

Diabetes Life Lines

www.extension.uga.edu



Health Extension for Diabetes: a diabetes support program coming to Georgia

Health Extension for Diabetes (HED) is a free program for adults with diabetes. HED is recognized by the American Diabetes Association (ADA) as an effective diabetes support program. HED is provided by the University of Georgia's (UGA) Cooperative Extension Service. Its mission is to support people with diabetes so that they can prevent or delay diabetes-related complications. Programming includes education sessions that teach self-care behaviors related to nutrition, physical activity, and stress management. It includes education sessions, weekly health coaching follow-ups, connections to clinical experts in diabetes care, and guidance with finding community resources that can help participants overcome barriers to participation and behavior change.

HED was started at Clemson University in South Carolina in 2017. The program has expanded to surrounding states including North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia. In Georgia, in-person HED program options may be available in nine counties (Clarke, Early, Elbert, Gwinnett, Lanier, McDuffie, Monroe, Morgan, and Spalding). Online programs will be available statewide.

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Health Extension, continued

HED is led and delivered by trained UGA Extension agents in local community spaces, such as churches, community centers, libraries, or online using video conferencing. HED groups or “cohorts” meet for 1 hour every 2 weeks for education over a 4-month period. While meetings are led by a facilitator (a UGA Extension agent), the program is largely discussion based. Participants will be encouraged to share their own experiences during sessions. Participants will also receive weekly follow-ups from their HED facilitator or the UGA HED Team to discuss their health goals and any challenges they have related to diabetes self-care. Participants who attend at least six out of the eight education sessions will be able to graduate from HED. Make-up sessions will be offered to participants who miss education sessions or support group sessions (for online HED participants).



★ An HED Agent is Here; In-person program options may be available
 ■ Online programs available

Topics covered by Health Extension for Diabetes

- Causes of diabetes
- How diabetes affects your body
- Healthy eating with diabetes
- Being active with diabetes
- Medications & monitoring
- Problem solving & resources
- Healthy coping with diabetes
- Lowering risks with diabetes



HED programming covers many diabetes-related self-care topics including:

- What diabetes is and how diabetes affects the body
- Healthy eating
- Physical activity
- Medications and monitoring
- Strategies to reduce risks related to diabetes
- Healthy coping mechanisms
- Finding local resources

In order to participate in HED you must be at least 18 years-old and have diabetes. No referral or insurance coverage is required. HED is free of charge to eligible participants.

If you are interested in participating in HED, contact the UGA HED Team at: hed-uga@uga.edu, or reach out to your local UGA Extension Office.



Back to basics: types of diabetes

Diabetes is a common health condition in the United States and around the world. Many people may know someone with diabetes or have it themselves. In fact, there are over 31 million people living with diabetes in the U.S. (2). In Georgia, there are over 1 million people living with diabetes (2). Despite the number of people living with diabetes, not everyone knows what increases their risk or the symptoms to look out for. This makes it important to learn about diabetes and its causes.

There are three main types of diabetes, each with different causes. Type 1, Type 2, and gestational diabetes are the three main types.

Type 1 Diabetes

Type 1 diabetes is caused by the body's immune system attacking the cells that produce insulin. Insulin is needed to keep blood sugar levels normal.

Without insulin, blood sugar will become too high. Before diagnosis, people with type 1 diabetes may lose weight, urinate often, feel thirsty, hungry, or tired, and have blurry vision. If it is not treated, it can cause health problems like organ damage, coma, and death. There is no known cause or cure for type 1 diabetes. (3)

Type 2 Diabetes

In type 2 diabetes, the body still makes insulin, but cells do not respond to it correctly. This causes blood sugar to be high. Over time, high blood sugar can cause heart, organ, eye, and nerve problems. Symptoms of type 2 diabetes include urinating often, feeling thirsty and hungry, tiredness, blurry vision, slow healing of cuts, and tingling or numbness in hands and feet. Factors that increase someone's risk of type 2 diabetes include being overweight, not exercising enough, and family history of diabetes. (1, 3)

Gestational Diabetes

Gestational diabetes can happen during pregnancy. It happens because hormone levels are higher during pregnancy, which makes it hard for the body to use insulin. The symptoms are usually the same as type 2 diabetes. It is important to manage gestational diabetes for the health of the mother and baby. Gestational diabetes can go away after giving birth, but sometimes it increases risk of type 2 diabetes later in life. (3)

Management

If someone is diagnosed with diabetes, it is important for them to manage it well. Thankfully, there are many tools and treatments that can make it easier.

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Types, continued

Continuous glucose monitors (CGM) are a helpful tool. A CGM is a small device worn on the body that measures blood sugar levels and sends them to a phone or other device. This makes checking blood sugar levels easier than using a traditional glucometer that needs a finger prick. Blood sugar levels are important for making treatment decisions like insulin dosing and food choices. Making healthy lifestyle choices is important for diabetes management, too. Getting active, eating more vegetables and fiber, and taking medications and insulin if prescribed by a doctor are all great ways to manage diabetes. (1)

Safety begins at home: staying healthy can prevent falls

Our homes fulfill many needs for us. Comfort and a place for self-expression are vital for our well-being. Home gives a feeling of independence and should be a place where we are safe from accidents and injuries.

