

# Diabetes Self-Management Toolkit for Aboriginal Women



- User Guide
- NWAC Diabetes Action Plan
- My Personalized Diabetes Action Plan
- - Diabetes Information & Resources



- Healthy Living
- Diabetes in the Kitchen
- Tr
  - Traditional Foods & Recipes on the Wild Side
    - Bonus Materials:
  - Weekly Meal Planner
  - Activity & Exercise Tracker
  - Fact Sheet: Glycemic Index
  - **Game Fact Sheet:** Foot Care



Native Women's Association of Canada

Diabetes Self-Management Toolkit for Aboriginal Women

# User Guide



This Toolkit contains diabetes information and resources. It has been prepared for Aboriginal women, their families and communities by Aboriginal women.



### Introduction to Toolkit

Diabetes has grown to epidemic proportions among the Canadian Aboriginal population. Many of us know someone who has diabetes or we may have diabetes ourselves. This lifelong disease touches many of us and impacts our health, the health of our families and communities and the health of our Nations. As Mothers, Grandmothers, Aunties, Sisters, and Wives, Aboriginal women play an important role in sustaining the health of our families, communities and future generations.

It is upon this foundational understanding that NWAC began its work to address diabetes and increase awareness and prevention mechanisms across Canada. The evolution of this Toolkit has taken several years and is the result and dedication of the many Aboriginal women who first envisioned a diabetes-free people.

NWAC was founded in 1974 with the collective goal to enhance, promote, and foster the social, economic, cultural, and political well-being of Aboriginal women within both Aboriginal and Canadian societies. NWAC is committed to advancing Aboriginal women's health through education and awareness.

#### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

This toolkit was designed to supplement information and resources related to diabetes prevention, awareness and management. It was <u>not</u> designed to replace the valuable insight, care and treatment provided by your Health Care Professional.

**Always consult your Health Care Professional** 



### Development of Toolkit

Since attaining capacity support through the Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative (ADI), NWAC has actively engaged grassroots constituents by conducting a series of research initiatives and surveillance activities. In 2005 alone over 1200 Aboriginal women contributed to the development of recommendations, including: culturally relevant diabetes resources, securing of funding for regional and community based diabetes workshops and health fairs. An overview of existing literature was performed in 2004, followed by a more extensive literature review in the 2007-2008 fiscal year. This literature review was specific to identifying the incidence of diabetes type 2 across the life span of Aboriginal women from the prenatal environment to infancy, childhood, adolescence, expectant mothers, adults and elders. During this review, it was discovered that limited literature on gender and diabetes exists; therefore Aboriginal people in general were reviewed. This literature review combined with input received during various meetings and related functions during the last few years was instrumental in the development of the NWAC Diabetes Action Plan aimed at the prevention of type 2 diabetes in Aboriginal women.

The NWAC Diabetes Action Plan focuses on three key elements: prevention, partnerships, and cultural approach, and identifies two goals along with supporting strategies aimed at the prevention of type 2 diabetes in Aboriginal women. The *intent* of this Action Plan is to provide NWAC with strategies designed to reach Aboriginal women (living on-reserve, in rural areas, and in cities) and inform them of measures and best practices to undertake in the prevention of diabetes Type 2.

In the fiscal year, 2008-2009 NWAC focussed on how to implement the Action Plan and envisioned a toolkit that would empower Aboriginal women to self-manage diabetes in their life, in their families life and that of their community. This led to a special session held during the 2009 NWAC Annual General Assembly that enabled Aboriginal women from across the country to provide comments, inputs, insights, and other contributions to the development of this toolkit.

It is with great gratitude for these many "guiding lights" who were instrumental in this development phase, resulting in this first "beta" version of the toolkit as you see it now. This version of the toolkit will be reviewed by Aboriginal women during the 2010-2011 fiscal year and will be revised according to their recommendations before full distribution in 2011-2012.

Diabetes can be viewed not as a life sentence but as a life opportunity to do things in a good way, to live well, and to inspire those we love to live well so that they too go on to inspire others.



### Toolkit Contents & Usage

#### NWAC Diabetes Action Plan - Booklet

This booklet introduces the NWAC Diabetes Action Plan and takes you through the process of developing your own personalized Diabetes Action Plan. Within, you'll find the "Model to Raise Awareness and Knowledge of Diabetes". This model is presented using the medicine wheel quadrants making it easier to visually understand. Each quadrant includes key messages along with suggested action items. You will find many of these action items useful and relevant to your every day lifestyle and needs. You are encouraged to identify more actionable items as you go through this section, so a page for your notes can be found in the back. A special section is also included in how to develop and make the action plan your own. You will find samples on how to fill in the forms, this will guide you as you develop your own action plan. Refer to this booklet when working through the "My Personalized Diabetes Action Plan" booklet.

#### My Personalized Diabetes Action Plan - Booklet

This booklet was designed to enable you to personalize the action plan and is meant to be used in conjunction with the NWAC Diabetes Action Plan booklet. It contains the forms referred to in the NWAC Diabetes Action Plan. Take some time to review the forms and the booklets within this toolkit before beginning. It is recommended that you be at peace and take your time with this. Be honest with yourself, you know best who you are and what you are capable of. Remember to use a pencil when filling in your forms, and be good to yourself. Diabetes can be viewed not as a life sentence but as a life opportunity to do things in a good way, to live well, and to inspire those we love to live well so that they too go on to inspire others.

#### Diabetes Information and Resources - Booklet

This booklet contains diabetes information and resources and is a great reference piece to supplement your knowledge about diabetes in general. It also contains some statistical information relating to diabetes in the Aboriginal population and some interesting gender differences in terms of diabetes effects and impacts.



#### Healthy Living - Booklet

You're sure to find something interesting in this booklet! It's full of information and offers up some fun ways to live a healthier more vibrant life, for yourself, your family and community!

#### Diabetes In The Kitchen - Booklet

This practical booklet is your perfect kitchen companion. Simple and easy to read, you'll discover some practical solutions that can make your kitchen more diabetes friendly while inspiring good eating habits.

#### Traditional Foods & Recipes On The Wild Side - Booklet

When Aboriginal women came together to discuss what should be included in this Toolkit, an overwhelming recommendation was to include information on traditional foods and recipes. In addition to traditional foods, it was also recommended that we include a cultural component, which we have done by adding a Creation story. Many thanks to Brenda Gatto, Cayuga sister of the Wolf Clan.

#### Helpful Resources

Included in this toolkit are a "Weekly Meal Planner", and "Weekly Exercise & Calorie Tracker". You may find these useful in planning both meals and activities. Keep a blank copy, so that you may photocopy additional copies for yourself, family and friends.

#### Factsheets

Currently two fact sheets are available and included in this toolkit: Foot care and foot wear, and Understanding the Glycemic Index. In the future, we hope to add more, stay tuned!

#### Fun Stuff

Included in this toolkit is a Pedometer, Compass and other fun stuff. Be inventive with their use, have fun with yourself and family while doing activities that encourage physical activity!



Native Women's Association of Canada

# Diabetes Self-Management Toolkit for Aboriginal Women

# **NWAC Diabetes Action Plan**



Native Women's Association of Canada

### **NWAC Diabetes Action Plan: An Introduction**

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is an aggregate of thirteen Native women's organizations across Canada, and was founded in 1974 on the collective goal to enhance, promote, and foster the social, economic, cultural, and political well-being of Aboriginal women within both Aboriginal and Canadian societies.

NWAC is committed to advancing Aboriginal women's health through education and awareness. In this regard, NWAC has developed this action plan and accompanying toolkit to address the high rates of diabetes among Aboriginal women.

First Nations, Inuit and Métis women are at high risk for developing type 2 diabetes and gestational diabetes. Aboriginal children are also at high risk for developing type 2 diabetes. It is said, that many people have diabetes without even knowing it. This is of great concern because diabetes is a chronic disease that can damage the heart, kidneys, and feet. As such, it is important to take certain measures such as having blood glucose, lipids, and blood pressure checked at regularly. This can greatly assist in the early detection of diabetes and/or complications resulting from diabetes.

The intent of this Action Plan and its accompanying Toolkit is to provide and inform Aboriginal women of measures and best practices to increase awareness and promote the prevention of type 2 diabetes. Diabetes can be prevented; it can also be discovered early and managed effectively.



The NWAC Diabetes Action Plan and Toolkit has been developed by Aboriginal women over several years, and has been made possible through the Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative.

### **NWAC Diabetes Action Plan: Goals**

- 1. Increase awareness and knowledge among Aboriginal women in Canada about type 2 diabetes, the risk factors and complications associated with the disease, and specific lifestyle changes that can prevent the onset of the disease.
- 2. Create awareness and knowledge of ways to prevent complications early among Aboriginal women who have diabetes.

# **NWAC Diabetes Action Plan: Key Elements**

Aboriginal women play a primary role in maintaining the health and wellbeing of family and community; they are the life givers, main care-givers, educators and communicators within communities. Aboriginal women also have significant influence as role models. The key elements of the Action Plan acknowledges, respects, and empowers Aboriginal women in making positive change.

The three key elements to the Action Plan: Prevention, Partnerships and Cultural Approach

#### A. Prevention

The Action Plan is prevention-oriented and is designed to decrease the prevalence of diabetes among Aboriginal women by including, but not limited to, the promotion of healthy lifestyles, improving nutritional status and physical fitness. Health promotion and reducing risk factors related to diabetes can be achieved through individual and community-wide efforts.

#### **B.** Partnerships

The development of partnerships with all stakeholders at all levels is a critical component of making the Plan successful. Prevention and control of type 2 diabetes requires collaborative efforts by community, government and non-governmental organizations alike. NWAC, as a national organization with regional and local affiliates can play a key role in aligning these efforts. Aboriginal women play an instrumental in making changes in the home and in the community.

#### **C.** Cultural Approach

NWAC has incorporated a holistic approach to the Action Plan that reflects a traditional approach to health and wellness. With respect to the diversity of Aboriginal cultures and languages, it is recognized that expressions of holistic approaches will differ slightly from region to region. The Action Plan embraces a holistic approach for the prevention of diabetes that can be adapted.



## NWAC Diabetes Action Plan: Model to Raise Awareness and Knowledge of Diabetes

The intent of the model is to holistically and strategically guide First Nations, Inuit and Métis women:

- 1. in the prevention and early detection of diabetes.
- 2. who have diabetes to prevent further complications as result of having diabetes.



### **NWAC Diabetes Action Plan & Model: Key Messages and Action Items**

The messages found under each of the quadrants (physical, emotional, environmental, and spiritual) are intended to guide Aboriginal women in adopting specific actions to prevent and/or control diabetes. In no way are they intended to replace the advice and instructional care provided by your Health Care Professional.

#### NWAC Diabetes Action Plan: Model to Raise Awareness and Knowledge of Diabetes

### **Physical:** Key Messages and Action Items

#### First Nations, Inuit and Métis women with diabetes key message

#### Diabetes can be managed effectively!

- Doing physical activity for 30 minutes a day helps control blood sugars, helps maintain a healthy body weight, lowers cholesterol, raises HDL (good cholesterol), and lowers blood pressure;
- Take medication as prescribed;
- Check blood sugars regularly;
- Keep blood sugars within target range as advised by a physician. Keep your blood sugar levels as close to normal as possible to help to prevent complications;
- Know your body and listen for signs of high and low blood sugars.

#### First Nations, Inuit and Métis Women without diabetes key message:

#### *Type 2 diabetes can be prevented!*

- Request your physician check your blood glucose, blood pressure, and lipids once a year;
- Consider lifestyle changes necessary to prevent diabetes. These may include:
- Manage your weight by eating healthy, balanced meals;
- Get regular physical activity / exercise
- Learn to manage your stress because it can cause your blood sugar to rise
- Lose weight if you are overweight

NWAC Diabetes Action Plan: Model to Raise Awareness and Knowledge of Diabetes

# **Emotional:** Key Messages and Action Items

#### First Nations, Inuit and Métis women with diabetes key message:

#### Diabetes can be discovered early and managed effectively!

Know and understand the complications of diabetes and learn what you can do to avoid complications. This includes having examinations and tests. Some of these are listed:

- Visit your doctor every 3 to 6 months to have your blood sugars and blood pressure checked. Also have your feet examined and tested for feeling.
- Visit your dentist every 6 months
- Have an eye exam every year
- Cholesterol (LDH and HDL) and triglyceride test
- Urine test for protein (microalbuminuria dipstick test) and for kidney changes
- Blood glucose to test accuracy of glucometer
- Electrocardiogram (EKG)
- Exercise EKG before beginning vigorous exercise
- Ankle-brachial index (ABI) to test for arterial disease
- Electromyogram (EMG) if suspect for diabetic neuropathy

- Educate yourself about diabetes. Know the signs for high and low blood sugar. Know what you need to do to address both of these conditions.
- Learn about healthy eating.
- Look after yourself emotionally. Talk to the community health representative, public health nurse, or nurse practitioner about your fears.
- Find a support group. Talk about what works for you in managing your diabetes and any difficulties you may have.
- Have courage in living with diabetes and take control of your disease, don't let the disease control you.
- Find out the services available in your area that can help you live with diabetes.

NWAC Diabetes Action Plan: Model to Raise Awareness and Knowledge of Diabetes

# Emotional: Key Messages & Action Items

#### First Nations, Inuit and Métis women with diabetes key message:

Members of your family are also at risk for developing diabetes.

- Let them know about this.
- Educate your family about diabetes.
- Look to your family for help in managing your diabetes.

#### First Nations, Inuit and Métis Women without diabetes key message:

#### Respect and listen to your body.

- Learn about the signs and symptoms of diabetes type 2 and gestational diabetes.
- Aboriginal people, a high risk group for developing Diabetes Type 2, are often first diagnosed when complications appear such as a heart attack, or stroke. Report any new symptom such as pain or discomfort in the back, usually along the bra line, chest pain, numbness or shooting pain in your hands or feet.

#### NWAC Diabetes Action Plan: Model to Raise Awareness and Knowledge of Diabetes

### Environmental: Key Messages & Action Items

#### Key Messages for <u>ALL</u> First Nations, Inuit and Métis women

Diabetes is a common condition among First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Diabetes is a common condition among other groups of people. The rate of Diabetes is rising considerably all over the world.

## First Nations, Inuit and Métis Women with Diabetes:

- You are not alone, if you have diabetes.
- You are a role model to others in your family and community

### First Nations, Inuit and Métis Women without Diabetes:

- By virtue of simply being Aboriginal, you are at higher risk for developing Type 2 diabetes.
- You are also at higher risk if you have an immediate family member who has diabetes.
- All of the following will increase your risk for developing Type 2 diabetes. They are: little or no exercise, high levels of stress, eating foods that are high in sugar and high in fat, and smoking

Remember: By living a healthy lifestyle you are a role model for your children. Teach your children about making healthy food choices and being physically active so, it becomes a way of life for them.



#### Key Message for <u>ALL</u> First Nations, Inuit and Métis women:

#### Lead a healthy lifestyle!

- Aboriginal cultures look at healthy living holistically. Among many First Nations there is an understanding of the linkages between mind, body and spirit.
- Medical professionals (doctors and nurses) may have a different outlook than your own. They can better help you if you let them know what your needs are.
- Elders, spiritual people and healers can be important sources of support and information. Speak with them.



### NWAC Diabetes Action Plan: Making It Your Own!

This supplement was created to assist the individual person in implementing the NWAC Diabetes Action Plan. As each person's health care needs and situations vary, the following is designed to guide the individual in identifying what their personal action plan. Developing and designing an Action Plan requires careful thought to ensure that it supports the individual person's lifestyle, and evolves as that person moves through life. Diabetes is a disease that requires constant care and monitoring. A personal plan will help in maintaining good overall health status and diabetic care.

#### **Three steps to Your Diabetes Action Plan:**

- Personal Plan: Knowing yourself, your lifestyle patterns, needs and wants
- Strategic Approach: Knowing your medical needs and support sources
- Holistic Application: Knowing yourself and how to include this in your action plan

Owholistic Application Approach

Personal Action Plan

#### Personal Action Plan

As with all things in life, having a personal plan helps to ensure that we meet our goals, ambitions, needs and wants.

Naturally, a personal plan should revolve around our lifestyle patterns, and yet be flexible enough to incorporate changes in lifestyle patterns as you progress in your action plan.

For example, a person may normally walk her dog once during the day, but after developing her action plan may wish to incorporate a weekly nature walk with her children, thereby extending her walking and adding a holistic approach by taking advantage of the outing to talk about medicinal uses of plants or teach her children about the animals and ecosystems of the forest.

The personal plan is all about the individual. It is a plan for life that respects the individual, grows with them and ensures a health-balanced approach to diabetes management. This plan does not need to be complicated and should in fact be simple enough to explain in a few short sentences. It should be based in reality and be developed in part with the assistance of your health care provider.

# **NWAC Diabetes Action Plan:** *Personalizing Your Plan!*

How do we start designing a personal action plan to address our diabetic needs?

Start listing your likes and dislikes in one column. In a second column list how this effects or impacts upon your diabetes. In a third column, list what action, if any can be implemented to address the item. Ask your health care professional for assistance if necessary.

