

YANGHELI CH'ITSIZLAN

WE ARE GETTING

Healthier

FIGHTING DIABETES: HEALTHY PEOPLE, HEALTHY WAYS OF LIFE

In the past when our people led traditional lifestyles, our diets consisted of healthy foods and our days were full of activity – from hunting, fishing and gathering to building, chopping, rowing and more. We were among the healthiest people in the world.

Today, most of our Alaska Native people lead lifestyles and eat diets that are similar to other Americans. And like most Americans, we aren't as active as our ancestors, and the foods we eat today are high in sugars and preservatives. This has brought a national health crisis home to Alaska: diabetes.

Diabetes is a chronic and devastating disease in which there are high levels of sugar in the blood. As more sugar

builds up in your bloodstream, it can lead to major heart problems, kidney failure and other serious health issues.

As diabetes rates continue climbing nationally, that troubling trend is also hitting our Alaska Native people. In 1990, about 900 Alaska Native people had diabetes. By 2009, that number rose to 4,000, a 365 percent increase. Today, around 5,000 Alaska Native and American Indian people living in Alaska have diabetes.

To prevent diabetes, we must embrace healthy and traditional ways of life.



Diabetes can be managed and even be reversed if proper lifestyle changes are made to combat the disease. But the most important fact about diabetes is that it is preventable in most cases.

For diabetes to be prevented, and for our people to be the healthiest people in the world, we must embrace both healthy and traditional lifestyles – including having a nutritious, balanced diet, and making exercise a part of our daily lives.

Tips for PREVENTING DIABETES



GET REGULAR EXERCISE

Staying active helps manage blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol, and lowers risk for diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.



MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT

to help you prevent diabetes, as well as heart disease, high blood pressure, unhealthy cholesterol, and high blood sugar.



EAT HEALTHILY

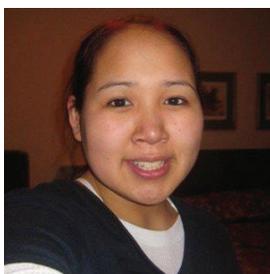
A smart diet is one of the most important things you can do to lower your risk for diabetes and heart disease.



LIMIT YOUR SUGAR INTAKE

Limiting the amount of sugar in your diet is an important part of eating healthy and preventing diabetes.

SIMPLE STEPS TO DIABETES SUCCESS: STEPHANIE AISHANNA (CHA/P)



When it comes to diabetes prevention, management and care, Stephanie

Aishanna chooses to keep it simple. A Community Health Aide/Practitioner (CHA/P) in Kaktovik, Aishanna said she knows her patients well, so she can simplify complex medical terms when needed and offer nutrition and activity tips that she knows can be easily incorporated into her patients' daily lives.

For her patients with Type 2 diabetes, Aishanna focuses on the importance of a healthy diet and exercise.

She encourages her patients to limit sugary drinks in their diets and drink

water instead. She also shares that traditional foods like seal, whale, caribou and fish are healthy additions to diets. She even recommends that patients "prepare our traditional foods how we used to before we had salt."

"That always gets a chuckle and smile with a reply, 'OK,'" Aishanna said.

Aishanna is a strong advocate for exercise and explains to her patients how simple changes in day-to-day activities can evolve into something that, with a little extra effort, turns to exercise that fights diabetes.

"There is one exercise that everyone does it without thinking about: walking," Aishanna said. "It is easy and you do it every day."

Aishanna said she loves helping others

and hopes to create positive changes for her diabetes patients. That's why she says that by helping her patients keep it simple, they can stay committed and take the small steps that will lead to healthy successes.

LEARN MORE

For more information about diabetes prevention and treatment, visit or contact the following:

American Diabetes Association: www.diabetes.org

IHS Division of Diabetes treatment and prevention:
[www.ihs.gov/
MedicalPrograms/Diabetes/](http://www.ihs.gov/MedicalPrograms/Diabetes/)

ANTHC Diabetes Program:
AKA-DIAB@anthc.org

Tips for MANAGING DIABETES



MONITOR YOUR BLOOD SUGAR LEVELS

and record them to track patterns.



ALWAYS TAKE YOUR MEDICATION

as directed. Do not miss doses.



CHECK YOUR FEET OFTEN

for cuts, blisters, sores, swelling, or sore toenails.



KEEP YOUR TEETH AND GUMS HEALTHY

by brushing and flossing every day. Gum disease is more common among those with diabetes.

TAKE PROPER CARE OF YOUR FEET

You might be wondering, "What do my feet have to do with diabetes?"



High blood sugar from diabetes can cause two problems that can hurt your feet —

- 1 nerve damage
- 2 poor blood flow.



- 1 Nerve damage can reduce the amount of feeling you have in your legs and feet. This means that an injury to your foot may get worse because you don't know it is there.
- 2 When you don't have enough blood flowing through your legs and feet, it is harder for injuries to heal.

Once in a while, a bad infection never heals, and the surrounding skin and tissue die. To keep more skin and tissue from dying, surgery may have to be done to remove a toe, foot or part of a leg.



EAT WISELY FOR YOUR HEALTH

There are hidden sugars everywhere in food, especially in already prepared foods such as ketchup, peanut butter, canned fruits and vegetables, and low-fat products, which replace sugar for fat content. Whenever possible, choose to eat whole and traditional foods that are natural and not processed — whole foods are foods in their truest form and do not contain added sugar, salt, carbohydrates, fats or preservatives that many processed foods do.



Water



Sports Drinks



Fresh Fruit or Wild Berries



Canned Fruit Cocktail



Potatoes



Potato Chips



Fresh Blueberries



Blueberry Muffin



Oil and Vinegar



Low-Fat Salad Dressing



Fresh Oranges



Orange Juice

Healthier Recipe: Duck and vegetable sauce over pasta



Duck meat is an excellent source of protein and iron, while whole-wheat pasta is a healthier choice than regular pasta because it is high in fiber. When combined with apple juice, tomatoes, carrots and other vegetables, it makes for a fast, fun and filling meal with a traditional touch.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 pounds duck meat (may include liver, kidney, heart if desired)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 2 cans (14.5 ounces each) diced tomatoes
- 1 can apple juice
- 1 can (15 ounces) mixed vegetables, drained
- 1 can sliced carrots (15 ounces), drained
- 1/2 pound whole-wheat rotini pasta

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Heat oil in pan, then sear duck meat.
2. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Once meat is seared, add diced tomatoes.
4. Add apple juice, bring to a boil, then drop to a simmer and reduce amount of liquid by half.
5. Boil water in large pot. Add pasta to boiling water, adding salt to taste. Remove from pot and drain when cooked.
6. Once sauce has cooked down, add vegetables. Serve over cooked pasta.

Whole-wheat pasta, apple juice, canned tomatoes, canned vegetables, and canned carrots are just some of the foods included in Alaska's Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), which provides nutritional food assistance to income-eligible Native American and non-Native households and communities. Learn more about Alaska's FDPIR and eligibility at <http://anthctoday.org/community/fdpir.html>.



ALASKA NATIVE TRIBAL HEALTH CONSORTIUM