AULTCARE
www.aultcare.com

AULTRA
www.aultragroup.com

Leading Our Community to Improved Health...

Take an Active Part in Your Health Care!

3111

Dear Member:
AultCare and Aultra offers a Care Coordination program to advocate for you to get the care, information and community services you need. We have combined the traditional services of Utilization Management, Case Management and Disease Management into one service, provided by one Care Coordinator, who will be your advocate and help you navigate through the health care system. Our team of registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and licensed social workers are available by phone to help you take control of your health and well-being!

Our services are free and we provide:

- Assistance with the referral process to out-of-network specialists
- Help with transitioning your care to panel providers, if appropriate
- Care coordination to help you get the most from your plan benefits while maintaining quality, cost-effective treatment
- Community resource information to provide assistance with prescriptions, utilities and transportation if you are having financial difficulties
- Phone calls with a nurse who specializes in managing care for health conditions
- Educational materials to supplement information your physician has provided
- Informative mailings and handouts about your condition
- Equipment such as the Cardiocom Telescale® and GlucoCom Telemonitoring System to help you manage your condition from the convenience of your home
- Staff to guide you in the right direction and help you work with your doctors to improve your health
- Reliable referrals to service agencies in the community

You may benefit from our Care Coordination services if you:

- Have questions about your health status or health care
- Are in need of a transplant
- Have been newly diagnosed with cancer
- Are experiencing complex medical issues
- Are receiving specialty care outside of the network

Best Regards,
Your Chronic Care Management Team

Influenza

Influenza ("the flu") is an infection that affects your respiratory tract (the mouth, nose, and lungs, and the passages between them). Unlike a cold, the flu can make you very ill. And it can lead to pneumonia, a serious lung infection. For some people, especially older adults, the flu can be fatal. This sheet tells you more about the flu and what you can do to avoid infection.

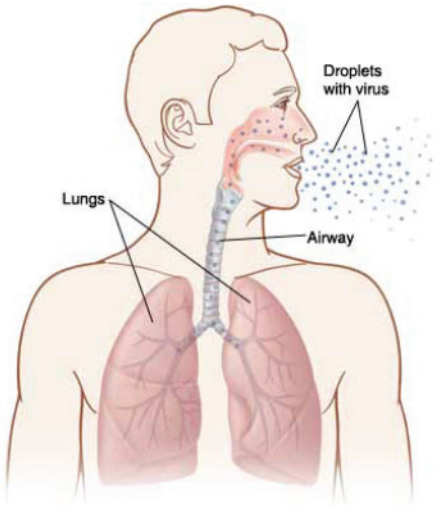
What Are the Risk Factors for the Flu?

Anyone can get the flu. But you're more likely to become infected if you:

- Have a weakened immune system.
- Have frequent, close contact with young children.
- Work in a health care setting where you may be exposed to flu germs.
- Live or work with someone who has the flu.
- Haven't received an annual flu shot.

How Does the Flu Spread?

The flu is caused by viruses (germs). The germs spread through the air in droplets when someone who has the flu coughs, sneezes, laughs, or talks. You can become infected when you inhale these germs directly. You can also become infected when you touch a surface on which the droplets have landed and then transfer the germs to your eyes, nose, or mouth. Touching used tissues, or sharing utensils, drinking glasses, or a toothbrush with an infected person can expose you to flu germs, too.



Viruses that cause influenza spread through the air in droplets when someone who has the flu coughs, sneezes, laughs, or talks.

What Are the Symptoms of the Flu?

Flu symptoms tend to come on quickly and may last a few days to a few weeks. They include:

- Fever (usually higher than 101°F) and chills
- Sore throat and headache
- Dry cough
- Runny nose
- Tiredness and weakness
- Muscle aches

Factors That Can Make Flu Worse

For some people, the flu can be very serious. The risk of complications is greater for:

- Children under age 5.
- Adults 50 years of age and older.
- People with a chronic illness such as diabetes or heart, kidney, or lung disease.
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility.

Influenza (continued)

How Is the Flu Treated?

Influenza usually improves on its own. In some cases, your doctor may prescribe an antiviral medication. This may help you get well sooner. For the medication to help, you need to take it as soon as possible after your symptoms start. If you develop pneumonia or other serious illness, hospital care may be needed.

Easing Flu Symptoms

- Drink lots of fluids such as water, juice, and warm soup to prevent dehydration. A good rule is to drink enough so that you urinate your normal amount.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Ask your doctor about acetaminophen or other medications for fever and pain. Take any medication only as directed. Don't give aspirin to children under age 18. It can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye's syndrome.
- Call your doctor if your fever rises over 101°F or you become dizzy, lightheaded, or short of breath.

Taking Steps to Protect Others

- Wash your hands often, especially after coughing or sneezing. Or, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand gel containing at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue. Then throw the tissue away and wash your hands. If you don't have a tissue, cough and sneeze into the crook of your elbow.
- Stay home until at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever or chills. Be sure the fever isn't being hidden by fever-reducing medication (such as ibuprofen).
- Don't share food, utensils, drinking glasses, or a toothbrush with others.
- Ask your doctor whether others in your household should receive antiviral medication to help them avoid infection.

How Can the Flu Be Prevented?

