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THE VELMA B. COX FOUNDATION

For Type 2 Diabetes & High Blood Pressure

A Healthy You During the Holiday Season, Because YOU are just that IMPORTANT!

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As the holidays are now quickly approaching and with this month designated as American Diabetes Month, our team thought it would be a great idea to share some health and nutrition education with you. Whether you have been diagnosed with pre-diabetes, diabetes, gestational diabetes, or none of the above, it is always beneficial to be equipped with the knowledge and be in the know about your health. The next few months are going to bring many family gatherings and celebrations, which may include a variety of foods. While some foods may be tasty and appear appealing to the eye, these foods may not offer nutritional value and benefit to one's health.

Let us look at a few tips and options on how you can manage and maintain healthy blood sugar, and healthy weight and improve your overall health when surrounded by so much food during the holidays.


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WHAT ARE SOME WAYS THAT YOU CAN GATHER WITH FAMILY AND STILL LEAD A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE?



PREPARE A SMOOTHIE

Although you will be meeting with family and friends for holiday lunch, dinner, or party, you can still benefit from great nutrition by preparing a fruit & vegetable smoothie. You can prepare and have a smoothie in the morning or prior to the function. Combining fruits and vegetables in a smoothie is a great way to obtain awesome nutrients such as magnesium, vitamins such as vitamin B & C, antioxidants, minerals and even fiber. This is a great way to pack in your nutrients.

EAT SMALL PORTIONS OF FOODS

You may want to eat until you are completely full. A good rule is to never eat until you are full. You may want to stop before that point. Eating to the point of fullness may bring discomfort and lethargy. It would be a good idea to eat small portions of foods, especially if these food items are composed of many calories and offer little to no nutrients, such as **simple carbohydrates** (such as **white flour white bread, white rice, white sugar, white potatoes**, etc.). Simple carbohydrates are just one of many examples of foods that add a lot of calories to but little to no nutritional value.



TRY TO SUBSTITUTE OR REPLACE FOODS FOR HEALTHIER OPTIONS



Avoiding or reducing the amount of simple carbohydrates would greatly benefit your health. Simple carbohydrates negatively impact our health, when eaten. These foods not only have larger glycemic indexes (the higher the value, the more that food increases your blood sugar) but also cause inflammation in the body, along with weight gain, and over time may cause issues surrounding blood sugar. Instead, replacing these simple carbohydrates with **complex carbohydrates** (such as **beans, peas, sweet potatoes, quinoa, butternut squash, brown rice, lentils, green peas**, etc.) results in great health benefits. These benefits include: managing blood sugar due to fiber content, helping you to feel full & eat less, supporting a healthy weight, and reducing inflammation throughout the body.



EXERCISE



Movement is so very good for us. Not only does movement improve our health due to increased circulation but movement helps to support our blood sugar and aids with weight management. Exercise is medicine and it is free! You may want to add exercise to your agenda five days out of the week. This is a great way to burn off some of those calories from all the holiday eating and snacking and moreover maintain or even improve your overall health. Taking a walk outdoors or on a treadmill, riding a stationary bike or using an elliptical machine are all great ways to support your blood sugar, maintain a healthy weight and maintain healthy habits over the holiday season.

STAY HYDRATED

Aim to drink water throughout the day, while avoiding alcohol, sodas, bottled fruit juices, and coffee with added sugars. Try to drink water in place of the mentioned beverages as much as you can. Drinking water instead of the alternatives will help to reduce inflammation, improve circulation, supports the digestive system, aids with detoxification, and helps to reduce unnecessary caloric intake of which may result in weight gain and blood sugar irregularities over time.



You can still gather with family and friends and celebrate the holiday season over great tasting foods. No matter where you are in your health, adding one or more of these suggestions to your lifestyle may significantly improve your health, during the holiday season.

WHY SHOULD YOU DO THIS? BECAUSE THERE'S NOTHING MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOU, ABSOLUTELY NOTHING!!!

Disclaimer: The included information is not meant to or should not be used to replace or substitute medical treatment, recommendations, or advice of your physician or health care provider. The information contained within is strictly for educational purposes and is based on evidence-based nutrition. If you believe you have a medical problem or condition, please contact your physician or healthcare provider.