Minnesota Department of Health

# CSFP Newsletter

*Nutrition Information, Recipes and Resources for Minnesota Seniors*

## Walk Away from Type 2 Diabetes Risk

When older people cut back on physical activity, their risk of Type 2 Diabetes rises. But walking regularly can help, a recent study suggests.

Researchers discovered that the more steps you take, and the more intense those steps are, can lower the odds of developing Type 2 Diabetes.

To discover the link between brisk walking and the prevention of Type 2 Diabetes, a study was conducted of more than 4,800 women who are 65 and older, who do not have diabetes and live on their own.

**The Study:** For 24 hours a day for one week, women wore a device on their hip that recorded the number of steps taken each day. The women's health was monitored for up to seven years, and 8% of those participating developed diabetes.

A key point in the study was for every 1,000 steps per day, the results showed a 6% lower diabetes risk in this population.

Many adults aged 65 and older slow down because of mobility issues. People who have mobility problems do not have to walk very far or brisk to reach moderate to vigorous activity levels.

To achieve moderate to vigorous intensity, it is the kind of steps that cause a person to breathe a little heavy and make it harder to engage in a conversation. For the average person aged 70 to 80, just walking around the block one time is moderate to vigorous intensity activity.

Previous research indicates that regular physical activity, along with improved diet, reduces the risk of diabetes in adults.

In order to stave off the diagnosis of Type 2 Diabetes, continue to engage in regular “stepping” as part of a daily plan so it becomes routine.

**Sources:** Alexis C. Garduno, Andrea Z. LaCroix, Michael J. LaMonte, David W. Dunstan, Kelly R. Evenson, Guangxing Wang, Chongzhi Di, Benjamin T. Schumacher, John Bellettiere; Associations of Daily Steps and Step Intensity With Incident Diabetes in a Prospective Cohort Study of Older Women: The OPACH Study. Diabetes Care 1 February 2022; 45 (2): 339–347. <https://doi.org/10.2337/dc21-1202>

<https://www.diabetes.org/diabetes/type-2>;

University of California, San Diego, news release, Jan. 20, 2022



**What Can I Eat?**

There is no one “magical” diet for those with Type 2 Diabetes since each person responds differently to diet and different foods. But there are a few takeaways to consider:

**Lots of Choices:** There are many different eating patterns to help manage your diabetes—from Mediterranean to low-carbohydrate to vegetarian. Include lots of non-starchy vegetables, minimize added sugars and refined grains, and choose whole, minimally processed foods.

**Carbs Are Not “One Size Fits All”:** There is no one definition for “low carb.” Following an eating pattern lower in carbs (26–45% of total calories from carbohydrate) showed better blood sugars and a reduction in diabetes medications.

**Weight Loss Works:** Losing 5% of your weight is a modest start. This can reap positive benefits on blood sugars and other diabetes outcomes in both type 1 and type 2 diabetes.

**Source**: [www.diabetes.org/foodforthought](http://www.diabetes.org/foodforthought)