- One of the best ways to avoid the flu is to get a flu vaccination each year. Viruses that cause the flu change from year to year. For that reason, doctors recommend getting the flu vaccine each fall or winter. Most often, the vaccine is given as a shot. But some people may receive the vaccine in nasal spray form instead. Your doctor can tell you which vaccine is right for you.
- Wash your hands often. Frequent handwashing is a proven way to prevent infection.
- Carry an alcohol-based hand gel containing at least 60 percent alcohol. Use it when you don't have access to soap and water. Alcohol gels kill most germs and are safe for children.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- At home and work, clean phones, computer keyboards, and toys often with disinfectant wipes.
- If possible, avoid close contact with others, especially children.
- If you're 65 or older, ask your doctor if you should receive the pneumonia vaccine.

Influenza (continued)

Handwashing Tips

Handwashing is one of the best ways to prevent many common infections. If you're caring for or visiting someone with the flu, wash your hands each time you enter and leave the room. Follow these steps:

- Use warm water and plenty of soap. Work up a good lather.
- Clean the whole hand, under your nails, between your fingers, and up the wrists.
- Wash for at least 15 seconds. Don't just wipe—scrub well.
- Rinse, letting the water run down your fingers, not up your wrists.
- Dry your hands well. Use a paper towel to turn off the faucet and open the door.

Using Alcohol-Based Hand Gels

Alcohol-based hand gels are also a good choice for cleaning your hands. Use them when you don't have access to soap and water, or your hands aren't visibly dirty. Follow these steps:

- Squeeze about a tablespoon of gel into the palm of one hand.
- Rub your hands together briskly, cleaning the backs of your hands, the palms, between your fingers, and up the wrists.
- Rub until the gel is gone and your hands are completely dry.

Preventing Influenza in Healthcare Settings

The flu is a special concern for people in hospitals and long-term care facilities. To help prevent the spread of flu, many hospitals and nursing homes take these steps:

- Health care providers wash their hands or use an alcohol-based hand cleaner before and after treating each patient.
- People with the flu have private rooms and bathrooms or share a room with someone with the same infection.
- High-risk patients who don't have the flu may receive a flu shot and the pneumonia vaccine to prevent illness.
- All health care workers are encouraged to have flu shots.

Here are two tips to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers to help stop the spread of germs:

1. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth since that is often how germs are spread.
2. Practice good health habits such as getting enough sleep, eating a healthy diet, and managing your stress.

Flu Symptoms

Flu symptoms tend to come on quickly. Fever, headache, fatigue, cough, sore throat, runny nose, and muscle aches are symptoms of the flu. Children may have an upset stomach or vomiting, but adults usually don't. Some symptoms, such as fatigue and cough, can last a few weeks.

Getting a Flu Vaccination

The flu (influenza) is caused by a virus that is easily spread. And it can be more dangerous than you think. A flu vaccine is your best chance to avoid the flu. The vaccine is given in the form of a shot (injection) or a nasal spray. It's best to get vaccinated each October or November, before flu season starts. This can be done at your doctor's office or a health clinic. Drugstores, senior centers, and workplaces often offer flu vaccinations, too. If you have questions about getting vaccinated, ask your health care provider.

Flu Facts

- The flu vaccine will not give you the flu.
- The flu is caused by a virus. It can't be treated with antibiotics.
- The flu can be life-threatening, especially for people in high-risk groups. About 36,000 people die of complications from the flu each year.
- Influenza is not the same as "stomach flu," the 24-hour bug that causes vomiting and diarrhea. This is most likely due to a GI (gastrointestinal) infection—not the flu.

Flu Symptoms

Flu symptoms tend to come on quickly. Fever, headache, fatigue, cough, sore throat, runny nose, and muscle aches are symptoms of the flu. Children may have an upset stomach or vomiting, but adults usually don't. Some symptoms, such as fatigue and cough, can last a few weeks.

How a Flu Vaccine Protects You

There are many strains (types) of flu viruses. Medical experts predict which 3 strains are most likely to make people sick each year. Flu vaccines are made from these strains. With the shot, inactivated ("killed") flu viruses are injected into your body. With the nasal spray, live and weakened viruses are sprayed into your nose. The viruses in both vaccines cannot make you sick. But they do prompt the body to make antibodies to fight these flu strains. If you're exposed to the same strains later in the flu season, the antibodies will fight off the virus. Your health care provider can tell you which type of flu vaccine is right for you.

Who Should Get the Flu Vaccination?

Almost anyone can (and should) get vaccinated, especially people in the following high-risk groups:

- Persons 50 and older
- Babies and children 6 months and older (ask your health care provider if your child should receive the vaccine)
- Children on long-term aspirin therapy
- People with chronic health problems (such as diabetes, chronic lung disease, asthma, or heart failure)
- People receiving certain medical treatments
- People who live in nursing homes or other long-term care facilities
- Pregnant women
- Caregivers and household contacts of babies younger than 6 months
- Health care workers

Who Can't Get a Flu Vaccination?