Likes & Dislikes	Effects / Impacts on Diabetes	Actions: Things I Can Do!
I enjoy nature, and like taking walks in the bush. But, I don't like going out in bad weather, such as storms, heavy wind, rain, and snow.	Taking walks is a good form of exercise. Bad weather is an ex- cuse.	<ul> <li>I can start a "Nature Walk" for my family, and inspire my community to do the same.</li> <li>I can look at nature and re- flect on its natural beauty in all weather conditions</li> </ul>
I enjoy eating a wide vari- ety of foods, and dislike dieting.	Many times I overeat, or eat food that I should not. This causes me to feel less energetic and in- creases my blood sugar levels	<ul> <li>I can modify my food intake by learning and using the "Plate Method"</li> <li>I will not "diet"</li> </ul>

Examine these columns and think about your lifestyle, both past and present. On another piece of paper, list the past in one column and the present in a second column (ensure that related topics are beside each other). In a third column, list a potential lifestyle change that you may wish to work towards, if applicable.

Past	Present	Future
When I was younger I spent a lot of time on the land: walking, hiking, camp- ing, fishing, and hunting.	Today I am not on the land that often, I spend most of my time watching TV, sewing and doing jigsaw puzzles.	<ul> <li>I am committed to myself and my family and will start doing the things that I enjoy and make me happy</li> <li>I can teach my children and grandchildren how to enjoy being on the land.</li> </ul>

# **NWAC Diabetes Action Plan:** *Applying A Strategic Approach!*

Many strategists will agree that a plan without an appropriate approach is like a car without the gas. Naturally, your action plan requires a strategic approach, after all what good is the car without gas?

Now, the thought of incorporating a strategic approach may sound intimidating, but it's fairly straight forward – in fact, we all do it on a daily basis. So, what is a strategic approach? It is the way in which we go about educating ourselves in order to make an informed decision. For example, before going out for the day, we check the weather report and dress accordingly; remembering to take our umbrella's if there is a 60% chance of showers. Simply put, a strategic approach is the information and the support systems, the medical care, and the community infrastructure you need to make an informed decision.

#### How to develop a strategic approach to your personal action plan?

Often our personal needs are overlooked as we proceed through life, and though we know we should be paying attention to them sometimes we don't. Or, sometimes, when we want to, we are unsure of what exactly they are! This section helps you identify these needs and put them into action. As diverse as we are, so are our needs.

To address this, we have separated them into four areas:

- Informational Needs: What information and resources do you need? Where will you find this, and how will you use it?
- Support Needs
- Medical Needs
- Community Infrastructure Needs



# **NWAC Diabetes Action Plan:** *Applying a Strategic Approach!*

#### **Informational Needs**

Identify your information and resource needs, ask yourself what you really need to know about. Keep in mind that we often disregard information that does not immediately apply to us, but remember that diabetes is a chronic disease that can result in complications. So, if there is something about diabetes you should know about, but seem to not "need" right now, list these anyways.

List these needs in one column, in the second column list where and how you can gain access to this information, in the third column list how you will use this information. Ask your health care professional for assistance, they can provide this information or direct you to sources.

My Informational Needs		
My Information Needs	Where & How to Get This Information	How I Will Use This Information
I need to know about foot care	Once a month, there is a free Diabetes Foot clinic at the local Health Centre.	I will go to the next foot clinic and learn about foot care.
I know nothing about diabe- tes and the eyes	My doctor can give me this infor- mation.	I will have my eyes examined at my next appointment.

#### **Support Needs**

Identify your support needs. Be honest with yourself, and include supports for your family and friends. List in one column what your support needs are. In the second column list how this support need can be addressed. In a third column list what your plan to meet this need. Ask for assistance, your family and friends would gladly provide feedback and may have been waiting for you to ask them. Remember, our support needs can vary depending on our circumstances and will change often, keep this in mind and update as required.

My Support Needs		
My Support Needs	How This Need Can Be Met	What I Will Do!
I get lonely easily, I need company when I go walking	My family and friends can keep me company on my walks. Maybe I can start dog walking.	I can form a walking-club and make it a social activity! Start a dog walking enterprise!

# **NWAC Diabetes Action Plan:** *Applying A Strategic Approach!*

#### **Medical Care Needs**

Identify your medical care needs, listing as much as possible. Your health care professional is your best source of advice and direction for this part of your Personal Diabetes Action Plan. In one column list your medical care needs, in the second column list your doctor's advice. In a third column, list how what you will do to meet your health care needs. Try to make this fun, think of interesting ways to turn medical needs into positive adventures! Enlist the advice of family and friends, and encourage them to make the same lifestyle changes!

My Medical Needs		
My Medical Needs	Medical Advice	What I Will Do!
My diabetes is controlled by my lifestyle, through diet and exercise	Use the "Plate Method" to control my daily food intake Exercise regularly, take daily walks	Learn about the Plate Method. Learn about food selection to control my blood sugars. Take a 20 minute walk every day.

#### **Community Needs**

Identify community needs. This can range from programming, policy to infrastructure. Be creative in your thinking as you prepare your strategic approach for this section. Already you may have identified what community resources are available and what your need are, list these needs in one column. In a second column, identify the source and address for fulfilling this need. In a third column, identify your goals to implement community infrastructure needs into your personal action plan.

My Community Needs		
Community Needs	Where to Find Information	Goals to Implement Community Needs
My community needs places for recreation and outdoor activity. This will improve our fitness level and the overall health of our mem- bers.	The neighboring community has a recreation centre and program- ming - this is a good source of information.	Speak with Chief and Council about making this a priority. Rally community support. Identify what types of activities are most suited to the space available - identify new spaces! Start a program!

# **NWAC Diabetes Action Plan:** *Now the Holistic Application!*

#### **Holistic Application**

The final stage to designing your Diabetes Action Plan is a very personal one, and will vary from person to person. What works for one individual may not for another. Look back at the sections on your personal action plan and strategic approach. At this point, you may be asking, "now what?" and "what is a holistic application?"

To better answer these questions, let us continue with the car analogy. Imagine the action plan as a car (the body) and the strategic approach as the gas (the energy). We wish to move forward, in this case, to better address diabetes and maintain good health. To put this in perspective, we now have the car and the gas, yet are lacking the "map". The map referring to the element that gets us from here to there, it is the source of strength that is us, the guide. In this action plan, we call it the holistic application.

During the development of the NWAC diabetes action plan, Aboriginal women from across Canada identified the need to include cultural and tradition to guide Aboriginal women. For some this includes the application of the medicine wheel teachings, for others it is religion, and still for others it is something else.

Regardless of the "type" of holistic application, it has been identified as important to the overall health status of Aboriginal women dealing with this debilitating disease. Remember, there is no right or wrong way to do this, what is important is capturing your beliefs, mind process, and what is most important to you. It is the part that makes us who we are, and takes us to where we need to be.

Similar to the previous exercises, list in three columns. The first column should list the topic, the second column should list how this topic relates to your action plan and strategic approach, and the third column should list how you will implement or include this topic. Several examples are provided to help you.

Holistic Application		
Topic	How This Relates To My Plan	How To Implement!
I want to learn about the Medicine Wheel - and how to balance all areas of my life	Knowing who I am inside and out will help me make better deci- sions. Being in balance will help me identify when I need to make change or ask for assistance.	I will ask the Elders about the Medicine Wheel and about finding balance. Then I will apply this to my life, and will share these teachings with my children.
I want to learn about "relaxation" and how to calm myself and find peace	This will reduce my stress making me much happier and more willing to make positive lifestyle changes	I will ask the Elders about tradi- tional "relaxation" exercises and make this a part of my daily rou- tine.
Tine.		

## Your Personalized Diabetes Action Plan: *Reviewing & Evaluating!*



Now that you've spent some time developing a Personalized Diabetes Action Plan, it's time to review and evaluate what you have written making sure that it reflects who you are. Add, edit, and modify your Personalized Diabetes Action Plan as you see fit. Refer to your action plan daily.

Remember that your Personalized Diabetes Action Plan will constantly evolve, changing as you change, adapting as you adapt, and growing as you grow. It is an entity that is part of you.

Your Personal Diabetes Action Plan is your framework for healthy living. It is also a healthy living framework that family and friends can easily follow and incorporate without drastic changes. It is one that can enrich your life and the lives of family and friends. Diabetes is not a life sentence; it is an opportunity for positive change.

# **MY NOTES**



#### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

This toolkit was designed to supplement information and resources related to diabetes prevention, awareness and management. It was <u>not</u> designed to replace the valuable insight, care and treatment provided by your Health Care Professional.

**Always consult your Health Care Professional** 

Native Women's Association of Canada

Diabetes Self-Management Toolkit for Aboriginal Women

# My Personalized Diabetes Action Plan



Native Women's Association of Canada

You may want to photocopy these pages.



#### **Personalizing Your Plan!**

Step 1: Start listing your likes and dislike's in one column. In a second column list how this effects or impacts upon your diabetes. In a third column, list what action, if any can be implemented to address the item. Ask your health care professional for assistance if necessary.

Likes & Dislikes	Effects / Impacts on Diabetes	Actions: Things I Can Do!



#### **Personalizing Your Plan!**

Step 2: Examine these columns and think about your lifestyle, both past and present. List the past in one column and the present in a second column (ensure that related topics are beside each other). In a third column, list a potential lifestyle change that you may wish to work towards, if applicable.

Past	Present	Future



### My Informational Needs

My Information Needs	Where & How to Get This Information	How I Will Use This Information



### My Support Needs

My Support Needs	How This Need Can Be Met	What I Will Do!



### My Medical Needs

My Medical Needs	Medical Advice	What I Will Do!



### My Community Needs

My Community Needs	Where to Find Information	Goals to Implement Community Needs



### **Holistic Application!**

### **My Holistic Application**

Торіс	How This Relates To My Plan	How To Implement!



### Extra Page


# **MY NOTES**





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Native Women's Association of Canada

Diabetes Self-Management Toolkit for Aboriginal Women

# Diabetes Information and Resources



Native Women's Association of Canada
# **Diabetes Information & Resources**

This booklet contains diabetes information and resources, and has been prepared for Aboriginal women, their families and communities.





**Important:** 

This booklet is not meant to replace the valuable insight, care and treatment provided by your Health Care professional. Always consult your Health Care professional for medical advice and treatment options.

# **Types of Diabetes**

*Type 1: Where your body makes little or no insulin* 

*Type 2: Where your body makes insulin but cannot use it properly.* 

### Gestational Diabetes:

Where the body is not able to properly use insulin during pregnancy. This type of diabetes goes away after the baby is born. Both mother and child are at increased risk of type 2 diabetes later in life.

Glucose	Pancreas	Insulin
The body requires a certain amount of sugar (glucose) in the blood. Too much causes damage to the body proteins. Too little prevents body cells from work- ing properly. The amount of glu- cose is controlled by insulin.	Insulin comes from the pancreas, a gland lying just below the stomach. Insulin goes straight through the blood stream to the tissues where it acts.	The starch in food is broken down into glucose. This glucose makes the pancreas release insu- lin. The insulin allows tissues to use the glucose.

Definitions:

# Diabetes: What Is It?

Diabetes is a lifelong condition where either your body doesn't produce enough insulin, or your body is unable to use the insulin it produces.

### Diabetes is a disorder that affects the way your body uses food for energy.

Diabetes is a disease in which the blood glucose levels are above normal.

The pancreas, an organ near your stomach makes a hormone called insulin that helps glucose get into the cells of our body.

When you have diabetes, your body either does not make enough insulin or cannot use the insulin it makes. This causes sugar to build up in your blood

#### What happens in my body when I eat food?

Sugar is a natural substance found in many foods we eat. The sugar you eat is digested and broken down to glucose. The glucose then circulates in your blood before it enters your cells to be used as energy, insulin helps move the glucose into your cells. Your pancreas will adjust the amount of insulin it produces based on the level of glucose in your blood.

If you have diabetes, this process is interrupted, and blood sugar levels become too high.

#### Why is insulin important?

Your body needs insulin to change the sugar from food into energy. When you don't have enough insulin, the sugar stays in your blood so that your "blood sugar level" gets too high.

#### What's wrong with having a high blood sugar level?

Over long periods of time, high blood sugar levels can cause complications, such as damage to blood vessels, kidneys, and difficulties with circulation.





Stomach

# Diabetes Signs & Symptoms

Knowing more about diabetes signs and symptoms will help you and your family. Keep in mind that diabetes symptoms often are different from person to person.

### **Diabetes Signs & Symptoms:**

Diabetes can often go undiagnosed because the symptoms can seem harmless and often times, normal.

Many of the signs of Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes are similar.

In both, there is too much glucose in the blood and not enough in the cells of your body. High glucose levels in Type I are due to a lack of insulin because the insulin producing cells have been destroyed. Type 2 diabetes occurs when the body's cells become resistant to insulin that is being produced.

### **Type 1 Symptoms Include:**

- Frequent urination
- Excessive thirst
- Extreme hunger
- Unusual weight loss
- Increased fatigue
- Irritability
- Blurry vision

#### **Type 2 Symptoms Include:**

- Blurry vision
- Cuts or sores that are slow to heal
- Itchy skin, yeast infections
- Increased thirst
- Dry mouth
- Need to urinate often
- Leg pain

Did You Know?

Every 8 minutes in Canada someone is diagnosed with diabetes,

5% of Canadians have diabetes, this number is expected to double by 2016

The most common form of diabetes is Type 2 Diabetes.

In the Canadian population, 90% have Type 2 diabetes, and 10% have Type 1 diabetes.

40% of Diabetics will develop long term complications

Aboriginal people are more likely to have Type 2 diabetes.

The rate of diabetes for Aboriginal people is 3 to 8% higher than the general population.

*1 in 4 Aboriginal people living on reserve has Type 2 diabetes* 

The rate of Type 2 diabetes in Aboriginal women is almost twice that of Aboriginal men

# Blood Glucose Highs & Lows

Diabetes awareness must also include knowing about the effects that high and low blood sugar levels have on a person with diabetes.



It's just as important to recognize the effects of high and low blood sugar levels as it is to know about diabetes signs and symptoms. Often times, it is having this information that helps us seek help for ourselves or others with diabetes. Knowing when you or a friend is experiencing problems can be critical.

The chart below lists some signs and symptoms to assist in recognizing if a person has indications of high blood sugar level (called hyperglycemia) or low blood sugar level (called hypoglycemia).

High Blood Sugar (Hyperglycemia)	Low Blood Sugar (Hypoglycemia)
<ul><li>This often happens when the person with diabetes:</li><li>Has eaten too much,</li><li>Has too little insulin in his or her body,</li><li>Is under a lot of stress.</li></ul>	<ul> <li>This often happens when the person with diabetes:</li> <li>Has not eaten very much,</li> <li>Has too much insulin in his or her body,</li> <li>Has exercised beyond his or her limits.</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Also be alert for these signs:</li> <li>Frequent need to urinate</li> <li>Drowsiness</li> <li>Nausea</li> <li>Extreme thirst or hunger</li> <li>Blurred vision</li> </ul> The most common symptom of high blood sugar levels, is no reaction at all. This is why there are many people who remain undiagnosed.	<ul> <li>Also be alert for these signs:</li> <li>Shaking</li> <li>Fast heartbeat</li> <li>Sweating</li> <li>Anxiety</li> <li>Dizziness</li> <li>Extreme hunger</li> <li>Weakness and tiredness</li> <li>Irritability</li> <li>Nervousness</li> <li>Confusion</li> <li>In severe cases, coma and death</li> </ul>

# **Diabetes Complications**

Most people with diabetes can look forward to a long, healthy life if they take simple measures to avoid complications.

There is no reason to get scared if you have been diagnosed with diabetes.

# Diabetes treatment rests on glycemic (blood glucose) control, which is achieved through diet, exercise, and medications if necessary.

Uncontrolled diabetes can lead to sever damage to blood vessels and nerves, leaving diabetics at increased risk for heart attacks, strokes, kidney failure, blindness, and gangrene of the legs and feet, leading to amputation, and the impaired functioning of many of the body's organs and systems. The image to the right points out where complications from diabetes can affect your health.

Talk to your Health Care Professional about how best to prevent complications arising from diabetes.

### Reducing the risk of diabetes complications can be

achieved by:

- not smoking;
- being physically active;
- eating a healthy, balanced diet;
- controlling blood glucose levels;
- maintaining a healthy cholesterol level;
- controlling blood pressure;
- taking care of the feet by regularly examining toes and skin;
- regular dentist visits;
- having regular eye examinations by an eye care specialist; and
- having regular kidney function testing.



# A healthy lifestyle and a healthy weight can:

- *Help you prevent or manage diabetes*
- Improve blood glucose, blood pressure and blood lipids (fats)
- *Reduce the risk of complications such as heart disease and stroke*
- Improve general well-being and energy levels

# **Diabetes:** Complications

Uncontrolled diabetes can lead to severe damage to blood vessels and nerves, leaving diabetes at high risk for complications.

