Well-Rounded Exercise Program, pp. 14-17).
4. Check your blood glucose before you exercise. Do not exercise if your fasting blood glucose level is above 250 and you have ketones in your urine. If your blood glucose is below 100, eat a small snack.
5. Know the signs of low blood glucose (hypoglycemia).
6. Always carry food or glucose tablets to treat low blood glucose.
7. Always wear your medical identification or other ID.
8. Find an exercise buddy. Many people find they are more likely to do something active if friends join them.

### **Practices that may help control diabetes**

1. Watch your diet.
2. Monitor your blood glucose (sugar) levels.
3. Develop a physical activity plan.
4. Take medicines as prescribed.
5. Have regular check ups with your doctor.

### **Risk factors that you can control**

1. Being overweight.
2. Getting little or no exercise
3. Having high blood pressure (130/80 or above)

### **Risk factors that you have no control over**

1. Having brothers or sisters or parents with diabetes
2. Being a woman who had diabetes when pregnant
3. Having a baby that weighed more than nine pounds at birth
4. Being an African-American, Native American, Hispanic, or Asian-American/Pacific Islander

### **Primary Sources**

*Diabetes* (2005). U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Retrieved from <<http://www.fda.gov/womens/getthefacts/diabetes.html>>.

*Diabetes a-z topics and titles*. (2006). National Diabetes Information Clearing House. Retrieved from <<http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/a-z.asp>>.

*National diabetes statistics*. (2005). National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. Retrieved from <<http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/statistics/index.htm#9>>.

*National diabetes statistics fact sheet*: (2005). National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. Retrieved from <<http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/statistics/index.htm#1>>.

*What I need to know about eating and diabetes*. (2006). The National Diabetes Information Clearing House. Retrieved from <[http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/eating\\_ez/#plan](http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/eating_ez/#plan)>.

### **Additional References**

Kanzer-Lewis, G. (2007). *10 Steps to better living with diabetes*. Alexandria, VA: American Diabetes Association.

*Nutrition and recipes*. (2004). The American Diabetes Association. Retrieved from <<http://www.diabetes.org/nutrition-and-recipes/nutrition/overview.jsp>>.

Woodruff, S. and Saudek, C. D. (2004). *The complete diabetes prevention plan*. New York: Avery-Penguin Group.

## **Sources of Additional Information**

American Diabetes Association  
1701 North Beauregard Street  
Alexandria, VA 22311  
Phone: 1-800-342-2383 (National Call Center) 703-549-1500 (National Service Center)  
Website: [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)

Diabetes Public Health Resource  
Centers for Disease Control and  
Prevention (CDC)  
PO Box 8728  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
Phone: 877-232-3422  
Website: [www.cdc.gov/diabetes](http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes)

Food and Drug Administration  
5600 Fishers Lane (HFI-40)  
Rockville, MD 20857  
Phone: 888- 463-6332  
Website: <http://www.fda.gov/opacom/lowlit/diabetes.html>

National Diabetes Education Program  
1 Diabetes Way  
Bethesda, MD 20892-3560  
Phone: 1-800-438-5383  
Website: [www.ndep.nih.gov](http://www.ndep.nih.gov)

National Diabetes Information Clearing House  
1 Information Way  
Bethesda, MD 20892-3560  
Phone: 1-800-860-8747  
Website: [www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov)

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases  
Building 31. Rm 9A06  
31 Center Drive, MSC 2560  
Bethesda, MD 20892-2560  
Website: <http://www2.niddk.nih.gov/>

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