

2ND EDITION

YUKON DIABETES RESOURCE GUIDE

Positive steps you can take to
control your diabetes



This resource guide was put together by the Yukon Diabetes Reference Group as an aid for people living with diabetes and their families. This guide is for your information. It does not replace one-on-one advice from a health care practitioner. For people with diabetes, it is essential to discuss any changes in your diet or activity level with your doctor, community nurse, dietitian or diabetes educator before you make a change.

Changes in how you eat or your activity level will affect your blood sugar control, and possibly your medications. The authors of this resource guide could not consider all possible resources and do not necessarily endorse the ones listed.



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Navajo Blessing

*We walk in our moccasins upon the Earth
And beneath the sky
As we travel on life's path of beauty
We will live a good life and reach old age.*

INTRODUCTION

Diabetes is a disease that prevents your body from properly controlling the level of sugar in your blood. When you eat, your pancreas releases a hormone called insulin, which moves sugar (glucose) out of the bloodstream and into your cells, where it is needed for energy.

Without enough insulin, or when insulin doesn't work well, someone with diabetes will end up with high blood sugar. People living with diabetes have to control their blood sugar, since their bodies have trouble doing this on their own. Through blood sugar control, a person with diabetes can live a long and healthy life, and may prevent or delay the onset of common complications of diabetes, such as heart disease, kidney failure, nerve damage, blindness and amputations.

In **Type 1** diabetes (about 5% of cases), the pancreas no longer makes insulin. People living with Type 1 diabetes have to inject insulin several times a day, and monitor their blood sugar very carefully. There is no cause or prevention for Type 1 diabetes, but healthy eating and an active lifestyle are still essential to help delay or prevent complications.

In **Type 2** diabetes (about 95% of cases), the pancreas either no longer makes enough insulin to

deal with the glucose as you eat; or, it makes insulin, but the cells are "insulin resistant," and won't let it in.

Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in Canada. A third of adults with diabetes are unaware that they have it. Diabetes often begins years before symptoms occur and diagnosis takes place. The information in this booklet can help you control diabetes, and prevent complications, or reduce the severity of the complications.

There are many positive actions you can take to control your diabetes. This resource guide outlines some basic steps you can take, and provides additional information on local resources for people with diabetes. It also lists several resources available from outside sources such as phone help lines and web sites.

We encourage all Yukoners to adopt a lifestyle that helps prevent diabetes. If you are

"They always say that time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself."

- Andy Warhol

living with diabetes, this booklet offers suggestions that could be adopted by your whole family, to support you in dealing with this complicated disease, and also to help themselves prevent diabetes.

LEARN MORE

If you are diagnosed with diabetes, you will have many questions and concerns. For example: Can I eat sugar? How much do I exercise? Do I need medication? Why me? There are a variety of places you can go to find answers and support. Learning as much as you can about diabetes is the best way to help yourself control your blood sugar.

Resources

1. DIABETES EDUCATION

The Yukon Diabetes Education Center at Whitehorse General Hospital is staffed with a Registered Nurse Educator and a Registered Dietitian Educator. They provide services to adult clients with diabetes. You can access the center with a referral from your doctor or nurse practitioner. Call **867-393-8711** or email diabetes.center@wgh.yk.ca

You may be able to access diabetes education services outside of the Yukon. These services are covered under Yukon Health for children and patients who need to see a specialist outside the territory. Talk to your doctor.

2. CHRONIC CONDITIONS SELF-MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (CCSMP)

The Chronic Conditions Self-Management Program is a peer-led, educational program designed to support and increase the skills of people living with a chronic condition. It promotes self-management skills, healthy living skills, and skills for coping with the social, emotional and psychological consequences of chronic illness.

For information call the CCSMP voicemail at **867-393-2201**.

3. CANADIAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION (CDA)

The Canadian Diabetes Association has a branch office in Whitehorse, or you can access the following national programs:

- **1-800-226-8464**, a toll-free phone hotline that gives you access to knowledgeable personnel who will answer your questions and help refer you to the resources you need. You can also email CDA customer care representatives at info@diabetes.ca.
- **1-800-665-6526**, BC/Yukon Region CDA hotline.
- www.diabetes.ca, the CDA website, contains excellent information.
- **867-393-2329** (voice mail), the volunteer-run CDA in Whitehorse. Call them for information.

4. NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DIABETES ASSOCIATION (NADA)

The National Aboriginal Diabetes Association addresses diabetes amongst Aboriginal Peoples by creating networks and opportunities for individuals and communities within their beliefs, traditions, and values. NADA seeks to be the driving force in addressing diabetes and Aboriginal people as a priority health issue. NADA works with people, Aboriginal communities and organizations in a culturally respectful manner to promote healthy lifestyles among Aboriginal people today and for future generations.

Phone NADA toll free at **1-877-232-6232** or send an email to diabetes@nada.ca.

“The doctor of the future will give no medicine, but will interest his patients in the care of the human body, in diet, and in the cause and prevention of disease.”

- Thomas Edison

5. DIABETES PREVENTION

The **Yukon Diabetes Prevention and Promotion Project** has been funded by the Canadian Diabetes Strategy from 2000 to 2004, by Health Canada in 2005, and with assistance from YTG Sport and Recreation Branch. Through the project, the Recreation and Parks Association of the Yukon produced and assembled a wide variety of diabetes prevention, health promotion and healthy living resources. For information about these resources, please contact RPAY at 867-668-3010, by email at rpay@klondiker.com or go to RPAY's website at www.rpay.org.

The **Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative (ADI)** helps co-ordinate ten First Nation communities to deliver their own services such as diabetes care and treatment, lifestyle support, and prevention and promotion. Call 867-393-9217.