**NERVE DAMAGE** - Also known as diabetic neuropathy (peripheral neuropathy), often affects the feet and legs. Nerve damage makes it difficult for your nerves to function normally. This means that it is harder for your nerves to send messages to your brain and other body parts. Neuropathy often causes a loss of feeling in parts of your body, or a painful tingling-type feeling. This can lead to serious complications, and on the extreme end, amputation of a limb. Check your feet every day and make sure your doctor checks them annually. See your doctor immediately if you notice any swelling and redness and feel warmth in your foot.

**EYE PROBLEMS** - Also known as diabetic retinopathy is damage and weakening of the small blood vessels in the retina. The retina is the part of the eye that is sensitive to light and helps you see. When the blood vessels are weak they can leak fluid which causes swelling in the eye that blurs your vision. Retinopathy can cause blindness, this occurs when the retina separates away from the back of the eye. People with diabetes should have an eye exam annually.

**KIDNEY DAMAGE** - Also known as nephropathy, this is damage of the blood vessels in your kidneys so that they can't filter out waste. Some people with nephropathy may require dialysis or kidney transplant. Your doctor will assess your kidneys yearly.

**HEART DISEASE & STROKE** - People with diabetes are at greater risk for heart disease and stroke, this increases for people who smoke, have high blood pressure, have a family history of heart disease or are overweight. Heart disease is easy to treat if caught early, see your doctor regularly and have him/her test you for early signs of heart disease or stroke.



# Report any of these symptoms to your Doctor right away:

- Vision problems, such as blurry or spotted vision or flashes.
- Unexplained, overwhelming tiredness.
- Leg discomfort with walking.
- Numbness or tingling in your hands or feet.
- Chest pain that comes with exertion.
- Cuts or sores that stay infected or take a long time to heal.
- Constant headaches.
- Even without these symptoms, be sure to call your doctor any time you just don't feel "right."

# Diabetes & Aboriginal People

Expert opinion suggests that diabetes continues to be an ever increasing health problem with the Aboriginal population in Canada. Projections indicate the onset of a pandemic.



Diabetes rates among Aboriginal people are three to five times higher than the general population.

Many experts agree, diabetes is an epidemic in Aboriginal communities, where one in four people living on reserve has Type 2 diabetes compared to one in ten in the general public. According to the First Nation Regional Health Survey, 19.7% of First Nation adults living on-reserve have diabetes.

Many Aboriginal people consider diabetes an example of a "white man's illness," a new, introduced disease similar to smallpox and tuberculosis in the past. It is a disease that, seen through the eyes of many Aboriginal people is viewed as an outcome, a symptom, an effect, and a result of the loss of culture and traditional practices, access to lands and territories, holistic health perspectives and belief systems. The adoption of modern foods and the decline of hunting and fishing, combined with socio-economic factors are widely believed to be the underlying causes of the epidemic.

The long term effects of diabetes are detrimental in terms of quality of life, cost to the heath care system and negatively impact the individual, family, community and society as a whole. The health of Aboriginal people is not only sub-standard in comparison to Canadians, but is intricately related to poverty and unemployment, family violence, poor housing and living conditions, and the high cost of quality food in remote communities.

It has been suggested that poor integration of services result in Aboriginal people receiving a lower level of care in comparison to that received by the general population. Examples include the Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Plan where new diabetes medications, devices or supplies are not always made available, in addition, Métis and Non-status First Nation people do not have access to NIHB. The Health Council of Canada report *"Rekindling Reform: Health Care Renewal in Canada 2003-2008"* highlighted ongoing gaps in services due to the complex structure of health care funding and delivery for Aboriginal people.

Unfortunately, due to this complex structure, Aboriginal people find themselves navigating three systems of government (First Nations, Provincial, and Federal) to attain adequate health care services. This structure poses a problem for Aboriginal people and in particular Aboriginal women from equitably accessing the health care services they need.

# Diabetes & Aboriginal Women

The prevalence and severity of diabetes will hamper efforts to improve the overall health status of Aboriginal people to a level comparable to the rest of the population.

Studies have shown that Aboriginal women are not only at greater risk of developing and suffering from type 2 diabetes, but the problem of developing gestational diabetes is unique to women.

As well, now as in the past Aboriginal women are the foundation of families and communities. Aboriginal women have unique needs, and are the most vulnerable. They are heads of families, primary breadwinners and responsible for providing care for the family. This triple role results in stress. Their health is sub-standard compared to non-Aboriginal women and connected to poverty and unemployment, family violence and poor housing and living conditions, high cost of quality food in remote communities and a lack of clean water. They are also at greater risk of living in poverty.

Traditionally, it was the women who worked to ensure that the cultural teachings and unique heritage of Aboriginal people survived from one generation to the next. This fundamental role reinforces that Aboriginal women are our greatest catalyst for change within Aboriginal communities.

Statistics indicate that diabetes is taking a very heavy toll on Aboriginal women in Canada. Given this, greater emphasis on diabetes programming for Aboriginal women must be made a priority by all three systems of government. In addition, strategies aimed at addressing the diabetes epidemic among the Aboriginal population must not be tackled in isolation, and should include cross-pollination across a broad range of programming, that takes into account the social determinants of health.



Aboriginal women experience higher rates of diabetes (13%) compared to Aboriginal men (8%).

18% of expecting Aboriginal women are diagnosed with gestational diabetes increasing the likelihood that mother and child will experience diabetes at some stage in their life.

Aboriginal children as young as five years of age are being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.

These statistics pose grave concerns regarding the health of Aboriginal people today and in the future.

# Diabetes Resources & Information

The following pages contain a small collection of diabetes resources and Information. Remember to always consult with your Health Care Provider in the management and treatment options of diabetes.

National Aboriginal Diabetes Association (NADA) B1-90 Garry Street Winnipeg, MB R3C 4J4 www.nada.ca

Toll-free 1-877-232-NADA (6232)

Health Canada www.hc.sc.gc.ca

Canadian Diabetes Association 1400-522 University Ave Toronto, ON M5G 2R5

Reception desk: 416-363-3373 Toll free phone number: 1-800-BANTING (226-8464)

Email: info@diabetes.ca

Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/diseases-maladies/ diabete/index-eng.php#a7

Canadian Diabetes Strategy http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cd-mc/diabetes-diabete/ diabetes\_strategy-diabete\_strategie-eng.php

Health Canada—Non Insured Health Benefits for First Nation and Inuit http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/nihb-ssna/indexeng.php?wt=rf1



Aboriginal Portal Canada: Diabetes & Chronic Disease http://www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca/acp/site.nsf/eng/ ao26136.html

Healthy Canadians http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/index-eng.php



Website Links:

CDA: Healthy Living Series http://www.diabetes.ca/diabetes-and-you/healthylivingseries/

Diabetes Dictionary http://www.diabetes.ca/diabetes-and-you/what/dictionary/

Canada's Food Guide http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide: First Nations, Inuit and Métis http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/pubs/fnim-pnim/index-eng.php

Food Labeling http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/pubs/label-etiquet/index-eng.php

Food Safety http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/pubs/securit/index-eng.php

Eat Well and Be Active: Educational Toolkit—FREE www.health.gc.ca/eatwell-beactive

Healthy Living http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/index-eng.php

Physical Activity http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/physactiv/index-eng.php

### Benefits to Physical Activity PHAC Website: http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/hl-mvs/pa-ap/index-eng.php

# My Website List:

# Diabetes Resources & Information



#### **Diabetes Recipes—Online Website Sources:**

Canadian Diabetes Association—Recipes http://www.diabetes.ca/diabetes-and-you/nutrition/ recipes/

Diabetes-Recipes.com http://www.diabetic-recipes.com/

Diabetic Gourmet Magazine http://diabeticgourmet.com/recipes/

Diabetes Recipes at allrecipes.com http://allrecipes.com//Recipes/healthy-cooking/ diabetic/Main.aspx

Company's Coming—Diabetic Recipes http://www.companyscoming.com/diabetic-recipes/ dLife—Diabetic Recipes Finder http://www.dlife.com/diabetic-recipes/

Diabetes Daily—Diabetes Recipes http://www.diabetesdaily.com/recipes/

The Glycemic Index http://www.glycemicindex.com/

The Glycemic Load http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glycemic\_load

#### **General Interest—Diabetes Related Websites:**

dLife: The leading online diabetes resource. dLife is the place for all aspects of your diabetes lifestyle, offering information and community support for type 1 and type 2 diabetics and caregivers. http://www.dlife.com/

Diabetic live: Diabetic live is a respected diabetes news publication that was founded in August 2006. http://www.diabeticlive.com/

Daily Diabetic: Links to latest diabetes news and articles online, blog style. http://www.daily-diabetic.com/



#### **Interesting Resources on Diabetes**

Diabetes in Aboriginal Communities

http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/dic-dac2/ ☑ english/49chap6-eng.php ☑

A First Nations Diabetes Report Card (AFN, 2006) http://www.nada.ca/wp-content/uploads/504.pdf

National Diabetes Surveillance System—Aboriginal ☑Component

http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ccdpc-cpcmc/ndss-snsd/ english/aboriginal\_diabetes/index-eng.php

#### **Diabetes Research**

 An Economic Tsunami: The Cost of Diabetes in Can ☑

 ada
 ☑

 http://www.diabetes.ca/economicreport/
 ☑

Diabetes Information Source, Canada

http://www.diabetes.ca/get-involved/helping-you/ advocacy/disc/

**Diabetes Books** (Available in most libraries, bookstores, or for purchase online)

- Complete Canadian Diabetes Cookbook
- ☑ Canada's Diabetes Meals for Good Health
- ☑ The Canadian Type 2 Diabetes Sourcebook
- ☑ Canadian Diabetes Association, Living With Diabetes
- ☑ The Diabetic Gourmet Cookbook
  - Canada's 150 Best Diabetes Desserts
- Diabetes for Canadians for Dummies
- ☑ Diabetes Cookbook for Canadians For Dummies
- ☑ Canada's Everyday Diabetes Choice Recipes
- ☑ The G.I Diet Diabetes Clinic
- ☑ Cooking Up Fun for Kids with Diabetes
- ☑ Diabetes Burnout: Preventing It, Surviving It, Finding Inner Peace
  - Exercise Your Way To Health Diabetes
- ☑ Textbook of Diabetes and Pregnancy
- ☑ Canadian Diabetes Slow Cooker Recipes
- ☑ Type II Diabetes & Your Health
- ☑ And many more...



# **NOTES:**





### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

This toolkit was designed to supplement information and resources related to diabetes prevention, awareness and management. It was <u>not</u> designed to replace the valuable insight, care and treatment provided by your Health Care Professional.

**Always consult your Health Care Professional** 

Native Women's Association of Canada

# Diabetes Self-Management Toolkit for Aboriginal Women

# **Healthy Living**



Native Women's Association of Canada

# Healthy Living

It is said, that as we grow we change like the seasons, moving though our life cycle living and learning and expanding our understanding of life. This we share with ourselves and with others so that our learning continues into the generations to come.

This booklet has been developed to provide you with ideas on healthy living. You'll find some practical ideas and suggestions as well as information that may help you make better use of resources in your community. Above all, and across all spectrums is the wisdom within ourselves that acknowledges the need to enjoy life and live it well. This can mean different things to different people, yet one element remains consistent, and that is to have fun doing what you are doing.

In that spirit, as you read this booklet, think of ways to make everyday activities fun. A chore may seem like just a chore if it is viewed that way, but that same chore can be viewed in many ways. For example, yard care and maintenance serves many functions, and the most obvious is the visual nature of a nice looking lawn, but consider other points such as its impact on the neighbourhood, providing a safe and clean play area for your children or grandchildren, the supply of fresh herbs, fruits and vegetables that can come from the garden, as well as the health benefits to yourself and those who assist you.

The first part of this booklet looks at more practical ways to healthy living in terms of food resources, the second part of the booklet focuses on active living and traditional activities. An attempt was made to balance the content with the space available, while providing enough information to assist you.

As you go through this booklet, you may think of many ways to inspire healthy living for both yourself and family as well as community. Several pages have been made available for you to record your thoughts, notes and idea's.



"Honour the sun, that it may bless you to come another day..."

*Quote from the book, "Honour The Sun" by Ojibwa author Ruby Slipperjack.* 

# Medicine Wheel

The Medicine Wheel is an ancient symbol of the Aboriginal peoples of North America and remains with us today.

No discussion on healthy living can begin without first bringing into view the traditions and culture of the Aboriginal people of North America. The most common and most accepted concept is that of the Medicine Wheel. It is with this understanding that the NWAC incorporated a more holistic approach in the NWAC Diabetes Action Plan and Model.

The Medicine Wheel symbol is an ancient one, the two images on the upper right hand side is the Big Horn Medicine Wheel, located in Big Horn County, Wyoming. It is part of many sites within the area that documents over 7000 years of land usage by the Aboriginal people of the area. Across the northern part of the United States and in southern Canada, over 70 Medicine Wheels have been found.



Today, we are more familiar with the circular symbol to the left, and have incorporated many teachings around it. Some of these teachings focus on the four directions or quadrants which are often identified as: Spiritual, Emotional, Mental, and Physical.

There are variations with the Medicine Wheel symbol and its quadrants along with its many uses and teachings. Each with their own way of doing things in a good way.

The two bottom images depict Medicine Wheels that are more recent, you will note that the Sedona example shows the four quadrants, while the lower image is a combination of the old and new. Many people, even those living in urban settings have created their own Medicine Wheels in their back yards, and as special places within their community gardens, and parks. This may be something to consider for yourself and your community.



Big Horn Medicine Wheel



Sedona Medicine Wheel



Medicine Wheel

# **Community Gardens**

Community gardens can be a great source for healthy inexpensive fruits and vegetables, and exercise while having fun and making new friends in your community.

#### So, what is a community garden?

Simply stated, a community garden is a group of people that come together to garden. There are no hard and fast rules on what shape and size community gardens should be. Some are large, others are small, they can be on the ground, on rooftops, in plots, in raised beds or in planters. Many community gardens are a mix of all these types.

Community gardens can be "communal" where everyone shares the work and harvest, or allow for people to have their own plot. Many community gardens are a combination of both, for example, instead of having individual plots where everyone plants 4 or 5 corn plants, a communal plot may be set up for corn as it is the type of plant that grows best in "blocks".

#### What should be grown in a community garden?

The beauty of community gardens, is its versatility. You are not limited to vegetables, you can grow fruit, herbs, and even flowers. Some communities recognize a need for more natural gardens and will designate space for a butterfly garden, a bird garden or a woodland garden. You can even have a garden of traditional plants, such as sweet grass, sage, and other medicinal plants.

#### What time commitment is needed for a community garden?

In general, each gardener should spend enough time in their garden so that their plot is maintained and as weed free as possible. How much time will depend on the size of the plot, as well as organized communal tasks. Most community gardens hold a couple of group work days every year, for spring and fall clean up and improvement projects like building a seating area. Every community garden is different and will establish rules around participation, maintenance and group work days.



Community Garden Idea

The Three Sisters Garden

See page 9 in the Traditional Foods booklet for information on how to plant your very own Three Sisters garden.

# Starting a Community Garden

#### How can I start a community garden?

First, talk to your friends and neighbors about it. Any group of at least 3 to 5 committed people can build a community garden. They can be part of an organized group or can just be an informal group of friends, neighbors, or relatives.

#### **Community Garden Location**

If you live in an urban area, contact your municipality for information on community gardens, you may be pleasantly surprised that many have established community garden start-up information kits on how to go about selecting a location for your community garden. Ideally, you'll need an agreement to use the land for at least five years, public land such as parks, service centres, schools, apartments, or churches can be good choices. Regardless of the location, the garden should be close to the gardeners who will maintain it.

#### **Making It Happen**

Gardening is not complicated, but it's a good idea to have some experience. Read up on how to start a garden and on the type of plants that will be in your garden. Once your group has a plan, a location and some knowledge of gardening, you will need materials, tools, fertilizer, seeds and/or transplants. Ask around for materials, some community gardens are able to exchange "advertising" services for materials. For example, a plant nursery or hardware store may "trade" materials for advertising on your community garden signage, newsletter, website blog, or community garden social network site (i.e., facebook, twitter).

Once the garden is in place, production is fast. Most garden plots need about an hour of maintenance per week. Plan to spend a few hours for planting crops each season, and at harvest time anticipate spending 1 hour per week reaping the fruits of your labor. Enjoy, have fun, and plan for next year!



# Good Food Box Programs

Eating nutritiously, preserving the environment and staying within a budget is no easy task, but Good Food Box Programs can make it easier to reach those goals!

#### What are Good Food Boxes?

Most people have heard of Food Banks and may have used them, but surprisingly few have heard about Good Food Box programs that are available in many communities. The Good Food Box is a non-profit program for families and individuals who want to purchase high-quality, fresh, local produce at a lower price than grocery stores. Each box usually contains the same mix of food, with the contents changing depending on the season and harvest.

#### **How Food Boxes Work**

Most food box programs operate like large buying clubs with centralized buying and coordination. Twice a month, or weekly, people place orders, usually with a volunteer coordinator. These orders are by the box size and sized according to the number of people per household. These orders are picked up by the people at a neighborhood location, some programs offer home delivery.

