PURSUIT

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Florida Blue BetterYou

A monthly wellness newsletter from Better You

Plants + movement: better diabetes health

Diabetes affects how the body controls blood sugar (glucose). Keeping blood sugar in a healthy range is crucial — high levels over time increase the risk of heart, kidney, eye, and nerve problems. The good news? Two key lifestyle habits can make a real difference: regular physical activity and a plant-forward diet.

Exercise: your body's best tool

Exercise helps your body use blood sugar for energy and improves insulin effectiveness. Aim for 150 minutes of moderate physical activity weekly and strength train twice a week. The payoff is significant: lower blood sugar, improved heart health, healthier weight, and better mood and sleep.

The best part? You don't need a gym. Walking, swimming, dancing, or biking work equally well. If you're not active now, start small with a 10-minute walk after dinner and gradually build from there. Consistency matters more than intensity.

Plant-forward diet: fuel that works

Emphasize whole or minimally processed plant foods such as vegetables, fruits, beans, lentils, whole grains, nuts, and seeds.



You don't need to eliminate meat — just make plant foods the focus while limiting sugary drinks, sweets, processed foods, and saturated fats.

Here's why it works: plant foods are rich in fiber, which controls blood sugar and keeps you feeling full longer. Build healthy meals around non-starchy vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and beans. Choose water or unsweetened beverages. Be sure to stay mindful of portion sizes and carbohydrate intake since your body converts carbs into glucose.

The power of combining both

When you pair regular exercise with healthy eating, the benefits multiply. Together, they help manage blood glucose, blood pressure, cholesterol, and weight while lowering diabetes-related health risks. Even small changes such as a daily walk or adding vegetables and beans to meals will create meaningful progress over time.

Before you start

Work with your health care team before making major changes, especially if you take insulin or other medications that can lower blood sugar. They'll help you create a safe, personalized plan that fits your lifestyle.

To learn more, join our Live Well with Diabetes webinar series: Thursdays, November 5th, 12th, and 19th, at 2:00 p.m. ET.

Resources: ADA; NIDDK; cdc.gov

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Setting healthy boundaries

Stress builds when your time and energy are pulled in too many directions. Maybe you are juggling work, family, and personal goals. Or you're feeling exhausted, anxious, or overwhelmed without quite knowing why. The fact is much of that stress comes from not having clear limits. Setting healthy boundaries is a powerful way to prioritize your well-being. This is especially true as we start the holiday season.

What are boundaries?

Boundaries are limits you set to protect your time, energy, and emotional well-being. They are guidelines that help you decide what you will and won't accept from others. Think of them like a fence around your yard — it defines your space and keeps things in order.

Why boundaries matter

When you don't have clear boundaries, stress builds up fast. You might feel resentful, burned out, or anxious. Setting boundaries gives you clarity about what you're comfortable with and empowers you to be clear about it with others. It reduces stress, improves relationships, and allows you to focus on what matters most.

Three practical steps to get started:

1. **Identify your limits.** What drains your energy? What makes you feel uncomfortable? Notice patterns in situations where you feel frustrated or taken advantage of.

2. **Communicate clearly.** Use simple, honest language. No need to overexplain. Saying "I can't take that on right now" or "I need time for myself this weekend" is enough.

3. **Stay consistent.** Boundaries only work if you stick to them. It might feel awkward at first, but consistency shows people that you're serious.



Ready to learn more and set some boundaries?
Join us for The Art of Setting Boundaries webinar on November 10th at 1:00 p.m. ET. Register today — your well-being is worth it!

Resources: CDC.gov; APA.org

Simple Sauteed Spinach (Serves 6)

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 20 ounces fresh spinach
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper

Directions:

Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a Dutch oven over medium heat. Add 4 cloves of garlic and cook until beginning to brown, 1 to 2 minutes. Add 20 ounces of spinach and toss to coat. Cover and cook until wilted, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and add 1 tablespoon of lemon juice, ¼ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper. Toss to coat and serve immediately.



Recipe courtesy of Eatingwell.com; for nutritional information click here.

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