The **Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council (YAWC)** has offered various diabetes prevention workshops. Call YAWC at 867-667-6162.

6. FIRST NATIONS HEALTH

First Nations Health staff advocate for First Nation people at Whitehorse General Hospital, to ensure quality and culturally sensitive, holistic health care. The seven programs currently offered for WGH patients are:

- Child Life Worker
- Traditional Diet
- Traditional Medicine
- Interpretation Services
- In-service Training/Education
- Community Liaison Health Promotion
- First Nations Health and Social Liaison Workers

The Director of First Nations Health and these positions are all staffed by First Nation people.

The traditional diet Coordinator may be available to provide diabetes-related nutrition education to First Nations groups upon request.

Elders may also be available for consultation and for diabetes presentations at First Nation events. Call First Nations Health at 867-393-8758.

7. DIABETES WEBSITES

www.diabetes.ca
Canadian Diabetes Association

www.dietitians.ca
Dietitians of Canada

www.eatright.org
American Dietetic Association

www.niddk.nih.gov
National Institutes of Health

www.diabetes.org
American Diabetes Association

www.aadenet.org
American Association of Diabetes Educators

www.idf.org
International Diabetes Federation

www.childrenwithdiabetes.com
Children with Diabetes

www.jdrf.org
Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International

www.nada.ca
National Aboriginal Diabetes Association

www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/hlthconn/topics/diabetes
Calgary Health Region

www.diabaters.com
Diabetes Specialty Shop

www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/guide
Canada's Guide to Healthy Eating and Physical Activity

www.insulin-pumpers.ca
Insulin Pumpers Canada



HEALTHY EATING

With diabetes, your body cannot properly store and use food. When you eat certain foods, they are digested, or broken down, into tiny sugar molecules, called glucose. A molecule of glucose is much smaller than a grain of sugar. Glucose is the form of sugar, or energy, that your body needs to fuel its cells. Your body creates glucose by breaking down carbohydrates, which are found in many foods, including fruit, milk, starchy vegetables, breads and cereals, and sugar. When you eat carbohydrates, your blood glucose levels rise. When you hear the term “blood sugar,” it means “blood glucose.” In a healthy person, blood glucose levels rise and fall over a day, but stay within a certain range, between 3.8 to 6.3 mmol/L. In a person with diabetes, blood glucose levels can drop dangerously low or rise dangerously high over a day, because the body cannot automatically control the levels.

To help control your blood glucose you can eat healthy foods, be active and you may need to take pills and/or insulin. The following tips may help you understand more about how healthy eating can help you control your blood glucose. It is also very important for you to see a Registered Dietitian to find out what your body needs.

Healthy eating tips

<p>1. Eat three meals at regular times plus three healthy snacks. Don't starve yourself and then eat a big meal at night.</p>	<p>Eating at regular times helps you control your blood glucose by avoiding big ups and downs.</p>
<p>2. Balance carbohydrates, proteins, and fats in your snacks and meals.</p>	<p>Eating some protein and fat with carbohydrates helps your body avoid big ups and downs in blood glucose levels.</p>

“Before eating, always take time to thank the food.”

– Arapaho Proverb

<p>3. Watch your portion sizes at each meal. A general rule is to eat protein (e.g. meat) the size of your palm and thickness of your baby finger. For carbohydrates (like fruit or starch (e.g. potato or rice), choose an amount the size of your fist. Choose low-carb vegetables (e.g. green veggies) like broccoli, spinach, green beans, or kale, and eat as much as you can hold in both hands. Fat should be limited to an amount the size of the tip of your thumb.</p>	<p>Eating large portions makes it difficult to manage blood glucose and to maintain a healthy weight. A variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low fat milk products, and meat and alternatives will help keep you healthy. Moderation and common sense help you choose your portion sizes.</p>
<p>4. Your meal plate should be divided into one-quarter protein, one-quarter starch (e.g. rice or potato) and one-half vegetables, preferably two kinds of low carbohydrate vegetables.</p>	<p>Eat more vegetables. They are very high in nutrients and low in calories. They are also high in fibre.</p>
<p>5. Eat more high fibre foods (whole grain breads and cereals, lentils, dried beans and peas, brown rice, fruits and vegetables).</p>	<p>Foods high in fibre may help you feel full and may lower blood glucose and cholesterol levels.</p>
<p>6. Limit processed grains, sugars and sweets such as white flour and bread, sugar, candies, jam and honey. Artificial sweeteners can be useful.</p>	<p>The more sugar you eat, the higher your blood glucose will be. Processed grains act like sugar in your body, converting to glucose quickly, without the nutritional benefits that whole grains offer.</p>

“To lengthen thy life, lessen thy meals.”
- Benjamin Franklin

“If we could give every individual the right amount of
nourishment and exercise, not too little and not too
much, we would have found the safest way to health.”
- Hippocrates

Healthy eating tips *(continued)*

<p>7. Use quality fats in moderation, such as those found in olive oil, nuts, avocados, flaxseed, vegetable oils and lean or wild meat and dairy products.</p>	<p>Our bodies need fat to function, but all fats are not the same. The healthiest fats are labelled “monounsaturated” and “omega 3” fats. “Polyunsaturated” are also healthy and cholesterol free. Fat gives flavour to food, and also helps us feel full and satisfied.</p>
<p>8. Limit or eliminate trans fats and saturated fats. They are often hidden in snack foods, especially French fries, cookies, baked goods, donuts, pastries, some breakfast cereals and waffles. Even many frozen foods like fish sticks and prepared entrees contain trans fats.</p>	<p>“Trans fats” are the worst. They form when vegetable oil is heat-treated to make it thicken. These are labelled “hydrogenated” or “partially-hydrogenated” oils. Trans fats have been linked to cancer, heart disease and obesity. “Saturated” fats may boost cholesterol, but are not as unhealthy as “trans fats.”</p>
<p>9. Drink plenty of water. Herbal tea, decaffeinated coffee, and diet soda can be alternatives to water, in moderation.</p>	<p>Drinking regular pop and fruit juice will raise your blood glucose. They may also make you gain weight. Water helps prevent dehydration and overeating.</p>
<p>10. Take a walk. Don’t park in front of the TV after dinner.</p>	<p>Walking after a meal can help you reduce your blood glucose.</p>