#### **Benefits of Food Boxes**

You and your family can enjoy a box filled with fresh, local and in-season produce on a regular basis at drastically reduced prices compared to the local grocery store. Most Good Food Box programs buy local produce which means that you and your family are receiving produce that is locally grown, making your meal plans better for you!

#### **Good Food Box Programs In Your Area:**

Phone your local municipality or go online to your favorite search engine and type: "good food box *your community*" Or Visit: www.foodshare.net/train13.htm

**How to Start A Program In Your Community:** Free PDF Download available at: www.foodshare.net/publications 04.htm



Example of Good Food Box in Ottawa, On.

### \$10.00 Box Contains:

- Potatoes, 5lbs \*
- Onions, cooking, 1lbs \*
- Carrots, 1lbs \*
- Cauliflower, 1 \*
- Pumpkin, 1 \*
- Lettuce, romaine, 1 \*
- Apples, Spartan, 6 \*
- Leeks, 1 \*
- Green Pepper, 1 \*
- Pears, Bartlett, 4
- Banana's, 3
- Pink Grapefruit, 2
- Avocado, 1
- Tomato, 1

Contents may vary depending on season and harvest.

\* = Locally Grown Produce

# Food Banks

In Canada today, there is a growing gap between rich and poor, with the richest 10% of families earning 75 times more than the poorest 10%. Food insecurity and poverty is a real issue that every day people must deal with.

### **Food Banks**

Food banks can differ from community to community, but most will provide a household with a basket of food on a bi-weekly or monthly, as-needed basis. Generally, the amount of food provided will be no more than a few days worth and the nutritional value is low. This is because perishable food items, like fruits, vegetables, fresh meats and dairy, cannot be included.

Most food banks acquire food from individual or corporate donations. You many have noticed that many major grocery shopping chains provide donation bins for your local food bank.

While food banks do provide a very necessary service, they are not a long-term solution. In fact, since the conception of food banks in the 1980s, the problem of food insecurity has more than doubled and more people are trying to access these services. This trend is likely to continue as the gap between rich and poor grows.

Being food secure means that a person can obtain food in a manner that maintains human dignity. Many people who use the services of food bank, despite the provision of food, cannot ever fully absolve food insecurity seeing as the use of a food bank can be very stigmatizing.

### **Food Banks Canada**

This is a national organization that represents the food bank community across Canada. Food Banks Canada's mission is to reduce hunger in Canada by enabling an effective food bank community that addresses the short term need for food and longer term solutions. Visit their website for more information and ways to become active in your community. Website: www.foodbankscanada.ca



## Food Bank Statistics

- 85% of people access food banks nation-wide
- In an average month in 2009, close to 800,000 different people used food banks, 37% were children
- Recent immigrants and Aboriginal people make up a significant percentage of individuals assisted by food banks
- 12% of Aboriginal people in Canada use food banks, regional and provincial differences can vary substantially
- In Saskatoon, 62.5% of persons assisted by a food bank were Aboriginal
- Number of food banks in Canada: 884 and 2,906 affili-

# Breakfast Programs

We've all heard it before, that breakfast is the most important meal of the day! It is what gets us going and gives us the energy needed to start the day right.

### **Breakfast Statistics:**

One in 10 Canadian children (10%) live in poverty and are at risk of starting their day on an empty stomach. For Aboriginal children on-reserve, one in 4 children (25%) live in poverty, and 40% of off-reserve Aboriginal children live in poverty.

One of the recommendations arising from Aboriginal women regarding the development of this Toolkit was the need to emphasize the importance of breakfast. And where, issues such as poverty make breakfast a challenge, they suggested the use of breakfast programs in schools. Check to see if there is a breakfast program in your child's school, if there isn't one, inquire about starting one. Talk to other parents about whether they have an interest in starting a breakfast program, talk to the school, call the school board. We have supplied on the following page, two sources that fund breakfast programming for school age children.

### **Benefits of Breakfast:**

Our children deserve the best, and of all the meals we can provide for them, breakfast is the best! In fact many of us, may have heard our parents tell us that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. This fact remains true, and in the case of people with diabetes, it is crucial in maintaining blood sugar control.

Our children are naturally inquisitive. They will ask "why is breakfast important?" You can tell them that a good breakfast fuels you up and gets you ready for the day, breakfast is brain power! Without it, you may feel tired, restless or irritable. Plus, breakfast helps with weight control, studies have proven that people who don't eat breakfast often consume more calories throughout the day!



## **Oatmeal Facts:**

- Inexpensive compared to highly processed, high sugar content cereals
- Excellent source of Vitamin B complex
- Lowers Cholesterol levels
- Reduces risk of cardiovascular disease
- Enhances immune response to infection
- Stabilizes blood sugar
- Lowers Type 2 Diabetes risk
- Has Antioxidant benefits

*Tip: Buy Oatmeal in bulk and save a few dollars!* 



### **Breakfast for Learning**

Website: www.breakfastforlearning.ca

Breakfast for learning is a national non-profit organization solely dedicated to child nutrition programs in Canada. Visit their website to discover how to start a breakfast program in your school, applying for grants in your province or territory, and other valuable information. The resource page has free downloads for you to use: Start Up Kit, Expense Summary, Breakfast for Learning's Menu Planner Template, and Monthly Tracking Form. Other resources include, Sample Menu Plans and recipes.

Contact Information: Breakfast for Learning National Office 164 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 400 Toronto, Ontario. M4P 1G4 Telephone: 416-487-1046 Toll-Free: 1-800-627-7922 Fax: 416-487-1837

### **Breakfast Clubs of Canada**

#### Website: www.breakfastclubscanada.org

Breakfast Clubs of Canada is a national non-profit organization dedicated to providing services and funding to school breakfast programs. Visit their website to review program standards, admissibility criteria and so much more. The Breakfast Program Grant Application form is also available on the website.

Contact Information: Josée Desjardins at 1-866-794-4900

### Setting a Good Example, and Eat Your Oatmeal!

All children, young and old imitate the behavior of the adults around them. If they see you eating a healthy breakfast, they too will want the same. In fact, children who observe their parents making healthy food choices grow to make healthy food choices. A good, cheap breakfast choice at home is oatmeal, a long time favorite for many families. Choose the "real stuff", the plain oat flakes, not the "instant" version that is often flavored and contains sugars and other additives. Oatmeal is a good source of soluble and insoluble fiber, and nutrients including vitamin E, zinc, selenium, copper, iron, manganese and magnesium. It is also a good source of protein

# Active Living & You

Exercise and staying fit need not be a chore, in fact it can be very fun! Why do push-ups when dancing in the sunset is just as good for you!

### **Enjoying Life**

Sometimes we need to be reminded that all work and no play makes for a boring day, which can lead to inactivity, which can, over time lead to obesity, which can increase your risk of diabetes. With diabetes, we are often told to get more active, exercise, lose weight, and get fit. You may have even been told that doing household chores and yard related tasks is getting exercise, this can be true, but doesn't that sound like work?

Leading an active life, and enjoying it does not necessarily mean traditional types of physical exercise, such as push-ups, sit -ups, or lifting weights. It can mean so much more, and contribute to a healthier state of mind, making you feel better about yourself and your life.

Reflect on activities that are fun, things that you enjoy doing and find within those activities ones that also incorporate movement and physical control. Chances are these are activities that your family and friends would enjoy as well.

#### Active Ways To Enjoy Life

Several suggesting for you to consider:

- Horseback Riding
- Bicycling
- Canoeing
- Hiking
- Dancing, Jigging
- Jogging
- Swimming
- Team Sports



#### **Active Living**

As with many things, variety is the spice of life! If you've made the decision to be active every day you'll want to have a variety of activities, some you can do yourself, others are better suited to a group or a partner. Chances are you'll know someone who wants to make lifestyle changes, too, recruit them as your "activity buddy". Having an activity buddy has many benefits, from keeping you company, to safety, and of course, there may be a day when you're not in the mood to be active but your buddy will encourage you to get moving, and vice versa. Have an alternative activity if your buddy is unavailable, don't let that impact your routine!

Speaking of moods, a wonderful side effect to physical activity is that it boosts your mood as well as your metabolism. You will perk up after the activity, and feel more alive, happier. This is a good thing and will help you live life in a good way.

#### **Being Consistent**

Consistency is vital to getting results from any activity you do. Being active two days this week and one day next week is good, but it won't peel away the pounds. To see results, you must be consistently active, but do so gradually, start at 30, 60, or 90 minutes a day and maintain this time, adjusting when necessary, but whatever your goal is, try to be active most days of the week.

Some people find that scheduling activity time is a good way to be consistent. Included in this toolkit is an activity tracker, you may find this quite useful. Remember as with all things, consult your health care professional before beginning any physical program or activity.

#### TV Time Can Be Physical Time Too

We all do it don't we? Watch TV? According to Statistics Canada, Canadians watch an average of 22.7 hours per week of TV. You may watch more, you may watch less. This does not matter, what does count is what you do while watching TV, which doesn't have to be a sedentary activity. In fact, you can get double the reward by watching your favorite programs and working out, too.

This is where more common types of exercise activities can be worked into your daily schedule. Why not put your stationary bike or treadmill near the TV, and work out on it during a half-hour TV show, building up to an hour-long show. Do sit-ups, push-ups, and jumping jacks or jog in place during commercials instead of heading to the kitchen. Make it fun, let different family members lead activities during commercials. Rotate at every commercial break so that everyone gets a turn. In any case, have fun being active!

# **Traditional Activities**

Traditional activities among Aboriginal people are as diverse as the people themselves, but all functions served both community and family.

The Aboriginal people of Canada have traditionally lived on the land as was given to us by the Creator. Each Nation of people have both similar and different types of traditional activities. Very often these activities relate to the lands upon which they lived and travelled on, such as hunting, fishing, trapping, and gathering. Differences from region to region were mainly due to differences in land and terrain. For example, fishing on the West coast can be very different then fishing in the North or in the inland regions of the boreal forests.

In the so-called "modern" world, the use of the land in a traditional fashion may have changed for some Aboriginal people. This is especially so, as more Aboriginal people move into urban settings; the high rate of socio-economic challenges and poverty can limit their ability to return to their traditional lands, resulting in lost skills. For example, our youth today may know more about video games and navigating city transit systems than they do about snaring a rabbit, cleaning it, starting a fire and cooking it.

This is concerning for many Aboriginal people. Due to the potential of lost skill, diminishing cultural and traditional knowledge, many First Nation communities are now organizing traditional activities that are out on the land, away from communities and cities. While others have designated special traditional areas within their territories specific to these activities. In response to the many Aboriginal people living in urban centres, more and more Aboriginal organizations have included traditional activities within their programming.

As an individual, your choices will vary with your experience, location and abilities. These can be enhanced by the people in your community. Start a conversation today, about how to include more traditional activities into your day!



Some Traditional Activities include:

- Hunting
- Fishing
- Trapping
- Gathering
- Ceremonial
- Sacred Uses
- Birch bark Basket Making
- Making Snowshoes
- Dogsled Construction
- Paddle Making
- Tanning Hides
- Tipi Construction
- Building a Sweat Lodge

## Benefits can include:

- Increased self-esteem
- Cultural pride
- Cultural continuity
- Revival of Indigenous languages
- Pro-social behavior
- Community empowerment and mobilization

### **Traditional Games**

All Nations across Turtle Island incorporated fun into their traditional activities, resulting in skill-building games and competitions that reinforced and taught elements required in day to day living. These games helped bridge the transition to adult activities. As an example, small children played hunting games with small bows, arrows, and spears, which helped develop hand-eye coordination and other skills needed to hunt and survive. Other types of games such as the cup and ball (or ring and pin), various string games, hand shadow games, and games of strength and endurance, helped develop eyesight, agility and creativity.

Traditional games such as lacrosse were viewed as a gift coming from the Creator as a means to teach its participants courage, honour, respect, generosity and fair play. Regardless of what type of traditional games were played, emphasized in each activity are skills that benefitted the community and individual.

#### **Community Fun**

Increasingly, there is a move by Aboriginal communities to address incidents of obesity, diabetes and other chronic diseases through the use of traditional activities and games. Some host several communities for a period of days in what may be called a mini-Olympics based on selected activities and games. Friendly competitions between communities and within communities can foster a greater sense of belonging to a proud and strong Nation. Other communities many hold numerous smaller events geared around identified needs, such as increasing language skills that involves Elders and youth coming together for game playing.

Regardless of what types of activities or "games" that are played, the emphasis should always be around good safe fun. Talk to your community about starting something up, all it takes are a few people to attract more people, and you've just started something new and exciting to do!



## Some Traditional Games Include:

- Lacrosse, also known as "Tewaarathon"
- Long Ball (similar to baseball)
- Double Ball (played by women and girls)
- Archery
- Pole Push
- Snow Snakes
- Bone Toss
- Canoe & Kayaking Races
- Snowshoe Races
- "Sacred Run"



# My Thoughts, Notes & Ideas

14



15



### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

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**Always consult your Health Care Professional** 

Native Women's Association of Canada

# Diabetes Self-Management Toolkit for Aboriginal Women

# Diabetes in the Kitchen



Native Women's Association of Canada

# **Diabetes Friendly Kitchen**

Whether you have diabetes or not, this booklet has been developed to assist you in the family kitchen.

This wonderful resource booklet is jam packed with plenty of useful information along with plenty of hints and tips to make your kitchen a diabetes friendly kitchen!

#### What is a Diabetes Friendly Kitchen?

The answer is simple. A diabetes friendly kitchen is one that responds to the unique dietary needs of a person with diabetes or a family looking towards preventing diabetes. This means a kitchen that offers healthy food choices and a kitchen that offers solutions to enable healthy food choices.

Within these pages you'll find practical information on how to create a diabetes friendly kitchen. Learn about using the plate method, portion sizing and nutrition facts. Learn about meal planning and tips on grocery shopping, and so much more!

On the positive front, it may be that we already know how to select healthy meals, but often times we experience barriers or challenges.

These can range from:

- the wide variety of foods available in restaurants and fast food places,
- to having a busy schedule that limits on the time you have to shop for and prepare healthy meals,
- to mixed messages on what constitutes a healthy food choice,
- to the simple fact that food is available at all hours of the day for people to consume!





### Examples of Good Healthy Food Choices:

#### Yogurt

Yogurt is an excellent source of calcium, and contains healthful bacteria that help support our immune system

#### Broccoli

Broccoli is a nutrient powerhouse containing vitamin C, fiber, folic acid and antioxidants which may prevent cancer.

#### Oats

Oats lower cholesterol and blood pressure, and are a great source of fiber and protein.

# **Canada's Food Guide**

The Canada's Food Guide is an excellent resource in healthy food choices and meal planning.

Creating a diabetes friendly kitchen takes just a little thought and some action to implement! Our first stop in this process is the Canada's Food Guide. "Eating well with the Canada's Food Guide" contains invaluable information on choosing food, food choices at for various age groups, as well as how to use the food guide. Order your free copy today by calling this toll-free number: 1-800-926-9105.

This Guide is also available online at: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php

As you may have noticed, the photo on the upper right hand side is the "*Eating well with Canada's Food Guide: First Nations, Inuit and Métis*". This guide is very similar to the general guide, except that it reflects the traditions and food choices of the Aboriginal people of Canada. Inside you'll notice that both traditional foods and common store-bought are used to illustrate healthy food choices.

This guide is available in several languages: English, French, Inuktitut, Ojibwe, Plains Cree and Woods Cree. It is also available on request on diskette, large print, audio-cassette and Braille.

For more information, interactive tools or additional copies visit Canada's Food Guide at: <u>www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide</u>

Or:

Publications, Health Canada Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9

E-mail: publications@hc-sc.gc.ca TTY: 1-800-267-1245



Eating well with Canada's Food Guide: First Nations, Inuit and Métis



### More Examples of Good Healthy Food Choices:

#### **Blueberries**

Blueberries are rich in antioxidants that help slow or prevent the development of cancer and cardiovascular disease.

#### Legumes

In addition to being an excellent source of fiber and vitamin B, legumes help stabilize blood sugar levels and lessen the risk of cancer and heart disease.

#### Salmon

Salmon contains omega-3 fatty acids, which reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke.

# **The Plate Method**

Selecting healthy foods is one thing, another is serving those healthy foods in portions that make those healthy foods, good healthy food choices.

We all know how to "plate our food", don't we? Perhaps not! All too often we fill our plates without thought to the amount of food we plan to consume, many times we take the approach "that more food is better". The "Plate Method" shown here demonstrates a more healthy approach to serving food in healthy proportions.

The "Plate Method" is one of the best methods to achieve a healthy diet and control portion sizes. The plate method simply divides the plate by protein, carbohydrates and non-starchy vegetables, as shown in the diagram.

When eating your next meal, compare your plate to the plate method. Chances are, if you are like most people, you will see a large piece of meat, rice or potatoes, and a small side of vegetable. This type of meal increases insulin resistance, lipid levels, and your weight! It also makes it difficult for your body to control its blood sugar levels, and increases your risk of diabetes complications.

