

Diabetes and Me: **Taking My Medications** [a training for self-advocates]

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Disclaimer

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Objectives

This training will help you to understand:

❖ The importance of taking medications for diabetes.

Food Gives the Body Energy

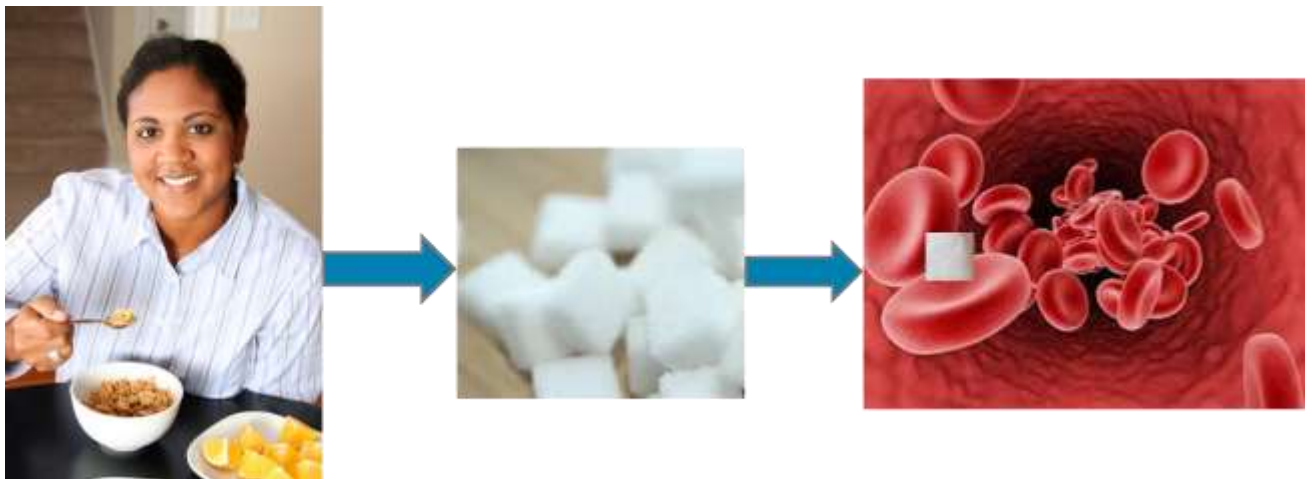
Our bodies need ENERGY to move, just like a car needs gas to move. ENERGY for your body comes from the FOOD you eat. Sugar from the FOOD you eat goes into your blood. The blood takes the sugar to your body parts, like the *heart, brain, lungs, and muscles*. Insulin helps the sugar get into the cells of your body parts. When each of your body parts has the ENERGY it needs, you can *work, play, and move* throughout the day.



What is Diabetes?

The sugar from the food you eat has to get into the *CELLS* of your body parts (your *muscles, heart, lungs, and brain*) to give them *ENERGY*.

Diabetes is a condition where that sugar stays in your *BLOOD* instead of going to the cells of your body parts. Too much sugar in the *BLOOD* can cause you to feel *TIRED*, and can affect how well your body works.



What is Diabetes? (continued)

It is IMPORTANT to remember:

- ❖ You did not do anything to cause this to happen!
- ❖ Following the advice of your doctor can help you to stay healthy and happy, and have enough energy to do the things you like and need to do.

Taking Medications

The doctor might tell you that you need to take **medicine** to control your diabetes.

- ❖ This kind of **medicine** helps move the sugar out of your blood and into the **CELLS** of your body.
- ❖ The **medicine** might be a *pill* or it might be a *shot*. Your doctor will know which medicine is best for you.



Pills or Shots

There are different types of medications for people who have diabetes. Your doctor might order **pills** or **shots** to take. Some people may first take **pills** for their diabetes, and then many years later may need to take **shots**. Everyone is different. Follow your doctor's directions.



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Pills for Diabetes

If you need to take **pills** to help get the sugar out of your blood and into your body, your doctor will teach you when to take your **pills** each day. Most **pills** are taken before you eat your meals.

Be very careful not to skip meals. It is best to eat a healthy meal, not a snack. Your body needs healthy foods and the medicine to keep you healthy.



Shots for Diabetes

You might need to take **shots** to help get the sugar out of the blood and into the body. A common medication **shot** used to treat diabetes is **insulin**.

Insulin shots are given before you eat your meals. Your doctor will teach you when **insulin shots** should be given each day.

Be very careful not to skip meals. Eat a healthy meal, not a snack, after the **insulin shot** is given. Your body needs healthy foods and the medicine to keep you healthy.



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Getting Shots

Getting a shot can be scary, but the shots for diabetes are different than other shots.

They do not hurt as much, because the needle is very **SMALL** and **THIN**.

Getting Shots (continued)

This picture shows the needle for a flu shot. The needle is **long** and a little **thick**.



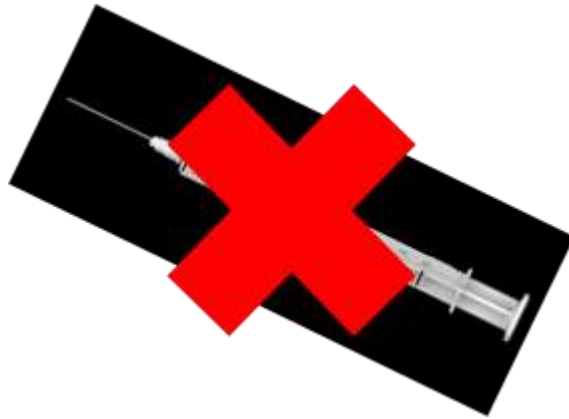
Getting Shots (continued)

This picture shows the needle for an insulin shot. The needle is much **smaller** and **thinner**, so it does not hurt as much.