Tips for eating out

- Fast food is generally loaded with saturated and trans fats and calories, and it is low in fibre.
- To make a fast food burger as healthy as possible, skip the bacon and cheese options and the fries! You may also want to toss the top bun.
- Salads are a healthy choice. Use light or low-fat dressing, or oil and vinegar, and ask for dressing on the side so that you can control the amount. Caesar salad is loaded with high-fat dressing, so beware!
- Choose whole-wheat subs, and avoid cheese and mayo unless they are low fat. Eating it open-faced is a healthy way to reduce the calories.
- Fish is an excellent choice, as long as it’s not breaded or battered.
- If you’re eating Chinese food, watch out for rice and sauces. Limit rice and pasta to one-quarter of your plate. Ask for “al dente” pasta. It’s not as starchy as overcooked pasta.
- Ask for a double portion of vegetables with your potatoes. It’s tempting to load up a healthy baked potato with sour cream, bacon bits, and butter, so try to opt for boiled potatoes instead.
- Order half-portions of meals, share with a friend, or take home a doggie bag. This helps you enjoy your meal, but not overeat.

"It's bizarre that the produce manager is more important to my children's health than the pediatrician."

- Meryl Streep

Grocery store tips

- Choose fewer processed foods. The healthiest foods are around the outside of the grocery store; the junk foods and processed snack foods are often down the center aisles.
- Look for lower-fat options like yogurt or cottage cheese instead of sour cream, or lean cuts of meat where you can't see marbled (white) fat.
- Read the labels to find out what you are eating.
- Fill your pantry with healthy food choices, and don't shop when you are hungry.
- Frozen vegetables are a healthy alternative to canned or fresh vegetables. Keep several types of frozen veggies on hand for quick meals, and to add to soups and other dishes.
- Check out your waste to help your waist. If you have lots of boxboard in the recycling bin, you may be eating too many processed foods. The healthiest foods, like whole grains and vegetables, don't generate a lot of garbage.



Resources

The following resources are available to help you learn more about healthy eating in the Yukon.

1. REGISTERED DIETITIANS

If you are diagnosed with diabetes, you can be referred by your physician to see a registered dietitian at the Yukon Diabetes Education Centre, **867-393-8711** or diabetes.center@wgh.yk.ca. If you are not diagnosed but would like to see a registered dietitian, you can be referred by your physician to the Outpatient Dietitian at **867-393-8700**.

2. REGISTERED NATUROPATHIC DOCTORS

Registered naturopathic doctors (NDs) do three years of pre-medical studies and four years of full-time naturopathic training prior to completing licensing exams. NDs examine, diagnose, and treat patients with programs tailored to their health conditions. They offer nutritional counselling, traditional medicine, and other methods that focus on improving your overall health, which may help you to control your blood sugar. There are several NDs in the Yukon, who work out of Whitehorse and travel to the communities.

- Michael Mason-Wood, Natural Terrain Naturopathic Health Care Clinic, Whitehorse, Yukon, **867-668-6464** or www.naturalterrain.com.

Michael is a member of the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation and works with people in Mayo, Dawson, Beaver Creek, Burwash, Pelly Crossing and Haines Junction.

- Joanne Leung, ND, 604 Wheeler Street, Whitehorse, Yukon, **867-668-7262** or leung@yknet.ca.

Naturopath - Assists clients with diabetes management in Whitehorse and in the Yukon communities.

- Janice Millington, **867-456-4151**, is based in Whitehorse.

3. CANADIAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION

An excellent guide to healthy eating is available at www.diabetes.ca.

ACTIVE LIVING

Being physically active is one of the most positive things you can do to improve your overall health, especially with diabetes. It is important to choose activities you enjoy so that being active becomes part of your daily life.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Exercise is one of the most powerful ways to help control diabetes.
- Exercise helps the insulin receptors in your cells work better, which means your cells can take in glucose better, and your blood glucose will be easier to control.
- Once your body adapts to regular exercise, it will use insulin more efficiently even when you aren't active.
- Exercise helps you maintain your weight, and complements healthy eating, but it is not a substitute for healthy eating.
- Exercise reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke, and even aging.
- Weight training increases muscle mass. Muscles use a lot of glucose, which helps control your blood glucose levels. Fat cells do not use glucose. Any kind of resistance exercise will have the same benefit.

HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

The harder you work, the less you need to do. Ideally, a person should aim for 30 minutes a day of

moderate activity, or 60 minutes a day of light to moderate activity. Start slowly and work your way up to 30 minutes a day. Walking briskly for 30 minutes a day can result in an average loss of 20 lbs (9.1kg) a year. Walking to or from work is one way to fit this in.

WHAT KIND OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DO I NEED?

You need to think about getting three types of activity into your life: aerobic exercise, where you are breathing harder and your heart rate goes up; resistance, or weights, which helps you build muscle mass; and flexibility, which helps you stay loose.

Most people know that physical activity is good for them, and that being inactive can lead to health problems, but the truth is many of us need encouragement to get started, and support along the way. The Yukon Government has adopted an Active Living Strategy to help Yukoners become more active. For more information about getting active in your community, please contact the Yukon Active Living Coordinator at RPAY, **867-668-2328** or active@klondiker.com.

"Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer fear, do not sit home and think about it. Go out and get busy."
- Dale Carnegie

Resources

The following are some local resources to help you get moving.

1. SUPPORT AND GOAL SETTING

The **Active Prescription (Active Rx) Program** is designed to help inactive people who are at risk of health problems to set realistic goals and work towards becoming more active.

This course includes four weekly sessions and several months of follow-up support. You can be referred by your doctor or sign up yourself by contacting RPAY's Healthy Living Coordinator at **867-668-3012** or healthy@klondiker.com.

2. WALKING PROGRAMS

"On the right path" is a Yukon-themed walking program designed to get you in the habit of walking. Participants will receive a logbook, pedometer and incentive prizes along the way. You can choose to walk the distance of the Overland Trail or the Silver Trail without leaving your town.

For information, contact RPAY's Healthy Living Coordinator at **867-668-3012** or healthy@klondiker.com.

The **Hearts in Motion Walking Club** is an indoor walking program running from September to June. It is a joint venture between the City of Whitehorse Parks and Recreation, Yukon College, and the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Register by calling the City of Whitehorse Parks and Recreation at **867-668-8325**.

Developing a **Stairway to Health Program** is a fun and easy way to get employees active in the workplace. Encouraging employees to take the stairs promotes health, vitality and weight loss.

For more information visit the website www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/sth-evs/english/index.htm.

3. FUN ACTIVITIES

- Try swing, tap, ballroom, country, or other forms of dancing.
 - Leaping Feats Creative Danceworks, **867-393-2623**.
 - Northern Lights School of Dance, **867-668-6683**.
 - Dancesport North of 60, **867-633-6821** or **867-668-7239**.

“Every step you take is a step away from where you used to be.”
– Brian Charquaf

- Tai-Chi Association of the Yukon, **867-668-7165** or www.taichi-yukon.ca.
- Pilates is an excellent exercise for strength-building, similar to yoga. Pilates machines, one-on-one programs, and drop-in classes for beginners and others are offered by professionally trained staff through the Northern Lights Pilates Studio at 66 River Ridge Lane. Call **867-456-4356**. Better Bodies and Peak Fitness both offer Pilates classes.
- Falun Gong is an ancient spiritual practice involving movement exercises. Everyone is welcome to participate in this free activity. Contact Jim at **867-633-6157**.
- Shanti Yoga at #2-404 Hanson Street offers various holistic health classes including yoga, pilates, belly dancing, nia and rolwing. Call **867-668-5055** or visit www.shantiyogayukon.ca.
- The City of Whitehorse Active Living Guide is published three times per year, and contains information on recreation and sport activities offered in Whitehorse. The guide is also online at www.whitehorse.ca or you can call the City of Whitehorse Parks and Recreation at **867-668-8325** for a copy of the guide.

- Black Street Stairs are a great way to get exercise! During a break at work, why not head to the end of Black Street near the clay cliffs and climb the City of Whitehorse Black Street Stairs. Enjoy the view and get your heart rate up.

4. THE CANADA GAMES CENTRE

The Whitehorse Canada Games Centre offers all ages the opportunity for active fun all year long. Take lessons, join a scheduled game, enjoy sports with your family or, use the facility to obtain your personal fitness goal... the opportunities are endless. Open 7 days a week, the CGC has a running/walking track, fitness area, flexi hall for ball games, soccer field, 2 skating rinks, swimming pool, hot tub and sauna, indoor playground and coffee shop. Located at 200 Hamilton Blvd. For information phone **867-667-4FUN (4386)** or visit the website www.canadagamescentre.whitehorse.ca.

“Vision is not enough; it must be combined with venture. It is not enough to stare up the steps; we must step up the stairs.”
– Vaclav Havel

5. SPORTS AND GYMS

- Get wet at one of the seasonal swimming pools in ten Yukon Communities.
 - Beaver Creek Swimming Pool. Call **867-862-7702**.
 - Carcross Swimming Pool. Call **867-821-3211**.
 - Carmacks Swimming Pool. Call **867-863-6512**.
 - Dawson City Swimming Pool. Call **867-993-7412**.
 - Faro Swimming Pool. Call **867-994-2375**.
 - Mayo Swimming Pool. Call **867-996-2220**.
 - Pelly Crossing Swimming Pool. Call **867-537-3151**.
 - Ross River Swimming Pool. Call **867-969-2516**.
 - Dennis Ball Memorial Pool, Watson Lake. Call **867-536-8030**.
 - Shakwak Valley Community Pool, Haines Junction. Call **867-634-7105**.
 - Takhini Hot Springs, Whitehorse. Call **867-633-2706**.
- Gyms offer personalized programs to get you active at any stage in life. The following gyms are available in Whitehorse. In the communities, check with your recreation director for local fitness facilities.
 - Better Bodies Crosstraining Ctr., 122 Industrial Rd, **867-633-5245**.
 - Peak Fitness, Leisure on Lewes Mall, Riverdale, **867-668-4268** or visit www.pkfitness.yk.ca.
 - Isis Women’s Fitness Centre is a Whitehorse-based business that offers a circuit-training program. Programs are tailored to your individual needs. The circuit takes about 30 minutes, easy for lunch hour. 4th Avenue in the Yukon Inn Plaza, **867-633-4747**.
 - Curves offers a circuit-training program designed just for women. There are 6000 Curves franchises around the world. Curves staff will discuss your goals and support you to reach them. 115 Jasper Road (off Industrial), **867-393-3443**.
- Play an organized sport. There are many sports organizations listed with Sport Yukon. Call **867-668-4236** or visit www.sportyukon.com for a detailed contact list.