The plate method will help you spread carbohydrate throughout the day, which will help keep your blood sugar level within your target range.

The plate method will reshape your meals, making them higher in fiber and lower in saturated fat, cholesterol, and carbohydrates.

Try the plate method today, it is an easy first step towards eating smaller portions and dietary control. An added benefit is weight loss - without dieting!



### The Plate Method:

- 1/4 Protein
- 1/4 Carbohydrates
- 1/2 Non-Starchy Vegetables

Along with a serving of fruit and beverage.

A plate format is an easy and simple way to plan meals.

### How To Plate:

- ½ or more of the plate has some vegetables, excluding potatoes and corn
- ¼ or less fish, lean poultry, lean cuts of red meat, meat substitute, or nuts/seeds
- ¼ legumes, whole grains, fruits, or low-fat dairy.
- Tip: Instead of using the regular 12" plate, use a 9" plate

# **Portion Control**

One of the most challenging things is portion control when serving meals for yourself, family and friends.

Using the plate method is an excellent way to control your portion sizes, but if you are like many people, understanding "portion size" can be confusing.

Exactly, what does a 1/4 cup of wild rice look like? What about 3 ounces of a Moose steak? Do I use my fist to measure my Moose steak, or is it the palm of my hand? These types of questions can challenge us at the best of times and lead to frustration at the worst of times. To help you, the images on the right hand side should serve as a handy visual aid.

The top picture, is one that does not use the Plate Method and makes no attempt at controlling portion size. While the young child in the picture enjoyed every minute of this watermelon-eating experience, he only consumed a small portion. This image is not meant to be duplicated at home.

The images in green and blue provide the answers to the many questions you many have when it comes down to judging portion size.

When it comes down to measuring portions, your hand is the best measuring tool. But if you need to think it terms of actual items you'll find the images in blue most useful.

Regardless of what method you prefer to use in controlling your plate portions, the most important thing to make note of is that you are controlling your plate portions. Combined with good food choices, you are on your way to a healthier you!


### **Nutrition Facts**

Checking the label of your food purchases for nutrition facts is a must in selecting foods for your family table.

Getting the "best value" for your food dollar means more then just how much it costs to feed yourself and your family. The focus of "best value" should also include the nutritional value of foods you buy and serve to your family.

If you or someone in your family has diabetes, knowing the nutrition facts of the foods you purchase becomes important. In fact paying attention to the nutrition facts of food in general is important to the overall health of yourself and your family.

Nutrition labeling refers to the nutrition information that is found in the "Nutrition Facts" panel on food labels. It has been mandatory for most pre-packaged foods since December 2005. The goal of nutrition labeling is to help Canadians make more informed food choices, and enable consumers to compare products more easily. The food label must list the total amount of calories and 13 different nutrients.



Above is a sample of the nutrition label that you will find on most grocery items. Start with the "serving size" which may be greater or less than the amount you consume. When calculating calorie intake remember to pay attention to the serving size. Try to limit total fat, cholesterol and sodium, while getting more dietary fiber and vitamins.

The chart below will help you to figure out what is a lot and what is a little.

Guide to Food Labeling	A lot	A little
	10 g of added sugar	2g of added sugar
	20g of fat	3g of fat
	5g of saturates	1g of saturates
	3g of fiber	0.5g of fiber
	1.25g of salt	0.25g of salt
	0.5g of sodium	0.1g of sodium

### **Glucose (Sugar)**

Our body's primary source of energy takes the form of glucose. A common disease related to the bodies irregular management of glucose is diabetes.

Understanding nutrition facts can help us manage and prevent diabetes by controlling the amount of sugars we consume.

We get most of our glucose from digesting sugar and starch in carbohydrates. When glucose levels in the bloodstream aren't properly regulated, diabetes can develop. Foods like rice, pasta, grain, potatoes, fruits, a few vegetables, and processed sweets qualify as carbohydrates. Our digestive system breaks down the starch and sugar in these foods into glucose. This energy then gets absorbed through the small intestine into the bloodstream where it meets with insulin which is excreted by the pancreas. Together they enter cells in muscles and the brain, allowing glucose to power your day to day activities.

Keeping glucose within a normal range is important since it is such a vital form of energy and interacts with both our digestive and endocrine system. Our body regulates this level by storing extra glucose as glycogen in the liver where it can be reabsorbed when our levels drop. It can also speed or slow the release of insulin. This natural balancing act can be disrupted by our food consumption.

Excessively high glucose levels might be due to too much sugar or too little insulin. Excessively low glucose levels might be due to too little food or variable insulin excretion. This imbalance can lead to diabetes or complications arising from diabetes. Refer to your Health Care Professional on how best to manage blood glucose (sugar) levels and control diabetes.



Sugars can be found in three different places on the food label -- in the Nutrition Facts Table, in the Ingredient list, and in a "nutrient content claim" if a specific claim about sugars content is made.

Sugars refer to all types of sugars naturally present and added to foods.

Examples of naturally occurring sugars include sucrose, glucose and fructose in vegetables and fruits, and lactose in milk.

Some of the sugars added to foods include sucrose (table sugar), glu-cose/fructose, honey and syrups.

Regardless of its source, each of these sugars is chemically similar, and has the same effects on health.

# Meal Plan 101!

For a person with diabetes, a meal plan is an important tool to maintain good health and to control your diabetes. Include your family in meal planning and promote life long healthy eating habits.

Included in this Toolkit is a simple and easy to use weekly meal planner and grocery shopping list that can be photocopied and shared with family and friends.

#### Always consult with your health care professional or registered dietitian on creating a meal plan suitable for you.

Before beginning a meal plan its good to determine the calorie intake keeping in mind differences in body shape and activity level. In general, a nutrition plan for a person with diabetes includes: 10 to 20% of calories from protein, no more than 30% of calories from fats, and the remaining 50 to 60% from carbohydrates. The following table shows meal plans by calorie count along with general recommended amounts. An example of how to use the meal plan by calorie is shown on the following page.



### **Benefits of Meal Planning**

- Controlled blood sugar/ insulin
- Reduction and/or elimination of medications
- Weight management
- Controlled cholesterol and triglyceride levels
- Controlled blood pressure
- Less likely to skip meals
- Proper portions
- Less frustration about what to eat
- Better control over grocery purchases and budget

Meal Plan A: 1200 - 1600 Calories	Meal Plan B: 1600 - 2000 Calories	Meal Plan C: 2000 - 2400 Calories
This meal plan is suitable for a small woman who exercises, a small or medium woman who wants to lose weight, and a medium woman who does not exercise much.	This meal plan is suitable for a large woman who wants to lose weight, a small man at a healthy weight, a medium man who does not exercise much or a medium to large man who wants to lose weight.	This meal plan is perfect for if you are a medium/large man who does a lot of exer- cise or has a physically active job, a large man at a healthy weight or a large woman who exercises a lot or has a physically active job.
Choose this many servings from these	Choose this many servings from these	~
food groups:	food groups:	Choose this many servings from these
• 6 starches	• 8 starches	food groups:
• 2 milk and yogurt	• 2 milk and yogurt	• 11 starches
• 3 vegetables	• 4 vegetables	• 2 milk and yogurt
• 2 meat or meat substitute	• 2 meat or meat substitute	• 4 vegetables
• 2 fruit	• 3 fruit	• 2 meat or meat substitute
• Up to 3 fats	• Up to 4 fats	• 3 fruit
		• Up to 5 fats

### Meal plans will help you eat better and can help you eliminate fast foods from your diet.

#### **Creating Your Meal Plan**

Always consult with your health care professional or registered dietician if you are diabetic or have any health care concerns or issues.

Plan your weekly meal plan with your family members, taking into account taste preferences, healthy snack options and any allergies. Remember to be creative while selecting your serving choices, watch your portion sizes and use the plate method.

The chart below demonstrates the three meal plans for each calorie intake range using a simple menu for each. Note that for this simple menu, added servings are indicated in green as the calorie intake increases with each meal plan. To assist you, the final column provides examples of serving sizes.

#### Meal Plan Hints & Tips!

- Eat lots of vegetables and fruits.
- Choose whole grain foods over processed grain products.
- Include dried beans (like kidney or pinto beans) and lentils into your diabetic diet meal.
- Include fish in your meals 2-3 times a week.
- Choose lean meats like cuts of beef and pork that end in "loin" such as pork loin and sirloin.
- Choose non-fat dairy such as skim milk, non-fat yogurt and non-fat cheese.
- Choose water and calorie-free "diet" drinks instead of regular sugar-sweetened drinks.
- Choose liquid oils for cooking instead of solid fats that can be high in saturated and trans fats.
- Eating too much of even healthful foods can lead to weight gain. Watch your portion sizes.

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks (s)	Water	Serving Sizes
Meal Plan A 1200-1600 calories	1/2 c. bran cereal 1 c. milk Blueberries	2 slices whole wheat bread with sliced cucumbers, tomatoes and lettuce, and 1 tbs low fat mayonnaise 1/2 c Bean salad	2 oz Salmon Spinach salad with sliced strawberries and 2 tbs dressing 1 small whole wheat din- ner roll	Low fat yogurt Small muffin		1 Starch = 1/2 cup rice, cereal, beans, 1 slice bread, a small bagel or muffin
Meal Plan B 1600-2000 calories	1/2 c. bran cereal 1 c. milk Blueberries Small bagel with 1 tbs peanut butter	2 slices whole wheat bread with sliced cucumbers, tomatoes and lettuce, 1 oz chicken and 1 tbs low fat mayonnaise 1/2 Bean salad 1 apple	2 oz Salmon Spinach salad with sliced strawberries, whole wheat croutons and 2 tbs dressing 1 small whole wheat din- ner roll	Low fat yogurt Small muffin 1/2 c wild rice pilaf		1 Fruit = medium size tennis ball sizeO, 1/2 cup juice, 15 grapes 1 Vegetable = 1/2 cup cooked, 1 cup raw 1 Meat = 1 ounce is a
Meal Plan C 2000-2400 calories	1 c. bran cereal 1 c. milk Blueberries Small bagel with 2 tbs peanut butter	2 slices whole wheat bread with sliced cucumbers, tomatoes and lettuce, 1 oz chicken and 1 tbs low fat mayonnaise 1/2 c Bean salad 1 apple	2 oz Salmon Spinach salad with sliced strawberries, whole wheat croutons and 2 tbs dressing 1 small whole wheat din- ner roll Mixed bean medley	Low fat yogurt Small muffin 1 c wild rice pilaf with 1/2 c steamed carrots		serving (aim for 2 or 3 ounces per meal) 1 Dairy = 1 cup of milk or yogurt 1 Fat = 1 tbs peanut butter, tsp butter, 1 tbs salad dressing

# **Shopping On A Budget**

Planning your meals keeps you one step ahead of diabetes, and keeps you on top of your monthly grocery shopping budget.

After careful thought into selecting healthy food choices and preparing a well-balanced meal plan the next step is normally the local grocery store.

But first, review your meal plan and don't forget to check your cupboards and freezer for meal ideas or to take stock on the various ingredients you will be needing. Use what you have before you replace it.

Plan your meals on what is already in the house and what is on sale at your local store and only buy what you need. Resist the urge to stock-pile because the cupboard looks too bare. Make a shopping list and stick to it. Don't give in to the flashy end displays and impulse shopping, this piece of advice takes us to our next topic, and that is your grocery shopping budget.

#### **Shopping On A Budget**

Budgeting for food is more then just a numbers game. It involves how we cook, how we eat, how we live, and for some it can even be an emotional issue, where certain foods fall into the category of "I can't live without...". Therefore, the start of any food budget is the willingness to examine habits; how you eat, cook, shop, plan, etc.. and have a solutions to make changes if needed.

Now focus on the numbers. How much do you have? How much can you afford to spend on food? And even, what would be wise to spend? Look at what you have been spending. Add up the grocery costs since the beginning of the year and divide this by the months that have passed and that will let you know how much you have been spending.



#### **Shopping Hints & Tips!**

Read the Nutrition Facts panel on food products, but don't obsess about reading them all at one time. Choose a few items on your list each week to compare and make the wisest choice.

Enlist older children to be label lookers and help you find the smartest choice of a product. This not only makes your job easier, it teaches them lifelong skills they'll need to manage their weight.

If you do buy processed foods, read labels and choose those that have less fat, sugar, and calories. These types of foods often have added fats and sugars, which will tip your caloriebalance scale in the wrong direction.

#### Sample Grocery Budget Calculator

January	\$275.00
February	\$310.00
March	<u>\$360.00</u>
Total	\$945.00

Total 945 Divided by 3 = 315.00

I spend on average \$315.00 on groceries every Month.

# **Grocery Shopping**

Many people shop without thought to meal plans, nutrition and budgets. This can lead to unhealthy meal choices and over-spending.

#### From Meal Plan to Shopping List

After knowing what your food budget is, prepare your weekly meal plan, keep nutrition in mind and make sure to include an abundance of low cost basic foods. Remember that the quality of food does not always have to be sacrificed for cost.

Think about what a "low cost basic foods" means, and remember that anything packaged in a box and ready to go is not a 'low cost basic food'. Focus on basic low cost food such as dried beans, legumes, brown rice, oats, wheat (or flour), meat, vegetables, and fruits and cook from scratch. Remember that there was a time in life when everyone had basic foods in the cupboard and had to cook from scratch. It was a way of life. Not only are these types of food nutritious, but often times are also the best value for your money.

Now that you have prepared a meal plan and have carefully constructed your grocery shopping list, it's time to go shopping!

#### Shopping For Groceries Is As Easy as 1 2 3!

1. Take your shopping list and stick to it

2. Shop the perimeter of the store first. Fill your cart with foods low in calories and brimming with nutrients, such as fresh vegetables and fruits, nonfat dairy foods, lean meats, and wholegrain bakery goods low in added fat and sugar.

3. Shop the interior aisles of the grocery store with care. Stick to wholesome foods such as rice, pasta, beans, and peanut butter. Avoid processed foods in packages and boxes, such as cookies, chips, packaged snacks, soft drinks, and most convenience foods.



### **Shopping Hints & Tips!**

- Make a grocery list before you go shopping; it will get you out of the store faster and prevent you from spending money on things you don't need.
- Take advantage of sales! Check out the weekly grocery store ads before you go shopping and stock up on items that can be stored. Canned goods, pasta and grains have long shelf lives; poultry and meat freeze well.
- Look for family packs whenever possible, as the price per pound is much lower, and it's very easy to repackage
- Coupons do count! A few dollars per week adds up to real savings over the course of a year.
- Be conscious of shopping for food that is in season. When you shop for vegetables, only buy what is in season and the lowest cost
- Follow the basic rule of shopping: If your family won't eat it, don't buy it -- at any price! Even at rock-bottom prices, these products are no bargain if nobody likes them.
- Try to go to the grocery store only once a week. Your meal plan will help you get what you need in one trip and avoid repeat trips.
- Don't go to the grocery store hungry. You'll be less likely to buy impulsively.



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**Always consult your Health Care Professional** 

Native Women's Association of Canada

Diabetes Self-Management Toolkit for Aboriginal Women

# **Traditional Foods** & Recipes on the Wild Side



Native Women's Association of Canada This booklet has been developed to complement the NWAC Diabetes Toolkit. It is intended to provide some cultural context, as well as information about traditional foods.

### You'll also find a few recipes on the wild side! Enjoy...

Diabetes is often referred to as a "lifestyle disease". Its rampant spread is believed to be linked to obesity, an increased reliance on the western diet and lack of regular exercise. The following statement is general knowledge, and practical advice:

# Eating a healthy diet and getting regular exercise is the most important thing a person can do to maintain good health.

So what can we do to improve our general health, while preventing and/or controlling diabetes? This question was asked of Aboriginal women throughout Canada, and the answer was not a surprising one. Increase traditional knowledge, culture and identity among our people, go out into our lands and be Indian, eat the foods that Turtle Island has provided us, take care of our environment, and most importantly, teach our children and grand-children so that seven generations onward, they too have the opportunity to lead healthy happy lives.

This booklet seeks to provide only a fraction of information, and is meant to inspire some thought about potential lifestyle changes for your, your family and your community. It is not about directing change; change must come from within.

You will find in the first few pages, the Haudenosaunee Creation Story and a section on the "Three Sisters", feel free to collect and add your own stories to this toolkit. You'll be pleasantly surprised to find instructions on how to start your own Three Sisters garden. Following this is a brief section on the traditional diet of the Aboriginal people, and acknowledging our role and responsibility as the people of Turtle Island. Apply as you go, your own understanding and teachings distinct to your particular Nation and geographical area. Talk to your children and grand-children, seek out your Elders and community leaders. Learning and growing is about reaching within and outside yourself to others and sharing this knowledge.

The final section of this booklet contains a few recipes on the wild side! It should be said, that when prompting those special "knowledge keepers", our mothers, aunties and grand-mothers for "recipes", it was said that there is no recipe, you make it the way your mother and grand-mother made it. Unfortunately, with many Aboriginal people now residing in urban centres, learning by watching has become a challenge. These non-recipe recipes are provided to address that challenge. Please note these recipes are not diabetic specific or tested.

