

Diabetes Prevention During Black History Month

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February is Black History Month, and a time when the American Diabetes Association is striving to raise awareness about Type 2 Diabetes among African Americans. [Studies have shown](#) that “13.2% of African Americans have been diagnosed with diabetes, compared to 7.6% of non-Hispanic whites.” Diabetes is a problem that should be taken seriously, and the right preventative techniques can help.

Eat a Proper Diet

The food you consume plays a major role in your likelihood of getting diabetes. One of the best things you can eat is grains rather than highly-processed foods. There is a large body of evidence that supports a correlation between foods like pasta, breads and cereal and a lower likelihood of suffering from diabetes.

While there's still a bit of mystery as to the specifics behind this correlation, research has found that grains help maintain healthy blood sugar levels. It's also recommended to get plenty of fiber via foods like fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds and whole grains. This also improves your blood sugar level and lowers your chances of heart disease.

Foods high in saturated fats such, especially foods that have been fried tend to be the worst for keeping a healthy heart and a healthy blood sugar level. Unfortunately, these also happen to be the most accessible food around, with fast-food restaurants virtually on every corner. Start with your work lunch habit — instead of your usual lunch spot, stretch your legs, explore the area — maybe you'll be able to find a place you love that serves healthy food and get exercise in the process!

Exercise

Staying active and engaging in activities like running, weight training and various recreational activities are also vital for keeping diabetes at bay. Exercising on a consistent basis prevents weight gain, keeps your blood sugar at a healthy level and makes you feel good. This doesn't need to be anything over the top, but striving to exercise for at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week can lower the odds of getting diabetes dramatically.

Drink Plenty of Water

Many people have developed an unhealthy love for soft drinks that are jam-packed with sugar. Consuming sugar-loaded drinks can adversely affect your health in many ways and will not do your blood sugar any favors. Consequently, you should try to replace soft drinks with water, and try to drink more water throughout the day.

By joining the American Diabetes Association in celebrating Black History Month and raising diabetes awareness, you can promote healthier living and hopefully reduce the number of diabetes cases.