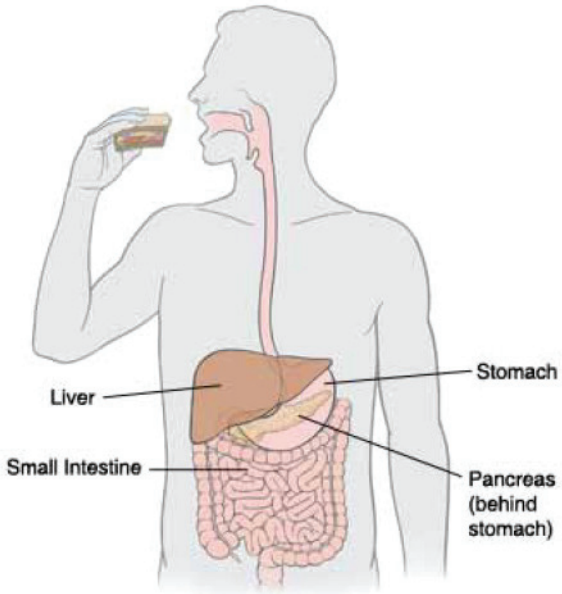
- Babies younger than 6 months
- People severely allergic to eggs
- People who have had bad reactions to flu vaccination (including Guillain-Barré syndrome)
- A person who has a high fever (the vaccine can be given after the fever goes away).

Understanding Type 2 Diabetes

When your body is working normally, the food you eat is digested and used as fuel. This fuel supplies energy to the body's cells. When you have diabetes, the fuel can't enter the cells. Without treatment, diabetes can cause serious long-term health problems.

How the Body Gets Energy

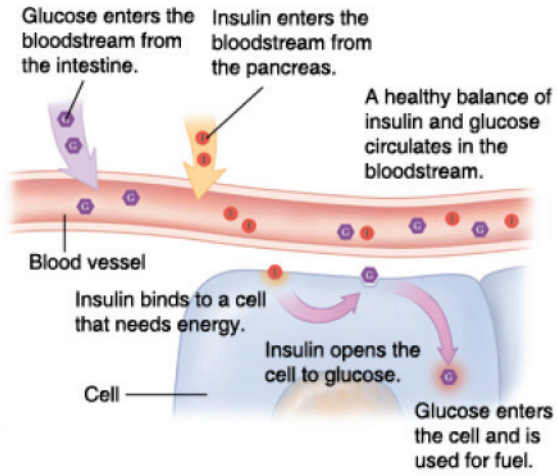
The digestive system breaks down food, resulting in a sugar called **glucose**. Some of this glucose is stored in the liver. But most of it enters the bloodstream and travels to the cells to be used as fuel. Glucose needs the help of a hormone called **insulin** to enter the cells. Insulin is made in the pancreas. It is released into the bloodstream in response to the presence of glucose in the blood. Think of insulin as a key. When insulin reaches a cell, it attaches to the cell wall. This signals the cell to create an opening that allows glucose to enter the cell.



Your body breaks down the food you eat into glucose.

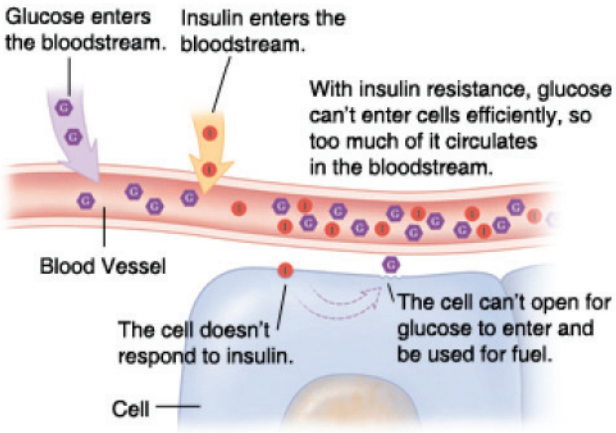
When You Have Type 2 Diabetes

Early in type 2 diabetes, your cells don't respond properly to insulin. Because of this, less glucose than normal moves into cells. This is called **insulin resistance**. In response, the pancreas makes more insulin. But eventually, the pancreas can't produce enough insulin to overcome insulin resistance. As less and less glucose enters cells, it builds up to a harmful level in the bloodstream. This is known as **high blood sugar** or **hyperglycemia**. The result is type 2 diabetes. The cells become starved for energy, which can leave you feeling tired and rundown.



Why High Blood Sugar Is a Problem

If high blood sugar is not controlled, blood vessels throughout the body become damaged. Prolonged high blood sugar affects organs and nerves. As a result, the risks of damage to the heart, kidneys, eyes, and limbs increase. Diabetes also makes other problems, such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol, more dangerous. Over time, people with uncontrolled high blood sugar have a high chance of dying of, or being disabled by, heart attack or stroke.



Oral Therapy for Type 2 Diabetes

Diabetes pills can help to manage your blood sugar. These pills are not insulin. They work to manage your blood sugar in several ways. You may be given a combination of medications. Always follow your doctor's instructions.

Types of Diabetes Pills

Sulfonylureas

These pills help the body make more insulin. They are usually taken 30 minutes before a meal. Possible side effects include:

- Hypoglycemia
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Drowsiness

Alpha-glucosidase Inhibitors

These pills slow the digestion of sugars and starches. They can help keep your blood sugar from going too high after a meal. Take them with the first bite of each main meal. Possible side effects include:

- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhea
- Excess gas (flatulence)

Thiazolidinediones

These pills help your muscle cells use insulin better. Your doctor may order lab tests to check the function of your liver before prescribing these pills and regularly while you are taking them. Possible side effects include:

- Upper respiratory tract infections
- Headaches
- Weight gain
- Swelling

Some pills may increase your risk for low blood sugar (hypoglycemia). Watch for symptoms of low blood sugar. Call your doctor if low blood sugar occurs often.