Note: Always consult your health care provider on dietary changes, especially if you have diabetes.



### **Environmental Contaminants**

As the human population of Earth increases, so does our human footprints and its impact on the environment. Many of the technological innovations and mechanical processes designed to improve our lives have also polluted our planet. We may ask ourselves, why we have not focused these innovations and new discoveries on protecting and preserving our environment.

While we strive to retain our culture and traditions we need to keep in mind the environmental conditions of our lands and pay attention to the health conditions of both plant and animal life.



Talk to your community leaders, talk to your Elders, talk to neighboring communities, talk to your health care workers, and take note of contaminations, unlawful dumping, oil and gas spills, pesticide spraying and other instances of pollutants in the past and present day. These could have a significant impact on your health and the health of the community.

Remember that contaminants, such as mercury can stay in an ecosystem, as well as within your body for a very long time. When in doubt, stay out. Take action to inform yourself, family and community about protecting the environment. *For more information visit Environment Canada's website at www.ec.gc.ca/* 

### **Reducing Your Environmental Footprint**

Harvesting more traditional foods, is it environmentally friendly? Not surprisingly, the answer is yes!

A recent Canadian survey of the energy used to produce and distribute various foods has found that wild edible plants and wild game meat are among the most energy-efficient - and least polluting foods in our diet. The analysis included the manufacture and application of fertilizers and other chemicals, harvesting, processing, packaging, transport and waste disposal. Coffee, salad vegetables, and pre-packaged foods (like French fries, pizza, and that Diet-Meal), on the other hand, are environmentally unfriendly.

Just think of how much plastics and other materials we dispose of every day, multiply that by the number of people you know and the people they know, and the amount of garbage and processing contaminants we've added to our environment at every meal. Now think of replacing just one of those meals with a traditional meal, like roasted rabbit with fresh fiddleheads. You haven't added to the garbage pile, and chances are you got a little exercise snaring and cleaning that rabbit, and foraging for fiddleheads!

### **Haudenosaunee Story of Creation**

A long time ago when the earth was first created, there was no land. The entire earth was covered with water, and in it lived the creatures of the waters.

High above in the heavens, was a place called Karonhia:ke or The Sky World. In the The Sky World there lived some beings who were very much like human beings. These beings were male and female, and looked and acted very much like human men and women, but they were very powerful. Some of them were able make things happen just by thinking about it.

In the center of the Sky World, there was a tree called the Tree of Life. On that tree grew many different kinds of fruit. Sky birds of many kinds came and made their nests on this tree. This tree also had many blossoms that glowed at night to light up the Sky World.

The Sky People were instructed by the Creator, never to disturb the Tree of Life because it was a sacred tree. One day, a woman who was expecting a baby had a craving for a root that grew at the bottom of the Tree of Life. As much as she tried not to give in to this craving, the desire for this root grew uncontrollable. She begged her husband to dig for the root, but he refused, and reminded her of the instructions given to them by the Creator. Overcome by this craving, she decided to start digging for the root herself. She dug and dug, and had dug so deep in search of this root that she made a hole in the sky.

Curious of the hole she had dug in the sky, and the light that was coming from it, she looked down into the hole. As she looked further into the hole, she lost her balance and fell in. As she started to fall, she grasped onto some of the branches and managed to grab a handful of seeds from the blossoms of the Tree of Life.

Many people today call her the Sky Woman, because she fell from the sky.



As she started to fall, a flock of geese were flying through the air, and one of them looked up to see the Sky Woman falling. He quickly passed the message to the geese to form a V and to all the other birds to flock together, and make a blanket with their bodies to catch her and soften her fall.

They formed a V and flew together to try and bring her back to the Sky World but she was much too heavy with child, so they called to the turtle to form a landing for her on the water below.

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The giant turtle came to the surface so that she could land on the shell on his back. The turtle called to the water animals to bring some dirt to the surface so that she could have some earth to survive. This became a competition between all the water animals. Many of them tried and failed. First the beaver, then the muskrat, and finally, the otter was successful in bringing some dirt from under the water and placed it on the turtle's back.

When this happened, the turtle's shell became covered with earth to form a landing for Sky Woman. To this day, the North American continent, from the Queen Elizabeth Islands at the Arctic Circle to Guatemala at the Mexican border resembles a turtle. This is why we call the land where we live, "Turtle Island".

Sky Woman thanked the creatures of the air and water, and as she thanked them, she rejoiced by singing. She began to dance in a counter-clockwise direction, shuffling her feet as she moved, so that her feet would never leave the earth, and as she did so, the grains of the earth beneath her, and the turtle's shell grew bigger and bigger. She dropped the seeds she brought with her from the Tree of Life, and because these seeds were magical, from another world, they grew instantly to form all sorts of plant life. As she continued to dance counter clockwise, she noticed that there was land and plant life for as far as she could see. This is why, to this day, the Haudenosaunee people dance on the earth in the counter-clockwise direction, and the women shuffle their feet when they dance our ceremonial dances.

A few months passed and Sky Woman gave birth to a baby girl.

The baby girl, not being of this world, grew very quickly, and before long became a young woman. She was told never to walk toward the west, but as many young people do, she disobeyed her mother's instructions, and walked towards the west. As soon as she began her westward journey, a strong wind began to blow, and a cloud moved towards her. The cloud was shaped in the form of a man, which frightened the young woman and she fainted.

When she awoke, she found two arrows crossed on top of her belly. She ran to tell her mother, Sky Woman, what had happened, and her mother told her that she had been visited by the Spirit of the West Wind, and had conceived of twin boys.

The twin boys were very special. Their grandmother was Sky Woman, and their father was the Spirit of the West Wind. One was a right-handed twin and very gentle and kind, truthful and honest. The Other was a left-handed twin and was often stubborn and argumentative, lied and had troubling thoughts. While they were still growing inside their mother's womb, they talked to each other, and often argued over how they would be born and the choices they should make once they arrived.



The Right-handed twin created human beings, and has been called Sonkwiadihsoh, "Our Creator" and "The Master of Life". The Left-handed twin helped him, but he caused people to make choices that were not always good, and he invented rituals of sorcery and healing. The world they built together, included both cooperation and competition, loving kindness and aggression.

The time came for the twins to be born, and the right-handed twin was born first, in the usual way. The lefthanded twin was stubborn and had no patience, so he forced his way out by pushing his way out by tearing a hole in his mother's side, killing his mother.

Sky Woman was very saddened and told the twins they must bury their mother. They buried their mother and from her head grew corn, beans and squash. Those are the staple foods of the traditional Haudenosaunee diet.

They are called The Three Sisters, because they grew together from the same mound of earth, and came from their mother's body just as they did. They were sisters, because the plants were female and would produce fruit that bear seeds for future growth. From her heart grew sacred tobacco, Oionkwehonweh, which is used when there is a desire to communicate with the Creator. From her feet grew the wild strawberry Jiosohndohk, which is known as The Big Medicine, and grows along the path to the Spirit World, and all of the medicinal plants we have come to know. Even in her death, the mother of the two boys was still making sure that

they had what they needed to survive. She is called Mother Earth and to this day she still supports all of the people, the animals and the plants.

Sky Woman, the twins' grandmother then told the boys that they have three sisters, but no brother.

They should consider the sun to be their eldest brother because he provides us with light during the day so that we can go about our business, travel about and not get hurt. He provides us with a blanket of warmth to protect us from the cold, and over sees us in the davtime, just as an older brother would do.

The twin boys grew very quickly, and before long grew into young men. They about the task of creating everything that is found in the natural world. As they went about creating, the twin brothers continued to compete with one another, and in doing so, represented different ways of living.

The Right-handed twin created beautiful hills, lakes, birds that sing, blossoms and gentle creatures. Meanwhile, the Left-handed twin sabotaged his brother's work, created jagged cliffs, whirlpools, put thorns on the rose, and made flies, mosquitoes, bugs and predators The Righthanded twin was always truthful, reasonable, good-hearted and a "straight arrow", while the Left-handed twin lied, rebelled, fought and made "crooked choices".





When Sky Woman passed away, the right-handed twin wanted to bury her next to their mother, but the left-handed twin objected, and in his anger, kicked his grandmother's head and caused it to fly up into the night sky.

She is still there. She is called Grandmother Moon. She watches over us at night. She helps the people keep track of time.

She controls the rise and fall of the waters. She keeps company with the stars and the left-handed twin, the keeper of the night. She regulates the monthly cycles of all of the female life which guarantees that new life will be born. She is the leader of all the female life.

After they had finished their creations, the Left-handed twin argued with his brother over who would rule over the new creations, and challenged his brother to a duel. They continued to compete in other ways, they gambled, played lacrosse and fourth each other with clubs. All at once, the Right-handed twin grasped a deer antler, and with it, killed his brother, then threw his body over the edge of the earth. The Right-handed twin prevailed over his brother in the natural world by day, but the Left-handed twin prevails over the darkness of night, and the beings of the underworld.

The Haudenosaunee believe that both the Left-handed twin and his creations and the Right-handed twin and his creations are necessary for the world to be in balance. The tension and struggle for balance between the two brothers and the principles of live is incorporated into the Haudenosaunee ceremonies and cycles of life, including birth and death.

Eventually, the human beings were made and were given instructions on how to give thanks for everything in creation, to remind them of their duties and to take care of these things. We are supposed to be the caretakers. We are supposed to make sure that everything stays in balance. However, as time passes, it is we, the human beings who keep forgetting what we are supposed to do. The sun still rises each day and provides us with light and warmth. The moon still watches over us at night and provides guidance for our calendars. She still controls the waters, the cycles of women and decides when babies are born.

It is we, who are forgetting to take only what we need and to leave the rest for the future generations to experience and enjoy. We, the human beings are the ones who are forgetting that everything in the natural world is connected and is part of the same web of life and so should be respected.

It is hoped that all of the people of the world will someday remember and respect the original instructions and take good care of our Mother Earth.





### **The Three Sisters Today**

It is through this Story of Creation that the Three Sisters are considered to be divine gifts to the Haudenosaunee from the Creator, and are recognized as forming the staples of the Haudenosaunee diet.

The story of the Three Sisters illustrates how well the Haudenosaunee understood horticulture and ecology hundreds of years before the development of modern farming techniques. Different kinds of beans, corn, and squash grew together in mounds, placed about three feet apart. Cornstalks provided supports for climbing bean vines. Squash leaves provided shade, keeping the soil moist and preventing weeds from choking the crops. In this way, the soil remained fertile for years. When the soil became fallow, the entire village would move to a new location.

A new corn harvest is celebrated each year during the Green Corn Ceremony in August or early September. During the harvest ceremony, sometimes called "the Big Green Corn Ceremony" when all of the three sisters have come into maturity, a celebration occurs and a special soup is made from all of the three sisters. Every part of the corn plant is used to make different things. Corn was pounded into meal using a mortar and pestle. Corn meal was made into bread, hominy, and pudding. Succotash, a stew of corn, beans, and squash, was commonly prepared as was corn soup, which continues to be a favorite among Haudenosaunee people. Corn husks were woven into mats, baskets, and moccasins and made into cornhusk dolls. The cobs were used as scrubbers and container stoppers.

Store-bought foods started to replace locally grown foods in the nineteenth century. As a result, Haudenosaunee people have become more sedentary. Today, many Haudenosaunee still hunt, fish, and farm. However, like most everyone else today, most food is purchased at the supermarket.

There are several versions of "Three Sisters Soup", two versions are provided in this booklet.

#### "Three Sisters Soup" (Serves 6)

Ingredients: 2 cups fresh sweet corn cut from the cob, or 2 cups of frozen corn (may also substitute with 2 cans of white hominy corn);



2 cups fresh green and yellow beans, trimmed and snapped;

1 cup of pre-cooked kidney beans, pinto beans or roman beans; 2 cups peeled and cubed butternut

squash or acorn squash;

1 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups diced peeled potatoes;

1 to 2 pounds cubed beef or chicken; 5 cups water;

- 1 teaspoon salt;
- 2 tablespoons melted butter;
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper;

#### Directions:

In a large pot, pour in water, salt and add meat, bring to a boil and simmer 20 minutes.

Place the corn (or hominy), green beans, squash, and potatoes into the pot, and return to boil. Reduce to medium/low heat, and simmer until vegetables are soft, about 10 minutes.

Blend flour into the butter, then stir into the soup. Increase heat to medium, and cook for 5 more minutes, or until soup thickens. Season with pepper, and serve.

# **Three Sisters Garden**

This form of gardening is easy to plant, maintain and harvest. Try creating one for yourself and family, and remember to get the your children involved!

Traditionally, women of the village would mound the soil and plant corn (*maize*) in the center of the hill. Once the corn came up, probably about two weeks, they would then plant the beans around the corn seedlings followed by the squash seeds at the furthest distance from corn seedlings.

This form of growing these three vegetables worked very well because the three plants complemented each other and made great companions. The corn gave the beans a place to climb, the beans provided nitrogen to the corn roots and the large squash leaves provided shade and living mulch which helped to deter weeds and hold moisture in the soil.

At harvest time the Haudenosaunee people offer prayers and thanks to the three sisters calling them '*Dyonheyko*'; meaning "life's sustainers" or "they who sustain our lives."

# How to Plant Your Own Three Sisters Garden:

You'll want to plant your Three Sisters garden once all danger of frost has past. Select an area that had direct sunshine for most of the day.

- 1. Choose the vegetables to be planted.
- 2. Use a hoe to create a mound of soil approximately five feet across and one foot high.
- 3. Amend soil with compost if needed and level off top of hill.
- 4. Plant 4-6 corn seeds in holes at center of hill 6" to 8" apart and 1" deep.
- 5. Wait for corn to sprout and reach approximately 6" high before planting beans. Plant four bean seeds 4" from base of corn stalks, evenly spaced around stalks.
- 6. At the outer edge of the mound, plant three squash seeds evenly spaced around perimeter of mound. Squash should not be planted directly on edge of hill rather, *set in* approximately six to eight inches.
- 7. Harvest as plants ripen, enjoy in your favorite recipe or try one of the recipes provided in this booklet.



# **The Traditional Diet of Aboriginal People**

As with many Indigenous cultures throughout the World, the traditional diet of Aboriginal people in Canada was derived from the land. Wild game and edible plants formed the traditional Aboriginal diet.

Traditionally, Aboriginal people were hunter-gatherers; the daily diet varied according to the type of plants and animals available in the particular location and season. By necessity, they had an extensive knowledge of plants, animals, the land and the effects of the weather for each time of year.

The traditional diet of Aboriginal people was made up of the animals and plants found on the land and in the sea around them. This included moose, caribou, elk, seal, whale, buffalo, rabbit, all kinds of fish and many species of bird. Every part of the animal was consumed or used to make clothing or shelter. Edible plants included corn, squash, fiddleheads, wild rice, nuts and wild berries. Certain plants were highly prized for their medicinal value.

# The traditional diet of Aboriginal people was nutritious and high in the calories needed to live life on the land, it was also a life full of physical activity.



Wild game along with the wide variety of edible plant life meant that Aboriginal people were generally well nourished. Children were typically breastfed until three years of age, and introduced to solid foods once their teeth had come through. The hunter-gatherer lifestyle also meant plenty of physical activity.

During the long, frigid winters extra calories were needed to help keep warm. In the summer months, Aboriginal women would plant small gardens and gather wild berries and seeds. Common vegetables included corn, beans, and squash, which were often simmered to make soups or stews, such as Three Sister Soup (the "sisters" are corn, beans, and squash). Gathered foods included ground nuts, wild grapes, and fiddlehead ferns in the east and wild rice in Ontario and Manitoba. Medicinal plants were also sought after.

While Aboriginal men hunted large wild game, the women and youth often hunted small game such as rabbit and partridge. Our Elders tell us that all family members contributed to providing for the family.

Today, many Aboriginal people have added processed foods to their traditional diet. This dietary change along with other socio-economic factors contribute to an increase in health problems that come from consumption of foods rich in sugar and additives (which may contribute to tooth decay, obesity, and diabetes).



### **Gifts from Turtle Island**

North America is full of edible plant life, such as fruits, vegetables, and teas. It is also home to an abundance of large and small animals, along with many varieties of fish and fowl.

These gifts from Turtle Island formed the traditional diet of the Indigenous peoples of North America. They were rich with the nutrients necessary for maintaining good health. Combined with a lifestyle, lived on and with respect for the land, Aboriginal people thrived.

Today, the diet and lifestyle of many Aboriginal people have changed, and with this change came problems, such as obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure. From time to time, we may think about the past and wish that we could return to that lifestyle. While a complete return has challenges, there are things we can do to revive many traditions.

### **Reviving Tradition Starts At Home**

Our children and grand-children bring to us life and promise of continued life, seven generations and more into the future. As we honour all phases of life, so must we honour the learning stages of those who will go on to lead the generations of tomorrow. A part of our responsibility to Turtle Island so that she may live well and in good health is to teach our children and grandchildren about our ways of being and knowing.

