

Prediabetes: Lifestyle Changes

Often Prediabetes doesn't come along with any symptoms. You may feel fine. And because you feel fine, you may be tempted to ignore it or even forget about it.

But prediabetes will not go away on its own. Only with action can you lower your risk of developing type 2 diabetes and the many serious health problems insulin resistance can cause.

A major study called the Diabetes Prevention Program found that you can reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes, even if you have Prediabetes, by 58% by making healthier food choices and increasing your activity levels.

"You know, we like to sit in front of the TV at night, like most people, and we have to stop doing that. We have to make time in our schedule to get up and go walking." - Adele, Patient

Losing weight is key. In the study, people who lost 5-7% of their body weight by making healthy food choices and exercising 150 minutes a week were the most successful at reducing insulin resistance and improving their glucose levels. For someone who weighs 200 pounds, that means losing 10-14 pounds. Regular exercise works like a medication to help your body use your own insulin better.

But making lifestyle changes can be difficult. You are trying to change habits you have lived with for years. Habits that have led to weight gain and insulin resistance. It will take time.

To be successful for the long-term, don't make lots of lifestyle changes all at once. You will just feel overwhelmed, get frustrated and give up.

Instead make small, gradual changes.

"When you eat right then you have more energy. If you feel good, you can live a good life. If you feel bad, and you have health issues, you know, it really limits your life." - Adele, Patient

When you reach your goal and the change becomes a habit, make another change.

"I really liked sweets and I've been cutting back on them as much as I can. I haven't done it completely but a whole lot better than I used to" - Bill, Patient

The changes you are making are for life. Feel good about your efforts. Each change you make will lead you to a healthier life now and in the future.

You don't have to do this alone. Work with your healthcare provider to set healthy eating goals and physical activity goals that you can reach safely.

When you meet with your healthcare provider, don't be afraid to ask questions. She can give you great pointers on

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how to add healthy choices to your busy lifestyle and stick with the plan.

During follow-up appointments, make sure you get feedback on your progress. Knowing your changes are making a difference is a great motivator. We all do better if we know we're making positive changes for a healthier lifestyle.

"It's been about a year and a half since I've been diagnosed, and since learning that, I have tried to do better eating-wise. Overall I definitely feel better. You know, I'm getting older, you know, I have my aches and pains and everything else, but it's definitely doing better than it was." - Bill, Patient