Meglitinides

These pills increase your insulin for a short period of time only when your glucose is high. They are usually taken before a meal. Possible side effects include:

- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Low blood sugar
- Slightly increased risk for heart problems

DPP-4 Inhibitors

These pills help lower blood sugar levels in people with type 2 diabetes. They are less likely to cause hypoglycemia. They are taken once a day. Possible side effects include:

- Upper respiratory tract infection
- Stuffy or runny nose
- Sore throat
- Headache

Combination Pills

These medications may help keep your blood glucose within your target range. They also help your pancreas make more insulin and may help your muscles use insulin more effectively. Side effects depend on which type of combination you use. Your health care provider can tell you more.

Biguanides

These pills help control the amount of glucose in your blood. They do this by decreasing the amount of glucose made by your liver and helping your muscles use insulin more effectively. These medications are usually taken with each meal. Possible side effects include:

- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal bloating
- Excess gas (flatulence)
- Metallic taste in mouth

Watch for Symptoms of Hypoglycemia

- Headaches
- Shakiness or dizziness
- Hunger
- Cold, clammy skin; sweating
- A hard, fast heartbeat
- Confusion or irritability

8 Fall 2011

Types of Insulin

Most insulin is made in a laboratory and is called human insulin because it's just like the insulin that's made in the body. Some kinds of insulin work fast and other kinds work slowly and last longer.

Types of Insulin

1. Rapid-acting *(Lispro, Aspart, Novolog, Apidra)* Insulin

- Begins working about 15 minutes after taken.
- Strongest peak action is about 60 minutes after taken.
- Continues working for 2 to 4 hours.

2. Short-acting *(Regular)* Insulin

- Begins working within 30 minutes of being taken.
- Strongest (peak) action is 2 to 3 hours after taken.
- Continues working for 3 to 6 hours.

3. Intermediate-acting *(NPH, Lente)* Insulin

- Begins working 2 to 4 hours after taken.
- Strongest action is 4 to 12 hours after taken.
- Continues working for 12 to 18 hours.

How often you take your insulin depends on the kind of insulin your doctor recommends.

Caution: Exercise helps lower your blood sugar. Your blood sugar can continue to fall for several hours after you stop exercising. Check with your health care team. You may need to adjust your insulin if you change your exercise regimen.

4. Long-acting *(Ultralente)* Insulin

- Begins working 6 to 10 hours after taken.
- Minimal peak.
- Continues working up to 18 to 20 hours.

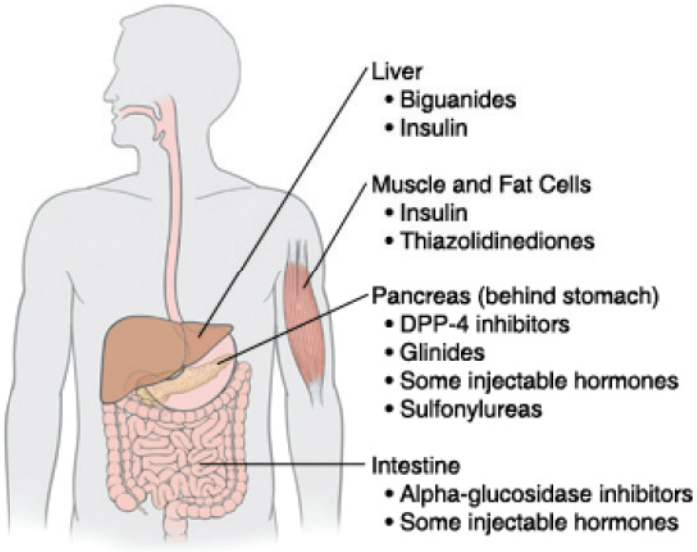
5. Very Long-acting *(Glargine)* Insulin

- Begins working 2 to 4 hours after taken.
- No peak.
- Continues working for 24 hours *(may be less in children)*.

Note: All times on this sheet are approximate.

Taking Medication for Diabetes

Medications can't cure diabetes. But they can delay or prevent health complications by helping you manage your blood sugar. Taking medications every day, especially shots, may seem overwhelming. But they are powerful tools you can use to stay in control of your health.



Where the Medications Work

Diabetes medications act on different parts of the body. Many of them affect insulin production in the pancreas. Others increase insulin sensitivity in cells, or keep the liver from releasing too much glucose. And some cause carbohydrates to break down more slowly. The diagram on this sheet shows where each class of medication works in the body.

Getting Familiar with Shots

Some medications, including insulin, can't be swallowed. They are usually injected through the skin to reach the bloodstream. It's not hard to learn how to give yourself shots. You may find that they aren't as bad as you fear. And there are new devices for injecting insulin that may be available to you. Ask your health care provider for more information.

Sticking to Your Medication Routine

Taking your medications at the right times will give you the best control over your blood sugar. Like a meal routine, a medication routine can help keep your blood sugar steady. Keep track of medications with a pill organizer and a daily schedule. Ask your family to help you stick to a medication routine. And don't get distracted. Make it a priority.

If You Take Other Medications

Medications of all types can affect blood sugar. This includes over-the-counter medications and those prescribed for other health problems. Make sure you tell your health care provider about all the medications you take, including herbs and vitamins. And always remember to tell the pharmacist that you have diabetes when buying other medications.

Your diabetes educator will help you practice giving yourself shots until you feel comfortable.

Did You Know…

Many people have side effects when they first start taking a medication. Side effects are things like a headache or upset stomach. These feelings should go away in a few weeks. Tell your health care provider about any side effects you have. Be sure your doctor knows about any side effects such as yellowing of the eyes, blurred vision, muscle aches, or problems breathing.

