



## Questions about your health?

Call Our Nurse Advice Line!

1-888-275-8750 English

1-866-648-3537 Spanish

**OPEN 24 HOURS!**

Your family's health is our priority!

For the hearing impaired please call

TTY/866-735-2929 English

TTY/866-833-4703 Spanish



## Travel and Diabetes

When traveling or going on vacation, you don't get to leave your diabetes behind. Here is a list of things to keep in mind before you go.

**Plan ahead:** Make an appointment to see your healthcare provider four to six weeks before your trip. Have a check up. Get a letter from your doctor explaining that you have diabetes. Also get a prescription for insulin or oral medication in case of an emergency.

**What to pack:** Pack twice the amount of medication and supplies. If you take insulin, pack an extra bottle of Regular just in case. Don't forget to bring a glucose monitor and test strips. Keep snacks, glucose gel, or tablets with you in case your blood sugar drops. Bring your glucagon emergency kit.

**If you are flying:** Keep all supplies in your carry-on luggage. Tell airport security that you have diabetes. You can take medicine and supplies through security checkpoints. They must have prescription labels on them. Have enough food with you to cover the entire flight. If you inject insulin while on the plane, don't inject air into the bottle. This is because the cabin is pressurized.

### Other important tips:

- Don't keep your medication in the trunk or glove compartment of your car. Insulin does not have to be refrigerated. But it should not get too hot or too cold.
- Tell traveling partners about the early signs of low blood sugar. These signs are glassy-eyed, confused, irritable, or sweating inappropriately. You will need sugar, juice, or milk right away.
- Take care of your feet. Change your shoes often. This will help prevent blisters and soreness at pressure points. Bring a first aid kit with you to treat minor foot injuries.
- Test your blood sugar more often. Changes in your daily schedule can affect your blood sugar.
- Always wear medical identification that says you have diabetes.

## Smoking and Diabetes Do Not Mix

Would you like help to stop smoking? Call Molina Healthcare of Utah's **Smoke Free** Program toll-free at 1-888-483-0760 ext. 170458. Molina members can join the **Smoke Free** Smoking Cessation Program at no cost.

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### Check Out the Molina Healthcare Website

Check out the Molina Healthcare website at [www.molinahealthcare.com](http://www.molinahealthcare.com). You can use the Internet for free at most public libraries. "Click" on the member button and drag your mouse down to your state. You can get information on our website about:

- Molina Healthcare's contracted doctors and hospitals
- Your benefits, including copayments and other charges (if they apply)
- What to do if you get a bill or a claim
- FAQs (frequently asked questions and answers)
- Drug formulary (approved drugs that doctors can prescribe)
- How to contact UM staff about a UM issue or question
- How to get primary care, hospital, specialty, and emergency services
- How to get care after normal office hours
- Preventive health guidelines and immunization schedule
- Your rights and responsibilities and the privacy of your information
- Restrictions on benefits or how to obtain care outside the Molina Healthcare service area
- Quality Improvement, Health Education, and Disease Management programs
- How to voice a complaint or appeal a medical decision
- How we decide about using new technology

You can ask for printed copies of anything posted on the website by calling 1-888-483-0760. Your member handbook is also a good resource. You can find it on our website.

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## Sneak in Some Exercise

During the spring season you might be extra busy. There is shopping to do, parties and school plays to attend, and work to be done. On top of all that you have to manage your diabetes. It's easy to put yourself last.

Exercise is a great way to relieve stress and control your diabetes at the same time. Exercise lowers your blood sugar and cholesterol. Getting some exercise doesn't mean that you have to give up hours of your day or become an athlete. Here are some tips on how to sneak exercise into your day:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Even walking down the stairs is better than using the elevator.
- Use 10 minutes of your lunch break to take a walk. It

will aid in digestion and energize you for the rest of your workday.

- Don't wait for the parking spot up front. Park farther away and walk. You'll get there quicker!
- Do some gentle stretches.
- Take the dog for a walk, or catch up with a friend over a walk around the block.
- Do some squats or leg lifts while you wait for the microwave.
- Exercise as a family. It's a great way to spend quality time together and be a good role model.

Find out what it is that you enjoy. The goal is to get moving. Remember, a little bit here and there really adds up, and the pounds won't!

