

THE EDUCATOR >>>>



Information you can use to **TAKE CONTROL** of your health

Issue 4, 2022

HAPPY, HEALTHY HOLIDAYS >>>>

Is your holiday season all about family and friends, festivities and food? People with diabetes face extra challenges during this coming season. With these savvy strategies, you can enjoy the holidays, keep your blood sugar in control AND eat your cake...or pie...or favorite cookies!



PLAN AHEAD - Meet with your diabetes care team in advance. Together you can prepare achievable meal plans to get you through the season. The goal is to keep your blood sugar stable and your carbohydrate intake similar to a routine day. Going to a party? Bring a healthy dish to share. Eating later than usual? Have a nutritious snack so your blood sugar doesn't drop.



DON'T SKIP MEALS - It's tempting during the holidays to "save up" your carbs and calories for a party or the big family meal. But that makes it harder to manage your blood sugar – and you'll be tempted to overeat later.



STAY WELL HYDRATED - Focus on water and other sugar-free drinks. Foods such as cucumbers, celery, berries and tomatoes pack plenty of fluid and fiber to help you feel full. Limit alcoholic drinks, which can negatively affect your blood sugar and interact with your medications. And don't drink your carbs. Eggnog, hot chocolate and holiday punch go down fast...and they are pure sugar.



EAT AND DRINK MINDFULLY - This might be the only time of year you get those special treats, like Danish Kringle or great-grandma's gingerbread cookies. Choose what you love, and enjoy it in moderation. Be sure to count it in your meal plan. Make appropriate trade-offs so you can keep a balanced plate. If you're going to have a sliver of pumpkin pie, skip the carb-heavy potatoes, stuffing and gravy.

WORK THE TABLE TO KEEP BLOOD SUGAR STABLE

Try these smart tricks to conquer the buffet table:



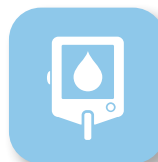
- Scout the entire table first before making choices
- Use a small plate
- Load up on veggies and fruit first to take the edge off
- Keep a glass of water or sugar-free beverage in one hand
- Slow down and savor each bite
- Count what you nibble. Even if it's just a bite, include it in your meal plan.
- Socialize far away from the buffet table



KEEP IT MOVING - Physical activity helps keep your blood sugar levels stable – and it's a super stress buster! Instead of couch-crashing for the holiday sports games or movies, take the dog for a walk. Turn up the music and grab a dance partner. Enjoy some time-to-yourself yoga.



GET GOOD SLEEP - Another great stress-reliever, sleep helps stabilize blood sugar and also reduces cravings for high-fat, high-sugar foods. Aim for 7 to 8 hours of restful sleep each night.



TEST YOUR BLOOD SUGAR REGULARLY - It's easy to forget about testing your blood sugar in this busy season. But when your routine is off, your blood sugar levels are more likely to be off too. Test more frequently and adjust foods and medications as necessary.

QuadMed

TAKE CONTROL >>>>

CONDITION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Interested in learning more? Call today to schedule a session with a TakeControl educator.

Newport News: (757) 327-4183 Ingalls: (228) 205-7667

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AVOID THESE COMMON WINTER SEASON ASTHMA TRIGGERS >>>>

People with asthma have to cope with new irritants this season. Know your potential triggers, and remove or avoid those you can control. Always have your rescue inhaler with you. Use your green/yellow/red asthma action plan for guidance.



Being indoors increases your exposure to dust mites, animal dander and other irritants.



Live pine trees and wreaths carry mold and pollen. Dry the tree or wreath in the garage for a week before bringing it inside.



Respiratory illness is rampant this time of year. If you haven't had them yet, get your flu shots and COVID boosters to protect yourself. s asthma flare-ups, slow down or modify your outdoor exercise.



Wood-burning and gas fireplaces emit particulates, gasses and other toxins that cause breathing difficulty.



If cold, dry air causes asthma flare-ups, slow down or modify your outdoor exercise.

TAKE YOUR HYPERTENSION MEDICATION AS DIRECTED >>>>



Three out of four Americans don't take their medications as directed. For people with hypertension, the consequences can be life-threatening. Uncontrolled blood pressure leads to heart disease, stroke and kidney failure.

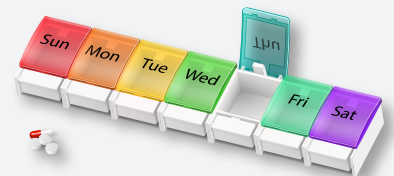
You might simply forget to take your meds. Maybe you worry about side effects or aren't certain how to take them. QuadMed is here to help. Talk with your TakeControl educator. They are experts in helping you manage your hypertension or other chronic conditions. They also work in close partnership with your primary care provider, pharmacist and other health team members. The educator will explain how your medications work, listen to your concerns, and answer your questions. Together, you'll come up with a plan to help you take your meds as directed, make healthy lifestyle choices, and live your best life.

Make an appointment with your TakeControl educator today. Always free. Always there for you.

MAKE YOUR MEDICATIONS WORK BETTER >>>>

The medications you take to control your blood pressure and lower cholesterol also reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke. But it's up to you to make sure those medications work to their maximum benefit.

- Take your medications as directed by your primary care provider.
- If you're on many different medications, use a pill organizer and/or medication tracker. Your TakeControl educator or pharmacist can help.
- Take your meds even if you don't have symptoms. Heart disease often has no noticeable symptoms. Are your numbers improving? That means your meds are working so don't stop taking them.
- Ask your provider or pharmacist how your medications interact with food and alcohol.
- Make a list of every prescription, over-the-counter medication, and herbal and nutrition supplement you take, including dosage. Keep it updated. Share it with your health team and pharmacies to help identify potential drug interactions.
- Know potential side effects, especially when you begin a new medication. Report them to your educator or provider.
- Help your medications do their work: Maintain a healthy weight, eat a heart-healthy diet and get plenty of physical activity.



MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS REWARDS >>>>

If you haven't already, we encourage you to become an **active** member of TakeControl.

As part of the HII benefits plan incentive, **active** members are eligible for \$0 fees on all QuadMed-operated services at the HII Family Health Center –meaning all health care, physical therapy and lab visits are provided at no cost. Completion of sessions with TakeControl educators, annual or semi-annual health checks and two well-being activities are all that are required by the benefits plan to maintain the \$0 fee incentive and remain an active member.

Contact a TakeControl educator to learn more about becoming an **active** member.

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Scan the code to access the TakeControl website today.