GlucoCom® Diabetic Monitoring System

We are here to provide helpful information and reliable resources to manage your diabetes. The GlucoCom® diabetic monitoring system is free to you and can help you take a more active role in managing your diabetes from your home. We have staff dedicated to guide you in the right direction. They will work with you and your doctors to improve your health through developing your personal treatment plan.

The GlucoCom® Diabetes Monitoring System:

- Collects blood glucose readings from patients at home
- Data from the GlucoCom® Meter is transmitted over a phone line in seconds
- Patient does not need a computer
- A free program for members of AultCare and PrimeTime Health Plan; co-pays and deductibles apply for testing equipent
- Secure web portal for easy report access by health care professionals
- Provides valuable reports to improve diabetes management

To discuss GlucoCom® with a Nurse Care Coordinator, call Michelle Metzgar, RN at 330-363-2389 or Linda Hahn, RN, BSN, CCM at 330-363-3956.

Diabetes: Driving Issues

Managing diabetes means developing a routine for things like meals, exercise, and taking medication. It also means making changes in some of your activities, such as driving, to help keep you and those around you safe.

Driving Safety

On long car trips, keep your diabetes supplies in easy reach, not in the trunk. Stop every 2 hours to take a short walk. This helps prevent blood clots from forming in your legs. If you take diabetes medication or insulin, be aware that driving when your blood sugar is low can be as dangerous as driving while drunk. To drive safely:

- Before starting out, check your blood sugar. Don't drive if it is below your target range.
- Keep fast-acting sugar within reach.
- Stop to check your blood sugar at least every 2 hours.
- If you feel symptoms of low blood sugar while driving, pull over and check your blood sugar right away.
- Treat your low blood sugar. Wait 10–15 minutes. Then test to see whether your blood sugar is still low.

Be Prepared

Natural disasters, accidents, and even traffic jams can disrupt your normal routine.

- Keep a diabetes kit. It should include your blood glucose meter, batteries, test strips, lancing device, fast-acting sugar, extra medication, syringes if needed, and copies of prescriptions. Use a case designed to carry diabetes supplies. Or use a makeup case, a belt pouch, or your briefcase.
- Take your diabetes kit with you everywhere, just like you take your wallet and keys.
- Wear a bracelet or necklace that says you have diabetes.

Your Diabetes Toolkit

You'll need to keep your diabetes supplies close at hand at all times. Make keeping track of your medications and diabetes supplies easy by creating a diabetes kit. A small makeup or travel bag makes an ideal "diabetes toolkit." Review the list of supplies below. Don't forget extra batteries for your meter. Include any other medications you take for diabetes-related problems.

* Extra insulin, syringes, pens, or insulin pump supplies
* Fast-acting sugar, such as glucose tablets
* Extra medication and copies of all prescriptions
* Glucagon for severe hypoglycemia *(if prescribed by your doctor)*
* A blood glucose meter, lancets, test strips, and a log book
* An ID card that says you have diabetes and lists your emergency contact numbers
* An ID bracelet that says you have diabetes
* The pharmacy label that came with your insulin *(label is required for air travel)*

Insulin Facts

Cool it, don't freeze it! Keeping insulin in the refrigerator—and not the freezer—is just one rule for storing insulin. Here are some other rules you must know:

- Use insulin before the expiration date on the bottle. Like food, it can go bad! Ask your healthcare team when to throw out open bottles of insulin. *(For pen users, the expiration date is usually on the box.)*
- Carry your insulin and injection supplies in an insulated bag or cooler when you're away from home.
- Don't let insulin get too hot *(above 86°F is bad)*. And never let it freeze.

There's no "X" to show you right where to inject insulin. When choosing a site, keep these facts in mind:

- Fact #1: You can inject insulin in the upper back part of your arms, buttocks, the top or sides of your thighs, and your stomach. *(Stay at least 2 inches away from the belly button.)*
- Fact #2: Insulin works fastest when injected into the skin of your stomach.
- Fact #3: It's not good to inject insulin in the same site every time. If you do, the skin will scar and become thick, making it harder for insulin to do its job. That's why you need to switch up injection sites often. Leave about 1 inch between injection sites. And never inject into moles, cuts, scars, or broken blood vessels *(purplish bruises)*.
- Fact #4: Injecting into a leg or arm that you plan to exercise is a bad idea. For example, if you run, don't inject into your legs before you exercise because the insulin will absorb too fast when you run.

Cigarette smoking decreases amount of insulin absorbed. No one should smoke, but if you do smoke, you are advised not to smoke within the 30 minutes after insulin injection. There are "helps" available for those who wish to stop smoking—ask your doctor. Start stopping NOW!

> ***Did You Know...***
>
> *"Do not stop taking any medicine without checking with your doctor first—feeling better is the first indication that the medicine is working. It does NOT mean that you do not need the medicine anymore."*

Diabetes: Living Your Life

Having diabetes may mean adjustments at work and in your social life. But these changes need not keep you from succeeding at work and enjoying your leisure time.

Family and Friends

Your family and friends may have questions about diabetes. They may have a hard time understanding why you need to make changes in your life. Urge them to learn about diabetes with you. Spend time with friends who support you in taking good care of yourself.