## What Makes Diabetes Worse?

Diabetes affects almost every body system. It affects your blood vessels, kidneys, eyes, heart and nerves. If you have diabetes you should know what makes diabetes worse.

### The following can make diabetes worse:

- Poor blood sugar control
- Poor blood pressure control
- Poor diet
- Physical inactivity
- Smoking

Poor blood sugar control means not taking your medicine properly. There are two main types of drugs for diabetes. These are insulin and oral medication. Insulin can come in three different forms. You might be on one or more types of insulin. The oral medications vary. You might take them once or more a day, with meals, before meals or without food.

This can be confusing! It is important to know what you are taking. It is also important to know how to take it and when to take it. Everyone's treatment plan is different. If you do not understand, talk to your doctor.

Poor blood sugar control also means not testing your blood sugar levels. Check your own blood sugar regularly. This can let you know if you need more or less insulin. It can also tell you how well your treatment plan is working.

High blood sugar levels cause changes in your blood vessels. These structural changes are bad. They contribute to eye, kidney, nerve and vascular problems.

Poor blood pressure control means that your blood pressure is too high. You should aim to keep your blood pressure below 130/80 mmHg. High blood pressure puts you at risk for heart disease, strokes, and kidney disease.

A healthy diet and active lifestyle is important. Diabetics should have a nutrition plan. The plan should focus on individual needs. Diabetes is a risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Therefore, limit your saturated fat intake. Also, limit cholesterol intake to 300mg or less a day.

Regular physical activity is an important part of diabetes control. If you are not active, it can make your diabetes worse. Weight loss has been shown to improve diabetes control.

Smoking is extra harmful for people with diabetes. Nicotine in cigarettes makes your blood vessels get hard and narrow. This reduces blood flow to your body. People with diabetes already have a reduced blood flow. Smoking makes this problem worse.

Having diabetes can be tough, but there are many ways to manage it. Knowing what makes diabetes worse can help you live a healthier, longer life.

## How to Pack a Lunch



Eating a healthy lunch can be challenging, especially if you have diabetes. Making time to eat can be difficult also. You might grab fast food or a quick lunch from a sandwich shop or cafeteria. Although these choices might save time, they make for poor blood sugar and weight control.

Try packing a lunch instead. It can save you from making poor lunch choices that are too large in portion size and heavy in fat and calories. By making your own lunch you control what goes in it and what it is made of.

Set aside a few minutes each week to think about what you would like for lunch that week. Make a list and take it with you to the grocery store. Prepare and pack what you can the night before to help save time in the morning. Think if you will have access to a refrigerator or microwave. Use an insulated bag if you need to keep your lunch cool. A thermos can help keep foods like soup warm.

Mix it up! You don't always have to pack a sandwich. Try a low calorie frozen entrée, but be sure to read the nutrition labels for the calorie, fat, sodium and carbohydrate content. Calories from fat should not be more than 30% of the total calories and the sodium content should be less than 800 milligrams.

Aim to eat whole grain breads, crackers, pasta and rice. Other good sources of carbohydrates are fresh fruit and vegetables. Carbohydrates have the biggest effect on your blood sugar. Be aware of how many carbs you need to eat at each meal and how many you eat. Sources of protein include meat, fish, poultry, cheese and eggs. Aim for lean cuts of meat and low fat dairy. Try to take it easy on the butter, mayo, oil and salad dressing. These are sources of fat. Don't forget to add some fiber to your lunch. Those whole grains, fruits and veggies are great sources. Try to eat 25-24 grams of fiber each day.

### Finally, watch serving sizes. Here are some guidelines from the American Diabetes Association:

- Meat, fish, poultry—3 oz. (about the size of the palm of your hand)
- Cheese—1 oz. (about the size of your thumb)
- Milk, yogurt, fresh vegetables—1 cup (about the size of a tennis ball)
- Bread—one slice
- Rice or cooked pasta—1/3 cup
- Potato or corn—1/2 cup
- Dry cereal—3/4 cup

You are receiving this as part of the Healthy Living with Diabetes<sup>SM</sup> program. If you do not want to receive this newsletter or participate in the Healthy Living with Diabetes<sup>SM</sup> program, please call us at Molina Health Education at 1-888-483-0760.