Getting Shots (continued)

The needle for a shot of insulin is not like the needle for a flu shot.



Insulin Shots

Some people are able to give themselves **insulin shots**. If you are able to give yourself **insulin shots**, the nurse at the doctor's office can teach you how to do it.

Some people have a caregiver or family member give them **insulin shots**. Talk with your doctor, family, and caregivers about the best way to make sure you get your **insulin shots**.

It is important to receive the **insulin shot** in a different location on your body each time. The body locations may include your *arms, thighs, and your belly*.



Tell Someone

Your doctor will order the type of diabetes medication that is best for you. Sometimes people do not feel well after a new medication is started. This is called a *side effect* of the medication. If you do not feel well after starting a new diabetes medication, be sure to tell someone. Can you think of people you can tell? Here are some possibilities:

You can tell your family



You can tell your caretaker



You can tell your supervisor at work



Eat When You Take Your Diabetes Medicine

Be sure to **EAT** something when you take your diabetes medication. It is not safe or healthy to take these medicines without eating food with them.



Sick Days

Everyone gets sick once in a while.

Talk to your doctor if you become sick and cannot eat. The doctor might want to change when you take the medication for diabetes.



Staying Healthy

When you have diabetes, it is important to keep the right amount of sugar in your blood – not too much and not too little. The doctor will help you plan how to do this.

The **3** best ways to keep healthy when you have diabetes is to:

1. **Eat healthy foods!**
2. **Be active!**
3. **Take medicine, if your doctor says you should!**



Healthy Foods

The doctor will tell you the best kind of foods to eat to keep the right amount of sugar in your blood. You will learn about foods that are **healthy** for you to eat; you may eat these foods often. **Healthy** foods include fruits and vegetables. Foods like blueberries, bananas and carrots are examples of **healthy** foods.

You will learn about foods that are **not healthy** for you to eat; you should eat these in small amounts and not every day. Foods that have a lot of sugar in them are **not healthy** for you; you should eat these in small amounts. Foods like bread and potatoes do not taste sugary, but the body changes those foods into sugar. These foods will put a lot of sugar into your blood. They are **not healthy** for you.

It is a good idea to eat at the same time every day to keep your blood sugar and your energy the same every day.

Healthy Foods (continued)

These are **healthy** foods. They are healthier to eat than cookies, candy, hot dogs or a large plate of spaghetti.



Be Active

Moving your body helps your body move sugar out of the blood and into the cells to give your body the energy it needs. The doctor can help you learn what type of activity that is best for you. Tell the doctor the kinds of activities you like to do.

Being active almost every day helps keep your blood sugar at a healthy level; it helps keep your whole body strong and healthy. What do **YOU** like to do to be active?



Diabetes and You

Remember, it is important to see your regular doctor and special doctors when you have diabetes. **You and your doctors will work together** to help you stay healthy.

It is not your fault that you have diabetes. It is not your doctor's fault, either. Millions of people have diabetes; **you are not alone.**

Diabetes does not go away, but you can control diabetes. **You are in charge.** If you follow your doctors' orders and do what you need to do to stay healthy, you can be well with diabetes.



Related Training Topics

The HCQU has more trainings about Diabetes that you can take. Here they are:

- ❖ Diabetes and Me: **What is Diabetes?**
- ❖ Diabetes and Me: **Healthy Eating**
- ❖ Diabetes and Me: **Taking Care of My Body**

References:

American Diabetes Association. (2020). Preparing for Sick Days. Retrieved on April 29, 2020 from <https://www.diabetes.org/diabetes/treatment-care/plaing-sick-days>

Diabetes UK. (2017, August 8). What to do when you have Type 2 diabetes - An easy read guide. Retrieved on April 29, 2020 from https://diabetes-resources-production.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/resources-s3/2018-04/What%20to%20do%20when%20you%20have%20diabetes%20-%20An%20easy%20read%20guide_0.pdf

What Did I Learn?

You learned a lot about Diabetes Medications today!



Let's practice what we learned...

Practice what you learned.

1. Circle the right answer. Corey has diabetes. Corey woke up a little late and is rushing to get dressed for his job. Corey knows that he needs to eat a good breakfast, but he is worried he might be late for work. He took his diabetes pills with a glass of water. What would be the healthiest breakfast for him to eat?

a. Eggs, thin bagel, fruit, and milk



b. Granola Bar



Practice what you learned.

2. Circle the right answer. Maria has diabetes too. Maria needs insulin shots to keep the right amount of sugar in her body. Maria is not afraid of the shots because she knows it doesn't hurt to get them. Which picture shows the right size needle for insulin?

a. Long Needle



b. Short Needle



Practice what you learned.

3. Circle the right answer. Michael also has diabetes. Last night he had diarrhea. This morning, Michael ate breakfast and then threw up. He is feeling a little better but still feels sick to his stomach and nauseated. It is now lunchtime. Should Michael still take his diabetes medications?

a. Yes



b. No



You Are Done!

You have finished the training!