Special Occasions

Parties and holidays often involve more or different food and drink. You can still enjoy special occasions:

- At parties, focus on enjoying music, dancing, or talking to friends.
- When going to a party, bring a snack or appetizer that works well for you.
- Before the next holiday, learn how to fit traditional foods into your meal plan.
- Religious holidays may involve fasting or other changes in the way you eat.
- Talk to your doctor, your dietitian, and your clergy about how you can
- observe holidays safely.

Work

Lunch meetings, shift changes, or business travel may affect diabetes management.

- If your work schedule changes often or you find it hard to manage your daily tasks, talk to your health care provider and your employer.
- You may need to make special arrangements to do your daily management tasks, such as checking your blood sugar.
- Unless having diabetes makes you unable to do your job safely, discrimination on the basis of your health is illegal.

Managing Stress When You Have Diabetes

Getting used to life with a chronic condition can be hard. You might find yourself feeling angry, sad, or even afraid. Rest assured, these feelings are normal. But excess stress or sadness can actually affect your blood sugar. Learn to watch for signs of these feelings. And know that you can get help.

Talking with Your Health Care Team

Learning to control blood sugar can sometimes be frustrating. You may have questions or fears about how diabetes may change your life. Your health care team is there to help you and answer questions. They can show you how to follow your meal plan, be more active, and check your blood sugar. Don't be afraid to ask your health care team for help.

Asking Others for Help

You don't have to deal with diabetes alone. Support from family, friends, or a diabetes support group can help you take better care of yourself. Ask others to:

- Listen to your feelings. This will help you work through fear or anger.
- Eat the same meals you eat. Your meal plan will be healthy for family and friends, too.
- Exercise with you. Exercise is good for everyone. It strengthens the heart and helps relieve stress.
- Go with you to visit your health care team. This will help your loved ones learn what you need to do.

Taking Time to Relax

Learning to relax and doing things you enjoy may reduce stress. Staying active also helps.

Ways to Relax

To relax your muscles and calm your mind:

- Sit or lie back in a chair. Take a slow, deep breath. Hold it for 5 counts. Then breathe out slowly through the mouth. Keep doing this until you feel relaxed.
- As you breathe deeply, tense and then relax the muscles in your body. Start with your feet and work up your body to your neck and face.
- Picture yourself in a peaceful place, such as the beach. Feel the warm sand. Hear the waves. Smell the ocean. Doing this will help you feel more relaxed.

Managing Stress When You Have Diabetes *(continued)*

Activities That Can Help

Focus your mind on things you like. This may include:

- Enjoying a hobby
- Meditating or praying
- Taking a walk with a friend
- Exercising
- Taking care of pets
- Keeping a journal
- Joining a social club or group
- Learning yoga or tai chi
- Spending time with people you care about

Identifying Causes of Stress

Things that cause stress *(stressors)* can be everyday events, major life changes, or a combination of things. They can be either happy or sad events. Knowing your stressors will help you find ways to manage your stress.

Minor Hassles

Daily life is filled with little annoyances. Spilled milk, lost keys, a missed phone call. These are rarely earth-shattering events. But the stress they cause can build up over time. Minor hassles also seem more painful if you're under long-term stress.

Major Changes

A move, a divorce, or the loss of a loved one are major changes. They require you to adapt to a new lifestyle. You may fear an unknown future or worry about whether you'll be able to cope. Even positive events, like marriage or the birth of a baby, can cause major stress.

Stress Overload

Being pulled in many directions can be exhausting—especially when you're juggling work and family. Working late, taking kids to soccer, paying bills, and buying groceries may feel completely overwhelming. For a time, life can seem totally out of control.

Feeling Helpless

Feeling helpless is a sign of long-term stress. You may feel like you have no control over your life. Even a faraway disaster told on the evening news may seem like it's part of your own troubles. Over time, these feelings may lead to depression. If you feel "down" for weeks, talk with your doctor or a counselor. Depression can be treated.

Eating to Prevent Gout

Gout is a painful condition caused by an excess of uric acid (a waste product made by the body). The uric acid forms crystals that collect in the joints, bringing on a gout attack. Alcohol and certain foods can trigger a gout attack. Below are some guidelines for changing your diet to help you manage gout. Your health care provider can work with you to determine the best eating plan for you. Know that diet is only one part of managing gout. Take your medications as prescribed and follow the other guidelines your health care provider has given you.

Foods to Limit

Eating too many foods containing purines may increase the levels of uric acid in your body and increase your risk for a gout attack. It may be best to limit these high-purine foods:

- Alcohol (beer, red wine). You may be told to avoid alcohol completely.
- Certain fish (anchovies, sardines, fish roes, herring)
- Certain meats (red meat, processed meat, turkey)
- Organ meats (such as liver, kidneys, sweetbreads)
- Legumes (such as dried beans, peas)
- Mushrooms, spinach, asparagus, and cauliflower

Foods to Try

Some foods may be helpful for people with gout. You may want to try adding some of the following foods to your diet:

- Dark berries: These include blueberries, blackberries, and cherries. These berries contain chemicals that may lower uric acid.
- Tofu: Tofu, which is made from soy, is a good source of protein. Studies have shown that it may be a better choice than meat for people with gout.
- Omega fatty acids: These acids are found in fatty fish (such as salmon), certain oils (such as flax, olive, or nut oils), or nuts. They may help prevent inflammation due to gout.

The following guidelines are recommended by the American Medical Association for people with gout.

