

# Facts About Diabetes

- When you have diabetes, your body has a harder time changing the food you eat into the energy you need.
- Diabetes causes sugar to build up in the blood. If the sugar stays high, it can slowly damage the heart, kidneys, eyes, and feet.
- Diabetes is a life-long disease, but you can control it by eating right and moving your body more. Most people also have to take pills or insulin shots.
- It takes time and practice to learn how to do these things. You and your health care team can work together to find the best way to control your diabetes.
- People with diabetes often have other health problems. Stopping smoking, controlling your blood pressure, and getting help with depression will help your diabetes.
- Use this guide to learn the skills you need to take charge of your diabetes and live the life you want to live. You can take this one step at a time. **Just START.** Share this guide with family and friends and get their support.



# Watch Your Portion Sizes

- Many people do not realize that the portion sizes they now eat are too big. One of the most important ways to control your blood sugar is to eat the right portion sizes.



Look at these plates. The plates on the left have too much food. The portions are too big. The ones on the right have the correct amount of food.

TOO MUCH



RIGHT SIZE



TOO MUCH



RIGHT SIZE



# Chapter 3: Be Active

## *What's in it for you?*

- Being more active is one of the best things you can do to control your blood sugar.
- Moving more can help you lose weight, have more energy, and feel more upbeat.
- No matter how old you are, being active is good for you.

## *Start smart!*

If you are not exercising, start with 10 minutes a day. It can be as simple as walking 5 minutes from your door and turning around and walking back.



You might be surprised that some of the activities you can do everyday are exercise:

- Climbing stairs
- Housework like sweeping, vacuuming, dusting
- Mowing the lawn or working in your garden
- Walking to the bus

Some people exercise by:

- Using a stationary bicycle
- Walking in the mall
- Enrolling in water aerobics
- Going to an exercise class

A lot of people say that walking is the easiest exercise for them. Many people walk with a friend or their pet. Walking is free, easy, and fun.

So turn off the TV, get up and get moving!

