



NATIONAL CENTER
FOR EQUITABLE CARE FOR ELDER


Managing Diabetes as an Older Adult: Your Diet and Your Dental Health

April 2020



————— An educational resource for older adult patients —————

Eating a balanced diet can help keep diabetes and other chronic conditions under control and avoid serious problems. But it can be tough to meet your daily nutritional needs if it is hard to chew because of pain or discomfort in your mouth. An estimated one-third of adults over age 65 have diabetes. Both a healthy diet and healthy mouth are needed for good blood sugar control. This fact sheet will explain small lifestyle changes that can have a big impact on diabetes management.

Turn over to learn more 



Tips for Healthy Eating

Tips for a Healthy Mouth

A diet full of fiber and calcium will give you energy and keep your blood sugar in check.

Try to eat a whole rainbow of colorful fruits and vegetables to add a variety of nutrients in every meal!

Eating smaller, more frequent meals can help keep your blood sugar stable.

Healthy and easy to prepare softer foods, including oatmeal, cottage cheese, stewed meats, and minced or pureed vegetables, can be easier to chew.

Diabetes and some medications can cause dry mouth. Sipping water or sucking on sugar-free mints between meals can help. Limit alcohol, caffeine, and sugary drinks when possible.

Your taste may change as you age. Boost flavor by adding fresh or dried herbs, small amounts of butter or olive oil, mustard, onion, garlic, turmeric, or cumin. Talk to your health center provider about how these additions could affect your medications.

Having high blood sugar puts you at higher risk for gum disease.

Take care of your mouth by brushing your teeth, tongue, and dentures or implants between meals and cleaning between your teeth daily.

If your mouth is sore, try using a spray bottle with water to make your mouth feel more comfortable and help your dentures fit better. Your health center provider can work with you to explore additional options to relieve discomfort.

Talk to your dentist if you have:

- Sore, red, or bleeding gums
- Loose or sensitive teeth
- A mouth sore that is slow to heal
- Dentures or implants that do not fit well

Talk to your health center provider if you need affordable dental care.



Health centers serve an important role in helping you and your loved ones manage diabetes and oral health concerns and making treatment plans that **work for you.**

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