Your diet should be:

- High in fiber, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables.
- Low in protein (15% of calories should come from protein. Choose lean sources such as soy, lean meats, and poultry).
- Low in fat (no more than 30% of calories should come from fat, with only 10% coming from animal fat)

Diabetes and Alcohol Consumption

If you have diabetes, you need to be careful with alcohol. Alcohol can affect how well you control your blood sugar (glucose) level. It can also increase risks to your health. Before choosing to drink alcohol, discuss it with your doctor. He or she can help you decide whether you can drink safely. This sheet tells you more about risks of drinking alcohol. It also gives you tips for staying safe when you drink.

How Alcohol Can Affect Your Diabetes

Here are some of the ways alcohol can affect your health if you have diabetes:

- It can make certain health problems worse. Alcohol may worsen disease of the liver, kidney, or pancreas. It may also make nerve or eye damage more likely. If you have any of these health problems, your doctor will likely advise you not to drink alcohol.
- It can increase your risk for low blood sugar (hypoglycemia). The liver helps prevent low blood sugar by releasing extra glucose into the blood. Alcohol in the blood keeps the liver from doing this. Low blood sugar is more likely if you drink alcohol on an empty stomach or during or right after exercise. It is also more likely if you take insulin or medications that help lower blood sugar. Also, alcohol may affect your ability to tell whether you have symptoms of low blood sugar. This may keep you from getting needed treatment.
- It can increase your risk for high blood sugar (hyperglycemia). Many alcoholic drinks contain carbohydrates (carbs). These include beers, sweeter wines, and drinks mixed with fruit juices or sugar. Carbs raise blood sugar levels higher and faster than other kinds of foods. Drinking may throw off your ability to monitor your carbs.
- It can affect how well you manage your weight. Alcohol is high in calories and has no nutrition. If you are on a meal plan to help control your weight, you will need to count alcohol as part of your daily calorie intake. A standard drink is usually counted as 90 calories or two fat exchanges. In addition, alcohol can cause you to feel hungrier than normal. This makes you more likely to overeat, which can affect your weight and blood sugar level.

Tips for Safer Drinking

Your doctor may give you the okay to drink in moderation. Here are some steps you can take to drink safely:

- Strictly follow the drink limits given to you by your doctor. Or use the American Diabetes Association guidelines.
- Check your blood sugar level before drinking. Do not drink if your blood sugar level is too low or too high. Also, check your blood sugar level after drinking or before going to bed. This is because alcohol can stay in the blood for many hours after drinking. If your blood sugar level is low or dropping, you may be able to treat it with a snack or glucose tablet before it worsens.
- Ask your doctor how alcohol will affect insulin or any medications you take.
- Never drink on an empty stomach.
- Never drink during or after exercise.
- Do not drink any alcohol if you are going to drive.
- Be smart about what you drink. This means choosing drinks that are lower in alcohol, calories, and carbohydrates. Options include dry wines, light beers, or mixed drinks with sugar-free juice, club soda, or sparkling water.
- Carry medical ID that tells others you have diabetes. This helps ensure that you receive proper treatment, if needed.

American Diabetes Association Alcohol Guidelines

If your doctor has cleared you to drink, limit drinking to:

- Women: No more than 1 drink a day
- Men: No more than 2 drinks a day

One drink equals 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of hard liquor.

Diabetes: Understanding Carbohydrates, Fats, and Protein

Food is a source of fuel and nourishment for your body. It's also a source of pleasure. Having diabetes doesn't mean you have to eat special foods or give up desserts. Instead, your dietitian can show you how to plan meals to suit your body. To start, learn how different foods affect blood sugar.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are the main source of fuel for the body. Carbohydrates raise blood sugar. Many people think carbohydrates are only found in pasta or bread. But carbohydrates are actually in many kinds of foods.

- **Sugars** occur naturally in foods such as fruit, milk, honey, and molasses. Sugars can also be added to many foods, from cereals and yogurt to candy and desserts. Sugars raise blood sugar.
- **Starches** are found in bread, cereals, pasta, and dried beans. They're also found in corn, peas, potatoes, yam, acorn squash, and butternut squash. Starches also raise blood sugar.
- **Fiber** is found in foods such as vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. Unlike other carbs, fiber isn't digested or absorbed. So it doesn't raise blood sugar. In fact, fiber can help keep blood sugar from rising too fast. It also helps keep blood cholesterol at a healthy level.

Fat

Fat is an energy source that can be stored until needed. Fat does not raise blood sugar. However, it can raise blood cholesterol, increasing the risk of heart disease. Fat is also high in calories, which can cause weight gain. Not all types of fat are the same.

MORE Healthy

Monounsaturated fats are mostly found in vegetable oils such as olive, canola, and peanut oils. They are also found in avocados and some nuts. Monounsaturated fats are healthy for your heart. That's because they lower LDL (unhealthy) cholesterol.

Polyunsaturated fats are mostly found in vegetable oils such as corn, safflower, and soybean oils. They are also found in some seeds, nuts, and fish. Polyunsaturated fats lower LDL (unhealthy) cholesterol. So, choosing them instead of saturated fats is healthy for your heart.

LESS Healthy

Saturated fats are found in animal products such as meat, poultry, whole milk, lard, and butter. Saturated fats raise LDL cholesterol and are not healthy for your heart.

Hydrogenated oils and **trans fats** are formed when vegetable oils are processed into solid fats. They are found in many processed foods. Hydrogenated oils and trans fats raise LDL cholesterol and lower HDL (healthy) cholesterol. They are not healthy for your heart.