WELL BEING

Living with diabetes can add to your daily stress. There are many emotions associated with the diagnosis. Some people have a difficult time believing and accepting that they have diabetes. Stress can also have an effect on blood sugar levels. Learning to manage stress can have the same impact as medication. Along with healthy eating and active living, having a support network, focusing on positive feelings, and learning more can help maintain well being.

Resources

1. TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

- The Chronic Conditions Self-Management Program (CCSMP) is a free program that teaches life skills for people living with diabetes and other chronic conditions. Call **867-393-2201**.
- Yukon Wholistic Health Network sponsors health fairs and can tell you how to reach various complementary health care practitioners in the Yukon. Contact Susan Gwynne-Timothy **867-660-4224**, sgwynne_timothy@yahoo.ca.
- Hodiyyin: Sacred Place offers workshops on well being throughout the year. Call Eleanor Velarde at **867-668-3747**.
- East West Health Centre offers complementary medicine and treats the whole body. Call **867-633-6157**.
- Prime Meridian Physiotherapy, Pamela Holmes, physiotherapist offering craniosacral and visceral therapy—a gentle, alternative bodywork approach for stress relief and health maintenance. Call **867-393-2610**.
- Massage is a great relaxation tool. For a list of massage practitioners, check the Yellow Pages under “Massage Practitioners (Registered).”

2. DIABETES SUPPORT GROUPS

- The Canadian Diabetes Association, Whitehorse Chapter, can tell you how to start your own diabetes support group. Call **867-393-2329**.
- Kwanlin Dun Health Centre offers a support group and programming for diabetics including monthly luncheons and morning walking groups. Contact Kwanlin Dun’s Diabetic Nurse at **867-668-7289**.

3. STRESS MANAGEMENT AND COUNSELLING

- Norm Hamilton, Relaxation Services, **867-333-0595**.
- Therapeutic Life Centre Incorporated, **867-667-2424**.

4. FIRST NATIONS HEALTH HEALING ROOM

The Healing Room is available at Whitehorse General Hospital as a place for family members to gather, to be with a patient, to pray and to practise traditional ceremonies and private rituals. The Healing Room is open for use by all people who respect First Nation traditional beliefs. The Traditional Medicine Program Coordinator will assist the patient and family with access to traditional methods of healing. Call First Nations Health at **867-393-8758**.

5. COUNSELLING SERVICES

Counselling can help you cope emotionally with life’s challenges. All counselling services are

“No man in the world has more courage than the man who can stop after eating one peanut.”
- Channing Pollock

confidential. Costs may be covered under your Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

The following is a list of professional psychologists currently practising in the Yukon.

- Yukon Family Services Association, Whitehorse, **867-667-2970**.
- Yukon Family Services Association, Dawson City, **867-993-6455**.
- Yukon Family Services Association, Watson Lake, **867-536-2330**.
- Bill Stewart, The Psychology Centre, **867-633-6010**.
- Barbara Nimco and Associates Inc., **867-668-4058**.
- Alberta Rooney, **867-393-3860**.
- Marilyn Smith, **867-633-2476**.
- JoAnne Green, **867-667-2787**.
- Johanne Fillion (bilingual), **867-668-2050**.
- Shannon Baskerville and Joanne Hutsul, **867-668-2229**.

WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

Reaching and maintaining a healthy body weight will help control your diabetes and prevent its complications. A healthy weight helps with blood glucose control and is healthier for your heart.

Weight isn't just about how heavy you are; it's about the amount of muscle you have compared to the amount of fat your body is storing. Gaining muscle helps control your blood sugar, since muscle uses more energy than fat.

When your body is overweight, you may develop "insulin resistance," meaning your insulin isn't working well. This leads to high blood sugar. Healthy eating, physical activity and weight loss can help reduce insulin resistance, which means your insulin works better and can do its job to bring down blood sugar levels. This is really important, because insulin resistance can lead to heart disease, diabetes, and other health problems, and to complications in someone who is already living with diabetes.

Getting active will greatly reduce your risk of developing diabetes or complications from diabetes, even if you don't lose any weight. If you are overweight, even a small weight loss will have a positive effect on your blood sugar.

Here are some positive steps you can take to help you reach a healthy weight:

1. NUTRITION COUNSELLING
Registered dietitians (RDs) provide nutrition counselling. If you are diagnosed with diabetes, you can be referred by a doctor to a registered dietitian at the Diabetes Education Center, **867-393-8711** or diabetes.center@wgh.yk.ca. Other clients can be referred by their doctors to an RD through

Outpatient Nutrition Services at Whitehorse General Hospital, **867-393-8700**.

2. TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY
Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) is a weight-loss support group that uses a sensible eating plan following the Canada Food Guide. Four groups meet weekly in Whitehorse at various times and

"I've been on a constant diet for the last two decades. I've lost a total of 789 pounds. By all accounts, I should be hanging from a charm bracelet."

- Erma Bombeck

"I never worry about diets. The only carrots that interest me are the number you get in a diamond."

- Mae West

locations. TOPS has approximately 60 members in Whitehorse, and there is an annual TOPS conference in May. Although most TOPS members are women, men and teenagers are welcome and encouraged to join. TOPS previously met in Haines Junction, Faro, and Watson Lake. If you are interested in starting a TOPS group in your Yukon community, the coordinator can help you get started. For information, contact the TOPS Coordinator, Madeline Boyd, **867-668-5977**.

3. CORONARY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Coronary Health Improvement Program (CHIP) is an intensive, four-week program to help you take an active role in restoring and/or preserving your vibrant health. CHIP gives you information on how to cook healthier foods and how to take charge of your health, with your doctor's help. It

delivers information, inspiration and motivation. CHIP is run by a non-profit society, the Yukon Community Health Improvement Project. There is no selling or promotion of products. CHIP is currently available in Whitehorse, Teslin, Haines Junction, and Watson Lake. For information call, Butch Johnson, **867-821-4338**.

