

Published on *VeteransNavigator* (<https://veteransnavigator.org>)

Living With Diabetes

If you have diabetes, remember that it takes time and practice to live well with diabetes. Everything you do to take care of yourself helps. Over time, you'll learn how to make diabetes fit with the rest of your life.

Diabetes basics

Remember when you first found out you had diabetes and learned the basics of self-care?

- Make and eat healthy food.
- Be active most days.
- Test your blood sugar often.
- Take medicines as prescribed, even if you feel good.
- Learn ways to manage stress.
- Cope with the emotional side of diabetes and learn to manage stress.
- Go to checkups.

You've had to make diabetes care fit with family, work, school, holidays, and everything else in your life. Here's our short list of tips to help.

> KEEP READING: [Monitoring Your Blood Sugar](#)

Tips for living well with diabetes

Healthy eating

- Take the time to cook. Simple recipes can be healthy and delicious.
- Write down or take photos of meals and snacks to help you stay on track.
- Try an online cooking class to learn how to make veggies taste delicious.
- Skip "diabetic" foods. They tend to be high cost and low flavor.
- Make the same food for you and your family. Healthy eating for everyone!
- Try Meatless Monday. Beans and lentils are cheap, tasty, and good for you.

- Swap veggies for rice or pasta or blend them and add to sauces.

> KEEP READING: [Healthy Eating](#)

Being active

- Being active is one of the best tools to manage diabetes, and it's free!
- Find ways to be active throughout the day, like climbing stairs.
- Work out with a friend. You'll be more likely to stick with it.
- Try an activity tracker (many are free) and watch your steps add up.
- Try online workout videos. There's something for every level of fitness.

> KEEP READING: [Get active](#)

Managing stress

- Try meditation or yoga to relax.
- Get moving! Taking a walk can help you unwind.
- Call or make plans to get together with a friend who understands you.

> KEEP READING: [Diabetes and Mental Health](#)

Getting enough sleep

- Keep your bedroom dark and cool (65 degrees is recommended).
- Keep TVs, computers, and smartphones out of the bedroom.
- Get some physical activity during the day.
- Mentally unwind and relax before bedtime.
- Have a bedtime routine, like taking a shower or reading.

Healthy habits

- For new habits, start small. Small successes make bigger goals easier.
- Make goals specific: "I'm going to walk after dinner on weekdays."
- Make good choices easier, such as leaving the dog's leash by the door.

> KEEP READING: [3 Steps to Building a Healthy Habit](#)

Resources and support

[Diabetes self-management education and support](#) (DSMES) can help you:

- Learn practical skills.
- Gain confidence.
- Get support.

Everyone with diabetes can benefit from DSMES, whether they're newly diagnosed or have had it for several years.

Ask your doctor to recommend a diabetes educator. You can also search the Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists' [nationwide directory](#) for a list of educators in your community.

Article Source

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

Source URL

<https://www.cdc.gov>

Last Reviewed

Thursday, July 4, 2024