



# Health News

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## Top Ways to Prevent Type Two Diabetes

### Introduction

Diabetes is a condition that affects people throughout the world. According to the World Health Organization, 347 million people have diabetes, and diabetes-related deaths are on the rise: Between 2008 and 2030, WHO estimates that diabetes deaths will increase by two thirds.<sup>1</sup> Type 2 diabetes, formerly called adult-onset diabetes, accounts for about 95 percent of all diabetes cases. Though most people who develop this health problem are middle-aged and older, it can manifest in people of any age, including children.

Type 2 diabetes is characterized by insulin resistance - the inability of your body's cells to properly respond to insulin (a hormone produced in your pancreas that helps control the amount of glucose, or sugar, in your blood). When glucose is unable to enter your cells, it accumulates in your bloodstream and may cause serious health complications over time, including heart and blood vessel disease, nerve damage and kidney, eye and foot damage. Fortunately, most cases of type 2 diabetes can be prevented. The Harvard School of Public Health states that nine cases in 10 can be prevented by eating a healthy diet, exercising more, and keeping body weight in check.<sup>2</sup>

Your chiropractor understands the diabetes disease process and how this problem can be prevented. Ask your chiropractor how you can best prevent this common health problem using natural approaches.

### Method 1: Change Your Diet

Changing your diet is powerful way to prevent type 2 diabetes. According to the American Diabetes Association, or ADA, individuals at high risk for type 2 diabetes should consume low glycemic index foods to keep blood glucose levels balanced as well as foods containing nutrients commonly lacking in the typical western diet, including calcium, potassium, fiber, magnesium and vitamins A, C, and E.<sup>3</sup> The ADA also recommends certain "superfoods" that are helpful in preventing type 2 diabetes, such as beans (kidney, pinto, navy, black), dark green leafy vegetables (spinach, collards, kale), citrus fruit (grapefruit, oranges, lemons, limes), sweet potatoes, berries (blueberries, strawberries, raspberries), tomatoes, nuts, whole grains and fish high in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon.



### Exercise of the Week

#### Cobra pose – lumbar extension

**Difficulty:** Moderate

*(Consult your Chiropractor before engaging in this or any other exercise)*

**Start:** On hands and knees. Be aware of position of spine – start with a neutral spine or a flat back.

**Exercise:** Allow hips to lower toward floor, keeping arms in a vertical position with shoulders back. Try to achieve a fully extended lower back. Hold for 10-30 seconds.



Certain spices may also be helpful in preventing type 2 diabetes. A 2005 study published in the journal *Nutrition & Food Science* notes that cinnamon, garlic, ginger, basil, oregano, nutmeg, tea, bay leaf, curry and other spices help lower blood glucose, boost insulin sensitivity and improve glucose synthesis in response to food consumption.<sup>4</sup> The authors of this study also note that these spices may help improve your circulation, reduce your blood pressure and protect the health of your blood vessels, which in turn reduces your likelihood of type 2 diabetes-related cardiovascular disease. Turmeric, which is commonly used in traditional Indian medicine, is another spice that may be helpful in reducing blood glucose levels. Turmeric possesses powerful anti-inflammatory properties that help protect your blood vessels from damage caused by excessive sugar in your cardiovascular system.

## Method 2: Increase Your Physical Activity

Exercise is a potent way to protect yourself against type 2 diabetes. Performing regular physical activity helps control your blood glucose levels, keeps your blood pressure in check and lowers your risk for not only type 2 diabetes but also heart disease and stroke. Both aerobic exercise (e.g., running, cycling, rowing, etc.) and resistance exercise (e.g., weight training) may be helpful for this health purpose. According to a 2002 study published in journal *Diabetes Research and Clinical Practice*, an 8-week circuit training program combining aerobic and resistance exercise helped improve a variety of health measures, including lean body mass, functional capacity, strength and glycemic control, in study participants.<sup>5</sup>



Initiating and sticking with an exercise plan can be tough but starting slow and building an exercise routine that is sustainable (and enjoyable) for you can help keep you motivated and on track to achieve your health and fitness goals. Your chiropractor can counsel you on how to create a fitness plan that matches your interests and aptitudes. In general, though, consider aiming for at least 30 minutes of aerobic exercise most days of the week. You can then add two or three resistance training sessions per week to build your strength and functional capacity. Remember to speak with your chiropractor before you begin an exercise plan.

## Method 3: Maintain a Healthy Body Weight

Excess weight and obesity are key factors in the development of type 2 diabetes. According to a 2006 study published in the journal *Diabetes Care*, weight loss is the most important predictor of decreased diabetes incidence and that for every kilogram of weight loss, there is a 16% reduction in risk. The authors of this study also note that interventions to prevent diabetes should primarily target weight reduction.<sup>6</sup> Ask your chiropractor about healthy and natural weight loss strategies.

## Quote to Inspire

*“Life is not over because you have diabetes. Make the most of what you have, be grateful”*

*Dale Evans*

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