4. WEIGHT WATCHERS

Weight Watchers offers its Wilderness Program in the Yukon, but there are no Weight Watchers meetings here. By signing on to the Wilderness Program for an annual fee, you will receive materials from the regular program and can attend up to 10 meetings a year in other cities across British Columbia, wherever meetings are held. For more information call **1-800-651-6000** or visit the Weight Watchers website www.weightwatchers.ca.

STOP SMOKING

Smoking greatly increases your chances of suffering from the complications of diabetes, especially heart, blood vessel, kidney, nerve and eye diseases, and erectile dysfunction (which used to be referred to as sexual impotence).

After your last cigarette...

Your health will begin to improve the minute you stub out that last cigarette.

- Within 20 minutes, your blood pressure and heart rate will drop.
- Within 20 minutes, the body temperature of your hands and feet increases to normal.
- Two hours after your last cigarette, the nicotine will begin to leave your body.
- 24 hours after your last cigarette, your chance of having a heart attack will decrease.

How to quit in the Yukon

1. YUKON GOVERNMENT

The Yukon Government wants people to quit smoking, and it wants to help them do it. The government has introduced its own Yukon Tobacco Reduction Strategy through Health and Social Services' Health Promotion Branch. This strategy is focused on two things:

- Supporting children and adolescents to resist tobacco messaging (e.g., from advertising and from what they learn when they see adults around them smoking) so they will never start smoking. Copies of Making Sense and Moving Forward: Report on the 2003 Yukon Youth Smoking Survey are available from Health Promotion, (867) 668-8394, or by email: health.promotion@gov.yk.ca.
- Helping smokers quit and stay smoke-free. Health Promotion has free QuitPacks to help smokers quit. This pack is full of things to keep your hands busy as you resist the

More reasons to get down to that last cigarette...

- If you smoke a pack a day, you could easily spend over \$2900 in Yukon in one year!
- Smoking is the number one preventable cause of death and disease in Canada.
- Not every smoker who quits experiences cravings or withdrawal symptoms.
- The average smoker attempts to quit smoking four to six times before they succeed.

urge to smoke, as well as printed material on quitting smoking. To obtain a QuitPack, call the Smokersline, 1-866-221-8393, or email Health Promotion at health.promotion@gov.yk.ca.

For additional support on curbing urges and quitting smoking, visit the Tobacco Reduction Strategy website, www.smokersline.ca.

2. BREATHE FREE

This quit-smoking program includes eight meetings, films, lectures, exercises, and diet tips free of charge. It is sponsored by the Seventh Day Adventist Church and Yukon College (it is not a religious program). For more information contact Chris Christianson, Program Coordinator, at 867-633-2769 or leave a message at 867-633-5385.

3. CANADIAN CANCER SOCIETY

The Whitehorse branch of the Canadian Cancer Society provides free educational materials for quitting smoking. Call 867-668-6440.

4. FAMILY PHYSICIAN

Your family physician can recommend nicotine patches, nicotine gum, Bupropion (Zyban) tablets, and/or acupuncture to help you to stop smoking. Some of these treatments are covered under Yukon Health Insurance or your employer benefits package.

5. WEBSITES

The following websites provide information, interactive programs, and help:

- Canadian Lung Association – www.lung.ca/smoking/
- Health Canada – www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hecs-sesc/tobacco/index.html or www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hecs-sesc/tobacco/quitting/ontheroad/index.html
- Canadian Cancer Society (bilingual site) – www.cancer.ca
- Yukon Tobacco Strategy – www.smokersline.ca
- Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada – www.heartandstroke.ca (Click on *Healthy Living* on the left side of your screen, then scroll down and click on *Stop Smoking*.)
- YTG Health Promotion – for Yukon smokers between the ages of 18-34 who want help quitting visit www.freequitpack.ca.

"Smoking kills. If you're killed, you've lost a very important part of your life."
– Brooke Shields

"To cease smoking is the easiest thing I ever did. I ought to know because I've done it a thousand times."
– Mark Twain

MEDICAL CHECK-UPS

Diabetes is a serious progressive disease that can lead to the complications of heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, nerve damage, including amputations and erectile dysfunction (ED), and eye disease. Regular physician, lab, and specialist visits help monitor diabetes and its complications, and can help prevent or delay the onset of complications.

1. FAMILY PHYSICIAN

You should have regular appointments with your family doctor to monitor your diabetes. He or she can check your blood pressure, your feet, and send you for lab work to check your blood.

2. LABORATORY

You will need to visit the lab for your regularly recommended A1C blood test, blood fat test, albumin creatinine urine test, and an annual quality assurance check on your blood sugar monitor.

3. SPECIALISTS

Specialists work from Whitehorse General Hospital on a rotating schedule. You need a referral from your doctor to see them. If you require other specialists or additional diabetes education, you will need to travel outside the Yukon. You can arrange this through your doctor.

4. EYE EXAMS

It is recommended that you have a dilated eye exam every year, as vision problems from diabetes may be prevented with early diagnosis. You can have this exam done by the following optometrists in Whitehorse:

- Dr. Hamilton, **867-633-3377**.
- Northern Lights Optometry Group, **867-668-2020**.

Your optometrist can refer you for an appointment with a visiting ophthalmologist (eye doctor) at the Specialist Clinic at the Whitehorse General Hospital.

5. ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION (ED)

For the ED information lines, call **1-800-951-9488** (answered by a nurse) or **1-800-583-0303** (you choose pre-recorded or a health representative). Visit www.edhelp.ca for more ED information.

