

## Dealing with Diabetes in the Winter

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### What Is Diabetes?

- Your body changes the food you eat into sugar, and uses the sugar for energy
- If you have diabetes, though, your body cannot use the sugar in the right way
  - Instead, the sugar stays in your blood instead of being used by your body



### You Can Manage Your Diabetes and Stay Healthy

- Managing diabetes means learning to control the amount of sugar in your blood.
- Your doctor will give you advice, which may include:
  - A special food plan
  - Blood sugar tests
  - Regular check-ups

### The Winter Season Brings Certain Challenges to Managing Your Diabetes

- The cold weather and winter holidays can cause:
  - More colds and flu
  - Changes in your blood sugar
  - Changes in your diet and exercise plan
  - More stress
- But there are ways to deal with these challenges



### Stay Warm When It Is Cold

- Diabetes can cause problems with your blood flow. These can get worse in the cold weather
- Wear layers of clothing to protect yourself from the cold
- It is especially important to keep your feet warm, which can be done by wearing comfortable shoes and socks
- Keep your head and hands covered and warm

### Protect Yourself from Getting Too Dry

- The cold weather can dry out your skin, eyes, and insides. To stop this from happening, you should:
  - Use a moisturizing lotion on your skin
  - If your eyes feel dry, ask your doctor about using eye drops
  - Drink lots of water
  - Use a humidifier to keep your home from getting too dry

## Find Fun Ways to Exercise in the Winter

- Cold weather and rain may make it hard to follow your regular exercise routine, but exercise is important in managing your blood sugar
- Find different ways to exercise, like:
  - Joining an indoor exercise class
  - Using an exercise video
  - Doing outdoor activities in your local community, including walks



## Remember Your Diet Plan

- Holiday treats can make it hard to stay on your meal plan, so it is important to look for healthy snacks and party foods
- It is also important to find a diet that is right for you
  - Talk with your doctor about how you can enjoy special holiday food while staying healthy

## Check Your Blood Sugar Often

- Changes in the weather can cause changes in your blood sugar
- Ask your doctor if you should increase the number of times you check your blood sugar
- Make sure to test your blood sugar regularly

## Be Aware of Stress and Your Emotions

- The holiday season can be busy and stressful
- The winter weather can also affect your mood and emotions
- Stress and strong emotions can change your blood sugar level

## You Can Manage Your Stress and Emotions

- Stay healthy and in a good mood by:
  - Managing your time
  - Eating healthy
  - Staying active
  - Doing things with others
  - Talking to others about your feelings



## Your Doctor Can Help You Manage Your Diabetes

- Talk to your doctor to plan what you can do to stay healthy in the winter and all year long

## Additional Resources

- American Diabetes Association: <https://www.diabetes.org/>
- Learning about Diabetes: <https://learningaboutdiabetes.org/>
- dLife- For your Diabetes Life: <https://dlife.com/>