

Diet and Diabetes # Research and Tips

Diabetes is a disease involving glucose levels and blood sugars. While food intake can directly affect the degree to which diabetes affects the body, there is no single proven diet regime that can help all diabetics.

People with diabetes receive conflicting dietary advice on a regular basis. Even medical experts cannot agree on the best food choices. Of course, the already inconsistent flow of information can be made even worse by media outlets reporting on selected snippets from medical reports.

One thing that medical experts do agree on is the fact that refined white sugar and products high in sugar content will have a negative effect on a person suffering from diabetes. Sugars are absorbed into the blood as glucose almost immediately, and diabetics struggle with regulating glucose levels. Therefore, sugar is an important dietary consideration for anyone with diabetes. Is it not, however, the only hot topic in medical circles.

While diabetic associations are adamant that no cure exists, a recent study suggests that some cases of Type 2 diabetes have actually been cured by diet alone. Christian Roberts of the University of California undertook research into the connection between diet and diabetes. The research findings indicated that in fifty percent of those taking part in the study, Type 2 diabetes symptoms were actually reversed. The regime for this study required participants to exercise for one hour every day, and follow a diet based on Pritkin principles: vegetables, whole grains and a little animal protein.

Another small study conducted in the United States concluded that some participants found that a high fibre diet helped to keep their blood glucose levels low.

There is controversy over the dietary recommendations that are suggested by diabetic associations in the United Kingdom and the United States. Their current advice is for diabetics to follow a low fat, carbohydrate-based diet; however, research findings have offered fairly compelling evidence to the contrary.

Who can you trust?

It's hard to know which research to trust, and what diets to follow, whether you suffer from diabetes or not. Behind many research reports lie hidden agendas of conditions that must be met and goals to be fulfilled. Drug companies sponsor some research studies to prove the benefits of their particular treatments. Others are held to prove pet theories and satisfy personal agendas. In reality, there is very little truly independent research that is not undertaken without prejudice to the outcome.

Some experts will suggest (or insist it's been proven) that an Atkins-style high fat, high protein, low carb diet is best suited for diabetics. It does seem logical that restricting certain carbohydrates may help to prevent elevated glucose levels in the blood stream. Further, there is a link between glucose, insulin and cholesterol, particularly "bad cholesterol". Proponents of the Atkins diet claim that cholesterol levels are not adversely affected by this particular diet regime. Of course, others hold views to the contrary.

You need to know that what may be a healthy diet for one person could be life threatening for another. A good starting point is a diet based around healthy protein including organic white meat and fish, natural carbohydrates like fruit and vegetables, and monounsaturated fats supplemented by essential fatty acids. Once this basic diet is established, you may consider introducing whole grains under controlled conditions, and assessing the effects on your glucose levels.

Before you make any dietary changes, be sure to discuss your intentions with your doctor. He or she can address your concerns and help you plan a diet that is best suited to your personal needs.