DIABETES MEDICATION AND SUPPLIES

Whether it is medications, personal glucose monitors, strips, or other diabetes supplies, there are added financial expenses when living with diabetes.

1. PHARMACIES

Most pharmacies provide a free sharps container service, diabetes support, and diabetes products and resources.

- Medicine Chest Pharmacy, Whitehorse, **867-668-7000** or **1-800-661-0404**.
- Shopper's Drug Mart, Whitehorse: Main Street, **867-667-2485** or **1-800-661-0506**; Qwanlin Mall, **867-667-6633** or **1-800-661-0413**.
- DrugStore Pharmacy, Real Canadian Superstore, Whitehorse, **867-456-6635**.
- Wal-Mart Pharmacy, Whitehorse, **867-667-2652**.
- Parhelion Medical Services, Watson Lake, **867-536-2568**.

2. YUKON HEALTH CARE INSURANCE PLAN

Yukon Health Care Insurance Plan (YHCIP) coverage is free for Yukon residents who are Canadian citizens or have landed immigrant status. You may qualify for the Chronic Disease Program, which helps cover diabetes medications and supplies. You may also need to contact YHCIP when travelling for medical appointments. YHCIP is located on the fourth floor of the Financial Plaza, Second Avenue and Lambert Street in Whitehorse. Call **867-667-5209** or **1-800-661-0408 ext. 5209**. Fax **867-393-6486**. Visit www.hss.gov.yk.ca and search "chronic disease program."

3. NON-INSURED HEALTH BENEFITS

Non-Insured Health Benefits provides some supplementary benefits for status First Nations and Inuit. This is a federal government program that covers some diabetic medications and supplies and may cover certain vision check fees and specialist appointments. Some specific travel is covered for those living with diabetes in Yukon communities. For more information call **867-393-6761** or **867-393-6777**.

4. EXTENDED HEALTH BENEFITS

You may get assistance with your diabetes medications and supplies through your employee extended health benefits package where you work. Check with your human resources department.



FOOT CARE

Many people with diabetes have foot problems. Ask your doctor to explain your own risk factors for foot problems. There are many things that you can do for yourself to avoid foot problems.

✓ DO	✗ DON'T
✓ Check your feet daily for cracks, bruises, blisters, sores, infections, unusual marks.	✗ Cut your own corns or calluses.
✓ Use a mirror to see the bottoms of your feet if you can't lift them up.	✗ Treat your own in-grown toenails. See a doctor or nurse.
✓ Check the colour of your legs and feet. If there is heat, swelling, or redness, see your doctor right way.	✗ Use over the counter medications on warts or corns. They are dangerous for people with diabetes.
✓ Clean a scratch or cut with a mild soap and water and cover it with a dry dressing.	✗ Apply heat to your feet with a hot water bottle or electric blanket. You could burn your feet and not notice.
✓ Trim your toenails straight across.	✗ Soak your feet for any more than 20 minutes.
✓ Wash and dry your feet every day, especially between the toes.	✗ Take very hot baths.
✓ Apply good skin lotion every day on your heels and soles. Wipe off any excess lotion.	✗ Use lotion between your toes.
✓ Change your socks every day.	✗ Walk barefoot inside or outside.
✓ Always wear good, supportive shoes from a reputable shoe store, and make sure they fit well.	✗ Wear tight socks, garters, elastics, or knee highs.
✓ Use professionally fitted orthotics if they help.	✗ Wear over-the counter insoles. They can cause blisters.
✓ Choose shoes with low heels (less than 5 cm/2" high).	✗ Sit for long periods of time.
✓ Buy shoes in the afternoon, as your feet may have swollen by then.	✗ Smoke.
✓ Avoid extreme cold and heat (including sun).	
✓ Exercise regularly.	
✓ See a foot care specialist for advice and education.	

*"I still have my feet on the ground,
I just wear better shoes."
- Oprah Winfrey*

*"The civilized man has built a coach,
but has lost the use of his feet."
- Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Although it is usually recommended that a podiatrist provide diabetes foot care, there is no podiatrist in the Yukon. However, the following people provide foot care in the Yukon:

- Foot Care by Dawn, Dawn Fralick, Registered Nurse, **867-633-5584**.
 - Carcross, **867-821-4444**.
 - Carmacks, **867-863-4444**.
- Seniors Foot Clinic, first Tuesday of every month through the Whitehorse Health Centre, **867-667-6371**.
 - Destruction Bay, **867-841-4444**.
 - Haines Junction, **867-634-4444**.
 - Pelly Crossing, **867-537-4444**.
 - Ross River, **867-969-4444**.
 - Teslin, **867-390-4444**.
 - Watson Lake, **867-536-4444**.
- Best Foot Forward, Evie Estey, Licensed Practical Nurse, **867-667-2863**.
- Home Care Nursing for clients who are less mobile, **867-667-5774**.
- Colad Studio, Tanya Mickey, Certified Pedologist, **867-633-3005** (Call well in advance, as she is very busy.)
- Wright Foot Clinic, Licensed Chiropodist (foot specialist), **867-633-3010**.
- Your physician/surgeon.
- Community Health Centres vary with availability of foot care services:
 - Whitehorse, 9010 Quartz Rd., **867-667-8864**.
 - Beaver Creek, **867-862-4444**.
 - Burwash Landing, **867-841-4444**.
- Pedicures performed by estheticians are not considered formal diabetes foot care, so make sure you inform the esthetician that you have diabetes.
 - KB's Esthetics, Whitehorse, **867-668-2430**.
 - Head To Toe, Whitehorse, **867-668-2179**.
 - Northern Esthetics, Whitehorse, **867-668-3100**.
 - Shay-Per Personal Care Studio, Whitehorse, **867-667-7799**.
 - Hair Cabaret, Dawson City, **867-993-5222**.
 - Amberly's Spa, Whitehorse, **867-667-2580**.

