

WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for November 1, 2021
Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about prediabetes, and as always, look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

November is National Diabetes Awareness Month. This year's theme is "Small Steps, Big Difference" and is aimed towards those with prediabetes. During this year's Dining with Diabetes program, several participants had been told by their doctor that they have prediabetes. They chose to participate in the program to increase their knowledge and discover practical ways to avoid developing diabetes in the future.

Prediabetes is a serious health condition when blood sugar levels are higher than normal, but not high enough to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes. The CDC estimates that more than 1 in 3 U.S. adults have prediabetes, but most people don't know they have it.

The American Diabetes Association recommends that diabetes screening for most adults begin at age 45. Two common blood tests can indicate prediabetes. Do you know your numbers?

- Glycated hemoglobin (A1C) test - This test shows your average blood sugar level for the past three months. The test measures the percentage of blood sugar attached to the oxygen-carrying protein in red blood cells called hemoglobin. This measurement is a better indicator of your average blood sugar over time compared to the fasting blood sugar test, which is a snapshot in time. An A1C below 5.7 percent is normal. Prediabetes is an A1C level between 5.7 and 6.4 percent. Type 2 diabetes is an A1C at or above 6.5 percent.
- Fasting blood sugar test - A blood sample is taken after you fast for at least eight hours or overnight. Levels below 100 mg/dL are normal. A fasting blood sugar level from 100 to 125 mg/dL is considered prediabetes and above that indicates type 2 diabetes.

Learning that you or a loved one are in the prediabetes range can be a great gift. That means with some key lifestyle changes, you are not destined to diabetes. Here are some tips from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases to help manage prediabetes and prevent diabetes:

1. Take small steps. Making changes to your lifestyle and daily habits is not easy. It is okay to start small.
2. Move more. Physical activity has many benefits for our bodies. Limit time spent sitting and aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity, 5 days a week.
3. Choose healthier foods and drinks most of the time. Two great goals are to make half your plate vegetables and to drink water as your beverage half the time.
4. Seek support. It is possible to reverse prediabetes. Getting support from your health care professional and loved ones can help you make the necessary lifestyle changes.

I was reminded of just how important it is to have people in your corner when you are trying to make healthy choices. My son is a runner. I am very proud of his discipline not only in running, but also in the healthy food and drink choices that he makes. But I don't always make these the easy choice for him. Because I like ice cream. And Dr. Pepper. And when I make these choices in front of him, I forget that this makes it harder for him to stay the course with his goals.

If there is someone in your life with prediabetes who is taking small steps to become healthier, don't stand in their way. Come along side them in their journey and be their biggest cheerleader.

It's not too late to sign up for the Holiday Jams and Jellies Class at Clary Gardens this Thursday, November 4. We'll be making some uniquely flavored jams and jellies, perfect for Christmas gifts- including Pomegranate Jelly, Carrot Cake Jam, and Low-Sugar Apple Pie Jam. You can find registration information on our website, coshocton.osu.edu. Sign up today!

Does the holiday season stress you out instead of making you smile? Do you feel like you don't have time to spend doing the important things? Join Ohio State University Extension for the "Play Your Way Through the Holidays" 6-week email wellness challenge to learn more about these and other wellness topics. The email challenge connects participants with tips, research, and resources to help you navigate life so you can spend time doing things that are truly important to you. Sign up for this free program on our website, coshocton.osu.edu.

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and improve our families, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at coshocton.osu.edu. Make it a healthy day!