Protein

- **Protein** helps the body build and repair muscle and other tissue. Protein has little or no effect on blood sugar. However, many foods that contain protein also contain saturated fat. By choosing low-fat protein sources, you can get the benefits of protein without the extra fat.
- Plant protein is found in dry beans and peas, nuts, and soy products such as tofu and soymilk. These sources tend to be cholesterol-free and low in saturated fat.
- Animal protein is found in fish, poultry, meat, cheese, milk, and eggs. These contain cholesterol and can be high in saturated fat. Aim for lean, lower-fat choices.

Diabetes Glossary

- **A1C.** A test to measure how much glucose has built up in the blood over the past few months.
- **Artery.** A type of blood vessel. It carries oxygen-rich blood from the heart to the rest of the body.
- **Basal insulin.** Insulin that lasts a long time and helps keep blood sugar steady.
- **Blood glucose meter.** A device that tests the amount of glucose in the blood.
- **Blood pressure.** The force created against blood vessel walls when the heart pumps blood through the body.
- **Blood vessels.** Tubes that carry blood throughout the body.
- **Bolus insulin.** The amount of insulin needed to balance carbohydrates that are eaten. It may also be taken to correct an unexpected rise in blood sugar.
- **Carbohydrate.** A nutrient in food. It is broken down into glucose during digestion.
- **Chronic.** Lifelong or ongoing. A chronic condition, such as diabetes, can be managed with treatment but not cured.
- **Diabetes.** A condition in which the body can't make insulin, or can't use it properly.
- **Diabetes complications.** Serious health problems that happen over time due to high blood sugar.
- **Diabetes educator.** An expert who teaches people how to manage their blood sugar.
- **Diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA).** A condition in which ketones build up to dangerous levels in the blood and urine.
- **Diabulemia.** A dangerous condition in which insulin is purposely not taken in order to prevent weight gain or cause weight loss.
- **Dietitian.** An expert in food and nutrition.
- **Endocrinologist.** A doctor who focuses on how hormones work in the body.
- **Glucose.** A simple form of sugar that is used to fuel the body's cells.
- **Hemoglobin.** A protein in red blood cells that carries oxygen.
- **High blood pressure (hypertension).** Blood pressure higher than the normal range.
- **Honeymoon phase.** A period of time in which a person with type 1 diabetes is still making insulin. The honeymoon phase may last several months.
- **Hormone.** A type of chemical released by special cells in the body. These chemicals tells other cells what to do.
- **Hyperglycemia.** A condition in which there is too much glucose in the blood.
- **Hypoglycemia.** A condition in which there is not enough glucose in the blood.
- **Injection.** A way to put liquid medication into the body. Also called a "shot."
- **Insulin.** A hormone produced by the pancreas. It allows glucose to enter cells.
- **Insulin resistance.** A condition in which cells don't react normally to insulin.
- **Ketones.** A chemical that is made when the body breaks down fat for energy.
- **Lancet.** A device that uses a small needle to pierce the skin. It is used to get a drop of blood for glucose testing.
- **Lipids.** Fats stored by the body to be burned as fuel.
- **Liver.** An organ that stores and releases glucose when needed.
- **Microalbumin.** A test that checks for small amounts of protein in the urine.
- **Nerves.** Fibers that convey signals to and from the brain.
- **Pancreas.** An organ that makes and releases insulin into the blood.
- **Peripheral arterial disease (PAD).** Damage to the arteries that supply blood to the arms, legs, and feet.
- **Podiatrist.** A healthcare provider who focuses on foot care.
- **Prediabetes.** A condition in which fasting blood sugar levels are high, but not high enough to be diabetes. This means that a person may develop diabetes.
- **Retinopathy.** An eye disease that leads to damage of the blood vessels in the eyes.
- **Saturated fat.** A type of fat that comes from animals and some plants.
- **Syringe.** A device with a small needle. It is used to inject liquid medication into the body.
- **Target range.** The level of blood glucose that a patient is told to aim for as often as possible.
- **Trans fat.** A type of fat that results when liquid oil is made into a solid fat. This kind of fat is bad for your body.
- **Triglycerides.** The main types of fat found in the blood.
- **Type 1 diabetes.** A chronic condition in which the pancreas can't make insulin.
- **Type 2 diabetes.** A chronic condition in which the cells are resistant to insulin. Also, the liver may release too much glucose into the blood. And the pancreas may not make enough insulin to overcome the resistance.

AultCare and Aultra Members...

If you have questions regarding provider information, coverage, benefits, services, business hours or any other health plan topics we are here to help!

Please contact our friendly customer service staff for fast answers to your questions!

AultCare Service Center:
330-363-6360 or 1-800-344-8858
TTY: 330-363-2393 or 1-866-633-4752
Call Center & Walk-In Hours:
Monday - Friday 7:30 am - 5:00 pm EST

Aultra Group Service Center:
330-363-2050 or toll free: 1-855-270-8497
Call Center Hours:
Monday - Friday 7:30 am - 5:00 pm EST

24 Hour Health Line

By calling the Aultman Health Line at **330-363-7620**, or toll-free at **1-866-422-9603** you will be directed to an experienced nurse to answer your health-related questions. This service is available 24 hours a day. All calls are **FREE** and entirely confidential!

- Provide first aid instructions and general health information
- Determine what level of care is most appropriate for you
- Answer your medication questions
- Other suggestions for self care