Home accidents are a major source of injuries and can cause death. Older persons, whose bones are often less dense and more brittle, are especially vulnerable to serious injuries from home accidents. A simple fall that results in a broken bone can become a serious, disabling injury that limits one's independence. Falls are the leading cause of injury and injury death for people 65 and older. However, falls are not a normal part of aging.

As we age, our senses of sight, touch, hearing, and smell tend to decline. Our physical abilities are reduced, and certain tasks such as stretching, lifting, and bending become more difficult. In addition, we experience a slowing of judgment and reaction time, resulting in slower response rates. These normal changes in perception, physical abilities, and judgment makes us more prone to accidents. Simple precautions and adjustments can help ensure a safe, accident-free home.

Many falls can be prevented. With a few changes, you can lower your chances of falling. Follow these four simple tips from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to make your home safer.

Have your healthcare provider review your medicines. As you get older, the way medicines work in your body can change. Some medicines, or combinations of medicines, can make you sleepy or dizzy and can cause you to fall. Ask your provider about taking vitamin D supplements to improve bone, muscle, and nerve health.

Exercise to improve your balance and strength. Exercises that improve balance and make your legs stronger, lower your chances of falling. It also helps you feel better and more confident. Lack of exercise leads to weakness and increases your chances of falling. Ask your doctor or healthcare provider about the best type of exercise program for you.

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Safety, continued

Have your eyes and feet checked. Once a year, check with your eye doctor, and update your eyeglasses, if needed. You may have a condition like glaucoma or cataracts that limits your vision. Poor vision can increase your chances of falling. Also, have your healthcare provider check your feet once a year. Discuss proper footwear and ask your healthcare provider whether seeing a foot specialist is advised.

Make your home safer. Use the University of Georgia Family and Consumer Sciences Extension home safety checklist as you go through your home. Mark those items or behaviors that you already have. If there are items that you do not check, then your home is not as safe as it could be. By improving those items not marked, you can make your home a safer and more comfortable place to live.

You can find the checklist online:

www.fcs.uga.edu/docs/Home_Safety_CheckList.pdf

Making some minor household modifications and behavior changes can reduce the likelihood of trips and falls. Safety in your home begins with identifying problems and removing hazards, reducing the potential for falls.

For more information on keeping your home healthy, visit www.georgiahealthyhousing.org

This article originally appeared in the Healthy Indoor Environments Newsletter which can be found online:

site.extension.uga.edu/hie/newsletters/

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Recipe corner: oven baked potato latkes (potato pancakes)

Yield: 12 latkes

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons olive oil

3 tablespoons whole wheat flour (or all-purpose flour)

1 teaspoon baking powder

3/4 teaspoon salt

2 large russet potatoes

1 small onion, peeled

1 large egg

Optional toppings: applesauce and yogurt (plain low-fat or Greek)

Directions

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Preheat the oven to 425 °F. Lightly oil the baking sheets by spreading the oil around with your clean hand or a paper towel.
3. Mix the flour, baking powder, and salt in a small bowl.

4. Use the large holes on your grater to grate the potato, then grate the onion too.
5. Put the potato and onion mixture in the colander inside the sink. Using a paper towel, press the potato mixture down to squeeze out and blot up some of the extra moisture. Stir it and blot again.
6. Put the potato mixture in the large bowl, add the egg, and stir well. Add the flour mixture and stir it very well.
7. Use a spoon or your fingers to pluck a clump of the potato mixture from the bowl and spread it into a round, flat nest on the oiled baking sheet: it should make a circle that's about 3 inches wide and 1/4 inch thick. Repeat to fill the sheet. (You don't need to leave space between them.)
8. Bake until the bottoms are deeply golden, 15 to 20 minutes, then turn the pancakes over and put them back in the oven for 10 more minutes.

Serve the latkes with applesauce and yogurt (optional).

Nutrition information (per 1 latke): 83 calories, 3g fat, 196mg sodium, 13g carbohydrate, 2g fiber, 2g protein.

Source: www.myplate.gov

Issue references

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). Diabetes risk factors. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/risk-factors/index.html>
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). State Diabetes Profiles. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes-state-local/php/state-profiles/index.html>
3. The path to understanding diabetes starts here. About Diabetes | ADA. (n.d.). <https://diabetes.org/about-diabetes>

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Dear Friend,

Diabetes Life Lines is a quarterly publication sent to you by your local county Extension Agent.

It is written by an Extension Nutrition and Health Specialist and other health professionals from the University of Georgia. This newsletter brings you timely information on diabetes self-management, nutritious recipes, and news about important diabetes-related events.

If you would like more information, please contact your local county Extension Office.

Yours Truly,

County Extension Agent

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