Supplies

- Specialty shoes and foot care supplies can be purchased at:
 - Alpine Health Supplies, Horwood's Mall, Whitehorse, **867-393-4967**.
 - Shoes R Us, Main St., Whitehorse, **867-667-2409**.
 - Northern Hospital Supplies, 6th and Ogilvie, Whitehorse, **867-668-5083**.
- Orthotics can be made by:
 - Outpatient Therapy Services, Whitehorse General Hospital, **867-393-8963**. The Occupational Therapist specializes in diabetic and arthritic foot conditions. Services include a comprehensive foot assessment for high risk feet, footcare education, footwear recommendations, and provision of orthotics if needed. Orthotics can be funded through private extended health care benefits, Yukon Health Insurance, or NIHB. A physician's referral is required.
 - Riverfront Physiotherapy/Physio Plus Clinic offers expedient professional physiotherapy consultation and treatment for musculoskeletal conditions. The physiotherapists at this clinic can help prevent and manage musculoskeletal complications of diabetes. Services include: exercise prescription; provision of custom fit orthotics; footwear advice; and assessment and treatment of joint, muscle and tendon conditions resulting from diabetes. Fees for services are usually covered by Extended Health Care Plans, Chronic Disease Programs and other third party health insurers. The clinic is now located at the Canada Games Centre on the second floor.

For information or appointments call **867-668-4886**.

SETTING GOALS AND STAYING MOTIVATED

If you are living with diabetes, making lifestyle changes that will help you prevent complications may be your ultimate goal. You may need some smaller goals to help get you there.

Exercise

A) One way to find your goal is to ask yourself these three questions, and write down the answers:

1. What am I doing right?
2. What could I do better?
3. How could I do this?

B) Make sure you write down your answers. For example, the answers may be:

1. What am I doing right?
I'm eating five fruits and vegetables every day.
2. What could I do better?
I need to get at least 30 minutes of exercise daily.
3. How could I do this?
*I could do this by: a) Walking to work on Mondays and Thursdays.
b) Walking the dog after work on Tuesdays.
c) Going swimming twice a week.*

This exercise helps you develop a list of simple goals that could lead to large improvements in your health in the long run.

“Every moment of life is a new beginning point as we move from the old. This moment is a new point of beginning for me right here and right now. All is well in my world.”

- Louise Hay

“The experience of overcoming fear is extraordinarily delightful”

- Bertrand Russell

Tips for reaching your goals

1. LEARN WHAT MOTIVATES YOU

We are all motivated by different things. What makes you want to go for a walk may be the opposite of your friend. Ask yourself what motivates you to act. Some motivators are:

- Positive thinking
- Spirituality
- Repeating affirmations
- Praying
- Praise
- Lecturing
- Promising yourself a reward
- Competition
- Getting help from friends
- Taking a class

2. FIND SOME ALLIES AND SUPPORT

We find courage when we aren't isolated.

- Ask a family member or your spouse to make changes to eating habits and activity levels with you.
- Get support from your doctor, diabetes educator or registered dietitian (RD).
- Use Active Rx, the Chronic Conditions Self-Management Program, or other programs from

this resource guide to get the information you need and support for your healthy choices.

3. GET CREATIVE, NOT DISCIPLINED

- Remember what gives you joy, what you loved as a child, how you feel when you are active or eat well. Find an activity that you love, or try something new like dancing or Pilates.
- Change is emotional, not rational. For example, you don't pat your dog every morning at 10:00 a.m. Listen to your own rhythms and trust your body when you are trying to make changes.

- Don't set yourself up for defeat with really high expectations. Maybe you can't do it every day, maybe it'll take you months to get consistent. You won't change overnight, but keep going anyway.

4. OVERCOMING RESISTANCE

Resistance is a safety mechanism. Pulling back from the unknown is a natural response, but it also makes changing more stressful. When you are resisting a goal, such as walking every day, here are some tips to get moving:

“Destiny is not a matter of chance; it is a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for; it is a thing to be achieved.”

- William Jennings Bryan

- Start with a small step. Do what you can without any stress, and then build from there.
- Make it small enough to give yourself a feeling of complete willingness. For example, “I’ll walk from the couch to the TV. That feels okay.”
- This lets you be in control. By taking charge, you reduce the stress that comes from resisting.
- You will choose the healthy behaviour when you are ready, when it doesn’t feel scary. “Okay, I now choose to walk from my house to the street.”
- Starting with small steps that you feel 100% willing to do helps

When you are living with diabetes, any improvement in your eating habits, activity levels and mental, emotional, or spiritual awareness, is a step forward, and will benefit your blood sugar control.

“The First Wealth is Health.”

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

you get in touch with the desire to be well. Desire is stronger than willpower or self-discipline.

5. REMINDERS

Use small things to remind yourself of your goals and your desires, like sticky notes around the house, calling your voice mail and leaving yourself a message, affirmations, clippings from magazines, photos, and your friends.

6. START AGAIN

If at first you don’t succeed, start again and again, and don’t judge yourself. Accepting yourself, just as you are, is the key to change.

*Adapted from Live the Life You Love,
© Barbara Sher, 1997*

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Acknowledgements

The second edition of this guide was published by the Recreation and Parks Association of the Yukon (RPAY) with the generous support of Health Canada in Spring 2006.

This guide is posted on the RPAY website, www.rpay.org. Your feedback and comments are appreciated to help us with the updates.

For additional copies of the guide, or to provide feedback, please contact RPAY at 509 Hanson St. Whitehorse, Yukon.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT DIABETES
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