

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF MID-COAST MAINE AND BEYOND

# The Times Record



**The Times Record It's How Online News Is Done!**  
 Subscribe to The Times Record and have access to all Current and Past Issues!  
 \* Past issues back to Nov 22, 2011.

*Subscribe Today!*

Brunswick, ME  
 61°F Overcast  
 WU WEATHER UNDERGROUND

[Click for weather forecast](#)

2014-03-21 / Commentary

## Tips for diabetes prevention and management

BY JOANNE WALLACE, RN, CCRN



According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) over 25 million people in the United States have diabetes. Here in Maine, there are 89,000 adults with diabetes and these numbers are growing rapidly. Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure, non-traumatic limb amputation, and new cases of blindness. Diabetes puts a person at increased risk for heart disease and stroke and is currently the 7th leading cause of death in the U.S.

Find nearby stories



News Bayou

The first step in diabetes prevention is awareness and knowing your risks. Family history and ethnicity are considered nonmodifiable risk factors for Type 2 diabetes. Lifestyles that contribute to obesity, with little or no physical activity, are considered modifiable risk factors. There are simple online tools like the American Diabetes Association's Diabetes Risk Test available at [www.midcoasthealth.com/diabetes](http://www.midcoasthealth.com/diabetes) that can help you determine if you are at risk for developing Type 2 diabetes.

It is also important to see your healthcare provider for an annual well visit check-up. Diabetes screening is part of your annual blood work and can help you prevent or manage diabetes depending on the results. Fasting blood glucose above 100 is considered pre-diabetes and you need to make lifestyle changes to prevent diabetes. Fasting blood glucose above 126 indicates that you have diabetes. Your doctor will work with you to make necessary lifestyle changes and may also recommend medication to control your blood glucose.

If you have diabetes, you will also need to keep track of your hemoglobin A1c. An A1c between 6.5 and 7 is a good goal to prevent long-term complications. Diabetes that is not well controlled increases your risk of heart disease.

**Healthy Eating:** Proper nutrition is one of the most important things you can do to take care of your health. If you don't know how to eat healthy, ask for help. You will definitely want to focus on increasing your fruit and vegetable intake and choose healthy plant based fats instead of less healthy animal fats. Plant based fats will help raise the good cholesterol (HDL) in your blood which helps prevent the bad cholesterol (LDL) from building up in your arteries. Also keep track of how much sodium you eat and drink daily. Too much can contribute to high blood pressure.

**Physical Activity:** It is also vital that you begin a regular exercise routine. Short frequent periods of physical activity (like 10 minutes three times a day) are a good option if you have trouble fitting it into your schedule. Aim for 150 minutes weekly. Even small decreases in weight will improve cardiovascular health and benefit blood glucose control.

**Routine Care:** If you are at risk or living with diabetes, make sure you are seeing your healthcare provider regularly. You will need to monitor your blood sugar, blood pressure, A1c, cholesterol, and weight. Remember, there are treatment options and resources available to help. Learn all you can to prevent complications.

The American Diabetes Association is a great resource for information on diabetes prevention and management. Learn more at [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org).

JOANNE WALLACE, RN, CCRN, is a Nurse Diabetes Educator with the Mid Coast Center for Diabetes & Endocrinology.

[Return to top](#)





Facebook social plugin

Copyright 2011-2014 The Times Record, All Rights Reserved



**Newspaper web site content management software and services**

[DMCA Notices](#)