Focus on the risk factors you can control. As you learned last week, some of the risk factors of diabetes are not within your control to change. These factors include: age, race, gender and family history. But you are 100% in control of certain lifestyle factors including changing what you eat and how much you exercise. Let’s see how these powerful actions can help lower your risk of developing diabetes, and we’ll begin setting some attainable goals!

Nutrition and Diabetes

**How can a nutritious, balanced diet help?**

Following a well-balanced diet can help you:

- Maintain a healthy weight (being overweight or obese is a risk factor for diabetes)
- Keep your energy level up, which is important for your ability to exercise
- Keep blood sugar levels stable

**Set Your Dietary Goal**

**Build to a goal of:** Eating at least 5-7 servings of fruits or vegetables daily, eliminating added sugars, and eating at least 25 grams (women) or 38 grams (men) of fiber daily.

We’ll cover more helpful nutrition tips in chapters 4 and 5 of this workshop!

Weight and Diabetes

**How can losing weight help?**

Research shows that if you are overweight, losing 5-7% of your body weight can help your body use insulin more effectively, reducing your risk of Type 2 diabetes.

The Diabetes Prevention Program studied people with prediabetes and found that those who lost just that amount of body weight through diet and exercise were 58% less likely to develop Type 2 diabetes!

**Set Your Weight Loss Goal**

**Build to a goal of:** Achieving a normal BMI (Body Mass Index) of 18.5-24.9. BMI is calculated from your weight and height and is a reliable indicator of your amount of body fat. To calculate your BMI, click here

**Start with Small Goals!**

We all know that we should eat right and exercise. But what does that mean and how can you make lasting, healthy changes to your current habits? The key is to make small changes and work up to your ultimate goals. For example, add one extra day of exercise this week. Or pack a healthy lunch instead of eating out one day.

Now that you have completed Lesson 1, please proceed to the next lesson.

Sources