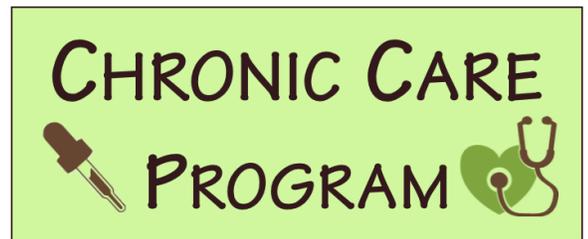


DIABETES

at a glance



What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a disease in which blood glucose levels are above normal. There are different types of diabetes; type 2 diabetes is also called adult-onset diabetes.

Most of the food we eat is turned into glucose, or sugar, for our bodies to use for energy. The pancreas, an organ that lies near the stomach, makes a hormone called insulin to help glucose get into the cells of our bodies. When you have diabetes, your body either doesn't make enough insulin or can't use its own insulin as well as it should. This causes sugar to build up in your blood.

Complications and Symptoms

Common signs and symptoms of diabetes include:

- being very thirsty
- urinating often
- feeling very hungry or tired
- losing weight without trying
- sores that heal slowly
- dry, itchy skin
- feeling pins and needles in your feet, losing feeling in your feet
- blurry eyesight



Leading an active, healthy lifestyle can help prevent or slow the progress of diabetes.

Risk Factors

Your risk of getting diabetes increases with age. People who are overweight and inactive are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes. Other risk factors include:

- having a parent or siblings with diabetes
- having diabetes while pregnant or if you gave birth to a baby weighing 9 pounds or more
- high blood pressure
- high blood glucose
- leading an inactive lifestyle or being physically active less than 3 times a week
- being overweight or obese

Prevention and Management

Treatment for type 2 diabetes includes:

- using diabetes medicines
- making healthy food choices
- being physically active by getting at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity activity
- controlling your blood pressure levels and your cholesterol levels

Diabetes is preventable. Many people have higher blood glucose levels than normal, but not high enough to be called diabetes. These people are more likely to develop diabetes, but can prevent it. Steps that can be taken include eating a variety of foods that are low in fat and remaining physically active.

The information on this side of the handout comes from the National Institutes of Health.



ITHACA HEALTH ALLIANCE



ITHACA FREE CLINIC

ITHACA FREE CLINIC

how we can help

Chronic Care Program

Joining the Chronic Care Program gives you access to all of the services offered at the Ithaca Free Clinic. Patients are seen by appointment, instead of waiting at the walk-in clinic. Other services also available include:

- acupuncture
- chiropractic
- massage therapy
- occupational therapy
- mental health counseling
- herbal medicine
- dietician
- energy work
- reiki
- health insurance enrollment

Here are some examples of how these services can help patients with diabetes.

Acupuncture

Acupuncture is a form of alternative medicine where thin needles are inserted into the body. Although it is often known for treating pain, acupuncture can treat or alleviate various conditions. Acupuncture can help stabilize fluctuating sugar levels. When done in combination with Chinese herbs, acupuncture can treat diabetes well.

Herbal Medicine

Herbal medicine uses plants for their therapeutic properties. Herbal medicines can be taken in various forms, including as teas or tinctures.

Herbalists assess symptoms; take a history including medications and other information; look at lab testing to determine which herbal medicines may be beneficial; look at cardiovascular and kidney health; discuss symptoms that may or may not be associated with diabetes; discuss nutrition, exercise and lifestyle choices, and prepare herbal medicines that:

1. Promote positive blood sugar levels
2. Are for possible associated diabetic problems such as abscesses or nerve pain
3. Support cardiovascular and kidney health

Massage

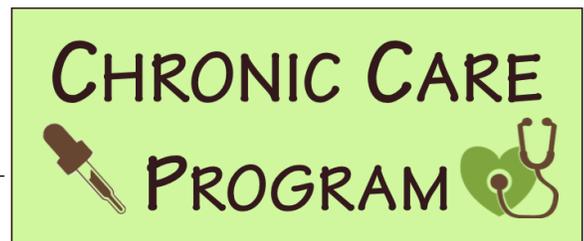
Massage therapy involves putting pressure on various parts of the body to reduce stress and anxiety, relieve pain, in addition to other therapeutic benefits.

Studies have shown that for type 1 diabetes, massage at insulin injection sites increase serum insulin action and decrease blood glucose levels¹. Uncontrolled studies have also shown massage may help normalize blood glucose and help with symptoms of diabetic neuropathy.¹

Nutrition

Dieticians are food and nutrition experts who provide individual counseling and educate patients about nutrition. Dieticians can help individuals form eating habits that facilitate the achievement of their health goals. Healthy eating habits are especially important to keep sugar levels stable for patients with diabetes.

¹ Is Massage Useful in the Management of Diabetes? A Systematic Review Jeanette Ezzo, MsT, MPH, PhD, Thomas Donner, MD, Diane Nickols, BA, PA-C and Mary Cox, MsT, BSDiabetes Spectrum 2001 Oct; 14(4): 218-224. <https://doi.org/10.2337/diaspect.14.4.218>



The Ithaca Free Clinic offers the Chronic Care Program, an integrative project that:

- helps patients with chronic diseases and conditions live with potential long-term health consequences
- makes each patient a part of a “care team” with multiple providers and health care professionals to help set and maintain the patient’s health care plan
- helps patients set goals and also provides support to reach those goals
- works with each patient to become and stay healthy!

To join the Chronic Care Program,
call (607) 330-1254
or email ChronicCare@IthacaHealth.org.

Learn more about the Ithaca Free Clinic at:
IthacaHealth.org

We are located at 521 West Seneca Street,
Ithaca, New York.



The Ithaca Free Clinic offers acupuncture services for various conditions, including diabetes.