This teaching or sharing is a natural part of who we are as parents, grand-parents, aunties and sisters. We all have gifts within ourselves that we share with those we love, with our community and with the rest of humanity. We can share our culture, our languages, our belief systems, and our ways of doing things. Think about your very special gifts and share them today.



### **Celebrating Turtle Island:**

Share the Creation Story, as it was told to you, or find someone who can share this story with you and re-tell to your children and grand-children

Be one with Turtle Island, reconnect by taking a peaceful walk along your favorite nature spot. Reflect on how best to share your gifts and revive traditional activities within your home and community while having fun! Some hints and tips:

- \* Traditional games and toys: discover what games and toys were unique to your people!
- Traditional activities: hold summer fun days, with swimming, canoeing, rock climbing, and arts & crafts as activities!
- Berry picking: where to find, when and how to pick, how to store, and how best to eat!
- Discover wild life, as an observer with a camera or as a skilled hunter: teach how and where to find certain animals, if hunting, how best to hunt and dress!
- \* Discover and respect nature: go camping, teach how to respect, survive and live on the land.

# Wild Rice

Wild Rice is a type of grass, which grows naturally in the fresh water lakes of central North America.

Wild rice is just one of many gifts that Turtle Island has to share with her people. In the comparison chart below, you'll quickly see the nutritional value of wild rice versus white rice.

As a staple food source for the Ojibwa people and other Nations, wild rice served as an essential source of nutrients. On the following pages, you will find information on selected plant food sources as well as recipes on the wild side. These recipes are not specific to a diabetic diet, consult with your health care provider on modifications and substitutions. These recipes are meant to inspire traditional taste buds to both young and old.

NUTRITIONAL VALUE OF WILD RICE (VS. WHITE RICE) (All values are for 1 Lb. of raw rice)					
		Wild Rice	White Rice		
Food Energy	Calories	1,601	1,647		
Protein	Grams	64	30.4		
Fat	Grams	3.2	1.8		
Carbohydrate	Grams	341.6	364.7		
Phosphorus	Milligrams	1,538	426		
Iron	Milligrams	19.1	3.6		
Sodium	Milligrams	32	23		
Potassium	Milligrams	998	417		
Thiamine Vit. B1	Milligrams	2.2	.32		
Riboflavin Vit. B2	Milligrams	2.87	.12		
Niacin	Milligrams	27.9	7.2		
Magnesium	Milligrams	585	127		



The Ojibwa people have always proclaimed the virtue of Manomin as a food rich in flavor and high in nutrition.

Wild Rice, added to a vegetarian diet, is easily digestible, high in fiber and high in protein (double that of brown rice).

Wild Rice is a rich natural source of Vitamin B, iron manganese, thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, calcium, phosphorous and carbohydrate.

A little goes a long way! One ounce (28 grams) of uncooked Wild Rice provides an individual serving.

See page 27 for Manomin recipes!

### Wild Game

Wild game animals, large and small, along with many varieties of fish and fowl formed a part of the Aboriginal diet.

As more Aboriginal people move into urban centres, we are witnessing second, third, and even forth generation urbanization along with a decrease in traditional activities, such as hunting and eating of wild game meats.

Hunting offers a wonderful opportunity to teach young children and youth about living on the land, life skills, safety and responsibility. It also provides for bonding between the hunters, young and old. These types of activities foster a sense of self, pride, and respect for our natural environment, and may promote culture and tradition.

Hunting for wild game contributes to a healthy life style. Wild game is typically lower in saturated fat and calories than domestic meat. In addition, the very process of hunting requires an exertion of energy, this energy exertion could be called exercise. Regular hunting activities, not only provides food for the family, but exercise as well.

Today, many Aboriginal people, especially those living in urban environments have less access or opportunity to hunt and consume wild meat. Some may even resist eating wild game meat simply because they have grown unfamiliar with it or because they are not sure how to cook it.

The following pages contain several recipes to cook wild game meat. These recipes are "non-recipes" and are simple and easy to make and modify. It should be noted that these recipes are not "diabetic recipes". If you are following a specialized meal plan consult with your dietician or health care professional before adding any new recipe or food to your meal plan.



Most game meat has significantly fewer calories than domestic grain-fed beef, pork and chicken.

Game meat has much more lean body tissue than domestic meat.

Game meat generally has less saturated fat.

The most important benefit is that game has a significantly higher content of polyunsaturated fat than domestic meat, especially beef and pork.

Game is high in EPA which is thought to reduce the risk of developing atherosclerosis which is one of the major risk factors for heart attack and stroke.

Bison is listed as one of the five best and most healthful foods for women due to its high iron and low fat content.

# Wild Game

Nutrient content of wild game compared to domesticated meat

The following chart provides a comparison between a variety of wild and domesticated meats, listing protein, fat, cholesterol, and calories.

This chart clearly shows that wild or (game) meat is high in protein, and low in calories and saturated fat.

Keep in mind that the nutritional value of these meats depend on several key factors:

- Type of animal deer, elk, moose, caribou, or antelope.
- Age of the animal Younger animals are usually more tender.
- Diet of the animal Animals with access to abundant food sources have more body fat
   so their meat is higher in fat and calories.

Some game meat is higher in dietary cholesterol than domestic meats, but the combination of more lean body tissue, generally fewer calories, less saturated fat and significantly higher percentage of cholesterol-reducing polyunsaturated fatty acids makes game a heart-healthy choice.

#### Nutrient content of wild game meat vs. domesticated meat.

Note: \*100 grams equals about 3 1/2 ounces. Note: \*\* Not trimmed of fat before analysis. All other samples of meat were trimmed of visible fat prior to analysis.

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Species	Protein %	Fat %	Cholesterol (mg/100g*)	Calories (Kcal/100g*)
Antelope	22.5	.9	112	144
Beef USDA choice	22.0	6.5	72	180
Beef USDA standard	22.7	2.0	69	152
Buffalo	21.7	1.9	62	138
Chicken	23.6	.7	62	135
Crane (Sandhill)	21.7	2.4	123	153
Deer (Mule)	23.7	1.3	107	145
Deer (Whitetail)	23.6	1.4	116	149
Dove	22.9	1.8	94	145
Duck (Domestic)	19.9	4.25	89	180
Duck (Mallard)	23.1	2.0	140	152
Elk	22.8	.9	67	137
Goose (Snow)	22.7	3.6	142	121
Grouse (Sharptail)	23.8	.7	105	142
Grouse (Sage)	23.7	1.1	101	140
Lamb	20.8	5.7	66	167
Moose	22.1	.5	71	130
Partridge (Gray)	25.6	.7	85	151
Pheasant (Domestic)	23.9	.8	71	144
Pheasant (Wild)	25.7	.6	52	148
Pig (Domestic Pork)	22.3	4.9	71	165
Pig (Wild Boar) **	28.3	4.38	109	160
Rabbit (Cottontail)	21.8	2.4	77	144
Rabbit (Jack)	21.9	2.4	131	153
Squirrel	21.4	3.2	83	149
Turkey (Domestic)	23.5	1.5	60	146
Turkey (Wild)	25.7	1.1	55	163
Widgeon	22.6	2.1	131	153

Surveys show that carcasses of domesticated animals have 25 to 30% fat while the average fat content of wild game animals is only 4.3%. Not only is the fat lower in game, but is also healthier. Fat from wild game contains a much higher proportion of polyunsaturated fatty acids, good fat and is lower in saturated fat, bad fat.

# **The Blueberry**

Blueberries are native to North America where they grow throughout the woods and mountain regions in the United States and Canada.

Traditionally, the Aboriginal people of North America had many uses for blueberries beyond being an excellent food source and for its medicinal properties. The Hopi called blueberries 'moqui' a term which meant spirits of the ancestors. Blueberry picking provided opportunities for socialization, story-telling and teachings.

Aboriginal people used dried berries to make puddings or smoked them to preserve them for use in the months of cold and scarcity. Pemmican was a combination of dried buffalo meat, fat and wild berries; it was often used to barter with the fur trading companies. Pemmican was a brilliant source of nutrition protein from the meat, vitamins from the berries, and calories (energy) from the fat.

Blueberries were often eaten off the branch and added to soups, stews and other foods. A favorite was dried blueberries combined with cornmeal, honey, and water that when mixed created a tasteful pudding. As a medicine, blueberry juice was often used to treat coughs, as a relaxant during childbirth, and to combat diarrhea.

#### TRY BLUEBERRIES THIS WAY:

Add fresh or dried blueberries to cold breakfast cereals.

For a deliciously elegant dessert, layer yogurt and blueberries in wine glasses and top with crystallized ginger.



Blueberries are bursting with nutrients and flavor, and are very low in calories!

Blueberries are rich in Vitamins A, C, E and betacarotene as well as rich in the minerals potassium, manganese, and magnesium.

Blueberries are also very high in fiber and low in saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium.

In fact, blueberries rate No. 1 in antioxidant benefits among 40 other fresh fruits and vegetables.

The total antioxidant capacity of blueberries is twice that of spinach and triple that of oranges!

Blueberries are also rich in pectin, a soluble fiber that has been shown to lower cholesterol.

Blueberry juice has been scientifically proven to reduce blood sugar levels!



Fiddleheads grow in clusters and is one of the first Spring plants to bloom.

Fiddlehead ferns are a good source of vitamins A and C.

Fiddleheads are versatile and easy to use. They can be used in similar ways to any firm green vegetable such as Asparagus or Broccoli florets.

Fiddleheads will lend their delicious flavor and elegant visual appeal to many familiar dishes.

Health Canada advises that fresh fiddleheads must be properly cooked before being consumed.

# Fiddleheads

Fiddlehead Greens are the premium wild forage vegetable of Spring. No other vegetable matches the delicious flavor of fresh Fiddleheads.

A Fiddlehead is a fern so young and new that it hasn't yet "unfurled" and opened its leaves. The end is still curled in a tight spiral, ready to unroll as the sun warms it and it gathers strength and size. This spiral shape reminds many people of the end of a violin, hence the name "Fiddlehead."

Every Spring, Aboriginal families on the East coast would make an outing of fiddlehead picking. The young children were taught to hunt for fiddleheads along rivers, streams, and brooks. They were also taught how to recognize them, by their brown papery scale-like covering on the uncoiled fern and by the smooth stem. Fiddleheads are picked when they are an inch or two above ground.

### Sautéed Fiddlehead Ferns with Parsley and Garlic

1-pound Fiddleheads
1 or 2 garlic cloves, minced very fine
½ cup butter or extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Trim and wash fiddleheads in cold water, removing the brown covering as you go. Drain and pat dry. Heat half of the butter (or olive oil) in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the fern shoots and turn the heat up to medium-high. The ferns should sizzle, but don't allow the butter to burn. Toss and stir for about 5 minutes. Add the other half of the butter (or oil), the garlic, and the parsley. Continue cooking for one minute longer, or until you can smell the garlic and the ferns are tender. Season with salt and pepper and serve immediately on hot plates

### **Moose and Elk**

#### **Moose Roast or Elk Roast Baked in Foil**

3-4 lb Roast 1/2 pkg. of dry onion soup

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Place roast on piece of heavy duty aluminum foil. Sprinkle 1/2 pkg of dry onion soup over meat. Bring edges of foil together and seal tightly. Place in shallow roasting pan and bake for 2 to 2 1/2 hours. There will be ample juice collected inside foil which can be thickened for gravy.

#### **Moose Meat Loaf**

 $1 \frac{1}{2}$  lbs. ground venison or moose 1 tsp. minced onion 1 cup milk 1 egg  $1 \frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt 1 cup oatmeal Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Mix all ingredients together. Place in a greased 9x5x3 inch loaf pan.

#### **Elegant Elk Stew**

2 lb Elk steak 1/2 lb Bacon or salt pork 2 tbsp flour 6 cups of stock 1 can stewed tomatoes or preferably zucchini 8 small carrots 2 stalks celery diced 2 tbsp. sugar 7 small onions garlic to taste 1 cup peas Salt and pepper to taste

Please note these recipes are not diabetic specific or tested.



Cut bacon (or salt pork) into 1" cubes and saute in large saucepan until lightly browned. Remove and set aside. Cut Elk into 1 1/2 or 2" pieces and brown over high heat in bacon fat. Stir in flour and make a roux. Lower heat and let brown 2-3 minutes. Then add stock and stir till smooth. Simmer 1 hour or more until Elk begins to get tender, add more liquid as necessary.

Add all the other ingredients, except peas, and continue to simmer to make a thick stew. Simmer peas in a separate pan until done. Strain and spoon over or around stew when served. Serve with corn muffins, 18 potatoes or parsnips and a salad.

### Deer

### Sautéed Filet of Venison

Wash venison thoroughly. Cut filet into 3/4" to 1" thick slices butter Thin lemon slices or frozen lemonade (easier)

Brush sliced filet with a very small amount of lemonade. If using lemon slices, slice lemon very thin and place a slice on each fillet. Place in refrigerator; wait 15-30 minutes. Remove, turn over, and place lemon slices on top. Again, let stand in refrigerator 15-30 minutes.

Sauté filets lemon side up, in skillet and brown quickly. Turn, placing lemon on browned side, and cook until rare or medium rare. Sprinkle with salt and serve. Serve rare. Do not overcook as venison is dry and will toughen almost immediately.

#### **Quick Cooked Venison**

1 lb. cubed venison, marinated in buttermilk with tenderizer, then washed and cleaned
4 baby carrots
1 med. onion, chopped
2 ounces butter
1/8 tsp. thyme
Flour
1 diced celery stalk
1 cup burgundy wine

Brown venison in butter. Add seasonings, celery, carrots, onion, and enough water to cover meat. Cook until tender; thicken sauce with flour and add wine. Serve with wild rice. Please note these recipes are not diabetic specific or tested.



### Easy Venison Chili Recipe

pound ground venison
 cans of kidney beans (16 oz)
 can tomato juice (1 qt 14 oz)
 Salt and pepper to taste
 drops of Tabasco sauce
 small onion (diced)
 sticks of celery (diced)
 Tbsp chili powder
 1/2 Tbsp brown sugar

Brown meat and onion. Add rest of ingredients and simmer for 1/2 hour.

### **Boiled Deer Tongue**

deer tongue
 tbs. salt
 peppers, whole
 bay leaves
 cloves, whole

Wash deer tongue well then cover with water in pot. Add spices and salt and simmer covered until tender. Remove from water and peel off outer layer before serving.

### Duck

### **Stuffed Wild Duck**

2 young, plump wild ducks, cleaned
Parsley, grapes, apple wedges
2 small onions, chopped
1 cup chopped apple, unpeeled
1 1/3 cups water
6 tbsp. melted shortening or bacon drippings
2/3 cup orange juice
2/3 cup chopped celery
Salt

Rub cavity of each duck with 1 tsp. salt. Combine celery, chopped apple, and onion; stuff into cavity of each duck. Close cavity with skewers. Brown ducks in shortening in a heavy Dutch oven; add water, orange juice, and 1/2 tsp. salt. Cover tightly; cook over low heat 45-60 minutes or until tender (time depends on age of duck). Baste 2-3 times during cooking. Garnish with parsley, grapes, and apple wedges. Makes 6 servings.

### **Duck and Wild Rice Casserole**

1 dressed duck salt and pepper water 1 small box wild rice, cooked

Put duck in crock pot. Add salt, pepper, and a small amount of water. Cook on low for 8 hours. Discard skin and bones. Pull meat apart into small pieces. Mix cooked wild rice and duck meat. Put in greased casserole dish. Heat thoroughly at 350 degrees. Please note these recipes are not diabetic specific or tested.



#### **Grilled Duck**

Duck breast sliced into 1/2" strips Olive oil 3 tbs. soy sauce 3 tbs. Worchester sauce 1 tbs. salt

Wash duck breast, slice into 1/2" strips or just wide enough not to fall through the grill. Place breast strips into plastic bag to be marinated. Pour some olive oil over the duck being sure to make sure all strips are covered. Add remaining ingredients and mix bag thoroughly and leave in refrigerator for 24 hours or more.

Take duck strips out and cook on the grill - do not overcook the duck - the meat will get tough in a hurry if you do - cook strips 3-4 minutes on each side.

### **Goose - Partridge**

#### **Roasted Wild Goose**

Wild Goose Salt and pepper Chopped onions Chopped celery Apple slices Thin bacon slices Dry red wine Flour for gravy

Allow one pound of Goose per person. Dry goose thoroughly inside and out and rub insides with salt. Fill the insides with onions, apple and celery. Place in an uncovered roasting pan, cover breasts with bacon. Add dry red wine and cook in a 325 degree oven for 10-12 minutes per pound for rare meat (really marvelous) or 15-20 minutes per pound for well done. Baste frequently with red wine drippings. Mix cold water with drippings and thicken with flour for gravy if desired.

#### **Goose Stew**

goose.
 cups of water.
 Poultry seasoning, to taste.
 cups of chopped celery ribs with leaves.
 onions, sliced.
 tablespoons of butter.
 2 cup of cooked wild rice.

Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Place the goose in pot with water, poultry seasoning and 1 cup of celery. Cover and simmer for 1 hour 30 minutes. Reserve broth and place in refrigerator. Debone the goose. Sauté the onions and 1 cup of celery with butter. Stir in reserved, degreased broth. Cover and simmer for 5 minutes. In a large pot, combine goose, cooked rice, celery and onions. Serve when heated. Please note these recipes are not diabetic specific or tested.



### **Grilled Partridge**

4 partridge 1 lemon zest (grated lemon peel) 3oz butter, softened Salt & ground black pepper

Cut the partridges in half lengthways with a sharp serrated knife and hit the pieces so the legs lie flat. Rub the partridge all over with the butter and season with salt and pepper. Cook under a hot grill being careful not to burn them, turn several times, brush with butter as needed. Cook for about 10-15 minutes, until golden brown and the skin is crisp.

### **Beaver - Ground Hog**

#### **Beaver Stew**

beaver (8-10 lbs.)
 bay leaf
 med. onions
 garlic cloves
 Celery leaves - optional
 carrots diced
 tbsp sugar
 tsp thyme
 Flour
 Salt and pepper

Remove all fat from beaver. Cut beaver the same way as you would a rabbit. Soak overnight in salt water. Marinate in buttermilk. Parboil until about half-cooked in water with the bay leaf, onions, garlic, celery and seasonings. Drain, roll in flour and brown in bacon fat, season with salt and pepper. Bake in covered pan in a moderate oven until tender. Gravy may be made from the drippings.

### **Beaver Tails**

1-2 Beaver tails Salt and pepper to taste

Hold over open flame until rough skin blisters. Remove from heat. When cool, peel off skin. Roast over coals or simmer until fork tender. Season to taste. Please note these recipes are not diabetic specific or tested.



#### (Groundhog) Woodchuck Stew

1 woodchuck, cleaned 2 onions, sliced 1/2 cup celery, sliced Flour Vinegar and water Salt and pepper Cloves

Cut woodchuck into serving pieces. Soak overnight in a solution of equal parts of water and vinegar with addition of one sliced onion and a little salt. Drain, wash, and wipe. Parboil 20 minutes, drain, and cover with fresh boiling water. Add one sliced onion, celery, a few cloves, and salt and pepper to taste. Cook until tender; thicken gravy with flour.

# Rabbit

### **Rabbit Salad**

1-2 dressed rabbits
1/2 cup chopped celery
1/2 cup pickle cubes
3 boiled eggs, chopped
1 tsp. Salt
1 tsp. Pepper
1 tsp. Sugar
1 cup Italian or vinaigrette or blue cheese dressing

Boil rabbit till tender, remove and cut into small pieces. Add celery, pickles, eggs, salt, pepper, sugar, and dressing; toss thoroughly until mixed. Serve on lettuce with sliced tomato and crackers.

### **Grilled Rabbit**

1 rabbit, cut up 1/2 cup lemon juice 3/4 cup butter 2 tsp. salt 2 tsp. summer savory 1 tsp. paprika 1 tsp. dry mustard 1/4 tsp. pepper

Marinate rabbit in lemon juice for at least three hours in refrigerator. Melt butter in saucepan and add remaining ingredients. Grill rabbit 5 to 7 inches from coals, under medium to high flame. Brush with butter mixture and grill 40-45 minutes, turning frequently until golden brown and tender. Please note these recipes are not diabetic specific or tested.



### **Plain Sautéed Rabbit**

1 rabbit, cut into serving-size pieces 1/2 cup flour 1/4 tsp pepper 1 tsp. salt 1/4 cup water 4 tbsp. fat 1 onion, chopped

Roll rabbit in mixture of flour, salt, and pepper. Brown in fat. Add water, and onion. Cover and simmer until tender. Remove cover for the last 10 minutes to brown.

### **Roasted Rabbit**

1 Rabbit Garlic powder Lemon Butter Salt and pepper

Rub surfaces of rabbit pieces with garlic powder, and lemon. Stuff if desired. Place on a greased rack in a shallow pan. Brush with melted butter and cover loosely with foil. Roast at 325 degrees F. for 1 hour (store rabbit) or 2 hours (wild rabbit). Remove foil during last 1/2 hour to brown.

# Fish

### **Poached Pickerel (Walleye)**

pound northern Pickerel fillets
 tbsp. olive oil
 cup chopped onions
 cup of julienne carrots
 large julienne green pepper
 large tomatoes peeled, diced
 cup diced celery
 tsp. garlic powder
 Salt and pepper to taste

Simmer vegetables and seasoning until tender. Poach Pickerel until tender in just enough broth to cover. Remove Pickerel and reserve. Blend vegetables and broth into a sauce on high. Place Pickerel in a warm serving dish, cover with sauce and serve.

### **Crispy Oven Fish**

tbsp vegetable oil
 lb fish fillet = (walleye, pike, sole, flounder and/or whitefish are recommended)
 cup milk
 tsp salt
 unsalted soda crackers crushed fine
 Lemon wedges for serving

Season fish with salt and pepper. Dip both sides of fish in milk and gently coat with cracker crumbs. Place in single layer on baking pan. Bake for 10-15 minutes at 450 degrees until crispy and firm to touch.

Please note these recipes are not diabetic specific or tested.



### Salmon & Wild Rice Chowder

1/4 cup butter
1/2 cup chopped onion
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
Salt and pepper to taste
4 to 5 cups milk
1 cup cooked wild rice
1 to 1 1/2 cups cooked or uncooked salmon, cut into bite-size pieces
1 dash Tabasco to taste

In a large soup pot over medium-low heat, add butter, onion, garlic, and thyme; sauté until soft. Add flour, salt, and pepper, stirring constantly until well blended. Gradually add milk, stirring constantly until sauce comes to a boil and thickens. Add cooked wild rice and salmon; simmer 5 minutes until salmon is heated/or cooked. Season to taste with Tabasco, and additional salt and pepper if needed. Remove from heat and serve.

# Wild Rice

#### Man-O-Min (Ojibwa Wild Rice)

1 cup wild rice 4 cups 1 teaspoon salt

Wash the wild rice in a colander or bowl, changing the water two or three times. Measure water into a large saucepan; add salt. Heat the water to boiling. Slowly add the rinsed rice to the boiling water. Lower heat to medium and simmer the rice, undisturbed, for about 40 minutes. (Do not stir the rice.) The rice grains will swell to four times their original size. Serve hot or at room temperature.

#### **Popped Wild Rice**

Wild Rice Cooking oil

Place about 1/2 inch of oil in a small, shallow pan with a small strainer set in the oil. Heat at high temperature until oil is at about 450 F. Drop 1 kernel of rice into the strainer. When it sizzles, cracks open and expands to about double it's length, the oil is ready. (You may wish to reduce the heat temporarily.) Add 1 tablespoon of rice at a time to the oil, when all the kernels have expanded (which constitutes the popping), empty the strainer out onto paper toweling. Repeat, adjusting heat as necessary. Crisp popped rice may be seasoned with salt, pepper, and mixed herbs to enhance the flavor. This popped rice can be made in large quantities and stored in a sealed container for several weeks.

Note: Not all wild rice will pop successfully. The best wild rice to use is hand processed wild rice that usually has more moisture left in each kernel, which will expand when heated. Please note these recipes are not diabetic specific or tested.



#### Wild Rice Casserole

- 1 1/4 cups of uncooked wild rice
- 2 teaspoons of salt
- 1/2 teaspoon of thyme leaves
- 1 medium onion, sliced
- 3 cups of water
- 2 tablespoons of butter or margarine

Heat oven to 350°F. In a 2-quart casserole, combine all ingredients. Bake covered at 350°F. for 1-1/4 to 1 -1/2 hours or until rice is tender, stirring occasionally during last half hour

### Long-Grain and Wild Rice Mix

1 cup of long-grain brown rice
 1/2 cup of wild rice
 1 tablespoon of dried parsley
 1 teaspoon of dried thyme

1/2 teaspoon of salt

Boil 3 1/4 cups water in medium sized saucepan. Add all ingredients, cover, and simmer for 50 minutes. Remove from heat, and wait 10 minutes before fluffing with a fork.

### **Bannock - Fry Bread**

Bannock or fry bread is simple to make, and just as easy to modify and flavor. Several "recipes" are provided here, however most basic bannock recipes contains the following ingredients:

Flour - Baking Powder - Water - Salt - Lard or Fat

Bannock can be cooked several different ways, the most common method is pan frying. These recipes can be used for oven baking, bannock on a stick, and even dumplings!

Bannock on a stick? Simply make a drier dough, and cook on a stick over an open fire, turning as needed.

Making your favorite stew, and want dumplings? These recipes make a fantastic dumpling, again just make the dough drier.

### **Fry Bread Recipe I**

2 c Flour 1/3 c Powdered milk 2 tsp Baking powder 1 tsp Salt 3 Tbsp Lard, divided 3/4 c Warm water Oil

Mix dry ingredients. Cut in 2 Tbsp. lard until crumbly. Add water & mix until a soft dough forms. Knead until dough is smooth & springy in texture. Make into 12 balls. Melt 1 Tbls. lard & brush on each ball of dough. Set aside for 30-45 minutes. On a lightly floured surface, roll each ball to a 4" circle, then stretch to 7-8" in diameter. Poke hole in center. Fry in oil until lightly browned, turning once. Please note these recipes are not diabetic specific or tested.



#### **Fry Bread Recipe II** 3 c Flour 1/2 tsp Salt Vegetable Oil for frying; 1 1/2 tsp Baking Powder 1 1/3 c Warm Water

Mix the flour, baking powder and salt together Add water and knead the dough until soft. Roll the dough until 1/4 inch thick, then cut out rounds 4 inches in diameter. Fry the bread in 2 to 3 inches of hot oil until puffed and browned on both sides.

#### **Enjoying Bannock**

Bannock is a versatile food that can be served with butter, honey or jam, or as the bottom layer of an Indian taco. Hot bannock goes very well with wild game, such as fresh fried moose meat.

Many people modify and flavor bannock recipes in a number of ways, some ideas are below, be creative and invent your own family favorites:

- Add cheese chunks
- Add cinnamon and raisons
- Add blueberries (or your favorite berries)
- Add diced onions, savory spices and parsley

# Recipes on the Wild Side

# **Three Sisters Soup**

**Dried Hulled Corn Soup** (makes 16 quarts of soup):

pound dried kidney beans;
 Tablespoon baking soda for soaking beans,
 Water to cover the beans for soaking.
 quarts dried white flint corn kernels hulled from the cob;
 pounds salt pork;
 quart hardwood ashes.
 Lots of water.
 Salt and Pepper to taste

Please note these recipes are not diabetic specific or tested.



Place kidney beans in a medium pot and pour in water to cover the beans by

2 inches and add 1 tablespoon baking soda. Place a lid on the pot and soak beans overnight. After the beans have soaked overnight, change the water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and cook beans until tender (about 1 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours). Set aside.

Put the dried corn kernels in a kettle with enough water to cover the corn. Bring to a boil and add ashes. Cook for about 20 minutes, stirring frequently. You will notice the color of the white corn kernels turn from an off-white color to red-orange. This is the result of the chemical reaction of the ashes and water on the corn. This loosens the hulls or shells on the corn and breaks open the hard outer shell. When this color change occurs, the "lye action" has begun, and actually changes the corn from a carbohydrate to a protein. When the hulls slip off the kernels easily, remove the kettle from the heat, drain the water and rinse corn in cold water, working the corn with the fingers to remove the hulls. (A handmade basket called a corn hulling basket, is traditionally used for this purpose)

Place the corn back in the kettle and replace the water and return to a boil. Boil for about 20 to 30 minutes and drain and rinse again. Continue to rinse until the water runs clear and no evidence of ashes remain. Place corn kernels back in the kettle, replace water and return to a boil. You may need to repeat the rinsing and boiling several times until the water is completely clear.

When the corn kernels are good and clean, place them in a large kettle or canning kettle with clean water. Add beans, and bring to a boil.

Cut salt pork into small pieces and add to the corn and bean mixture and continue to boil Be sure to use plenty of water, because the corn swells as it cooks. Cook 3 to 4 hours, or until corn is tender stirring occasionally and adding water as needed. Season to taste with salt and pepper as desired.

Some people add cut up cubes of squash to this hulled corn soup, using all of the Three Sisters. Others add vegetables, such as cabbage and carrot, and may use pork hock or pork loin instead of salt pork.



### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

This toolkit was designed to supplement information and resources related to diabetes prevention, awareness and management. It was <u>not</u> designed to replace the valuable insight, care and treatment provided by your Health Care Professional.

**Always consult your Health Care Professional** 

Weekly Meal Plan

Week Of:\_\_\_\_\_

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks (s)	Water
Sunday					
Monday					
TUESDAY					
WEDNES- DAY					

Notes / Recipes / Grocery Store Sales

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snacks (s)	Water
THURSDAY					
Friday					
SATURDAY					

Shopping List	My Coupons

### Weekly Activity & Exercise Tracker

Week of:

Plan your week and follow through! Make it fun, include family, friends, community and even your pets! Don't forget to use your pedometer and track your time. Each  $\Box$  is 15 minutes of time! Challenge yourself week to week!

	Activities & Exercise What I Plan To Do	Activities & What I Actu		Using My Pedometer	Tracking My Time!	Total Time
Sunday				My Steps:		
Monday				My Steps:		
TUESDAY				My Steps:		
WEDNES- DAY				My Steps:		
THURSDAY				My Steps:		
Friday				My Steps:		
SATURDAY				My Steps:		
My goals for t	his week are:		I really enj	oved	becaus	e:

NWAC Diabetes Toolkit: Weekly Activity & Exercise Tracker. Remember to consult with your health care professional before beginning any program.



### Fact Sheet: Glycemic Index

This fact sheet has been put together to help you gain a better understanding of the glycemic index. Always consult your Health Care Professional before making any changes to your diabetes management plan.

#### What is the Glycemic Index (GI)?

The glycemic index (GI) ranks carbohydrates in foods on a scale from 0 to 100 based on how much it raises your blood sugar levels after eating. In other words, the GI is a measure of the effects of carbohydrates on blood sugar levels.

#### The Glycemic Index is based on a scale, what are the scale levels?

Low GI= Under 55 Moderate GI = 56 -69 High GI = Greater than 70

#### What is the Glycemic Index Chart?

The glycemic index chart contains a list of foods along with a number ranging from 1 to 100. This number shows how much and how quickly your blood sugar will rise with each item. A food item with a high GI will be digested and burn energy faster while raising your level of blood sugar quickly. An item with a low GI will take more time to digest and will slowly raise your blood sugar level.

#### Why was the Glycemic Index created?

The GI was developed to help people with diabetes control their blood glucose levels.

#### How can the Glycemic Index help me?

The GI can help you select foods for diabetes management. Low GI diets have been shown to improve both glucose and lipid levels in people with diabetes (type 1 and type 2). They have benefits for weight control because they help control appetite and delay hunger. Low GI diets also reduce insulin levels and insulin resistance.

High	What are the benefits of using the Glycemic Index? There are numerous benefits to using the GI in selecting foods to consume, besides how it effects your blood sugar levels:	
GI	O Low GI diets help people lose and manage weight	
Over	o Low GI diets increase the body's sensitivity to insulin	
70	o Low GI carbs improve diabetes management	
	O Low GI carbs reduce the risk of heart disease	1995
	O Low GI carbs improve blood cholesterol levels	
Medium	O Low GI carbs reduce hunger and keep you fuller for longer	
GI	O Low GI carbs prolong physical endurance	
56 to 69	o High GI carbs help re-fuel carbohydrate stores after exercise	
	Recent studies from the Harvard School of Public Health indicate that the risks of diseases such as type 2 diabetes and coronary heart disease are strongly related to the GI of the overall diet.	
Low GI	In 1999, the World Health Organization (WHO) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) rec- ommended that people in industrialized countries base their diets on low-GI foods in order to pre-	E
55and	vent the most common diseases of affluence, such as coronary heart disease, diabetes and obesity.	The second second
Under	Talk to your doctor, registered dietitian, diabetes educator or health care professional about the Glycemic Index today.	Star West



### **Glycemic Index Chart of Common Foods**

GI numbers may differ by the type of food, its ripeness, processing, the length of storage, cooking methods, and its variety. The numbers provided below should be considered as a guide indicating which category a specific food item is most often rated.

	Low GI (55 and Under)	Medium GI (56 to 69)	High GI (70 and Over)
Cereals	All Bran 51 Bran Buds + Phylum 45 Frosted Flakes (3/4c) 55 Muesli, natural 54 Oatmeal, old-fashioned 48 Special K 54 Multigrain Hot Cereal 25	Cream of Wheat 66 Grape nuts 67 Life 66 Nutri-grain 66 Puffed Wheat 67 Shredded Wheat 67 Fruit Loops 69 Pan cakes (mix) 67 Oatmeal, one-minute 66	Bran Flakes 74 Cheerios 74 Corn Chex 83 Corn Flakes (1c) 83 Raison Bran 72 Rice Chex 89 Total 76 Rice Krispies 82 Pop Tarts 70 Waffles 76
Fruit	Apple (med.) 38 Cherries (10 lg.) 22 Grapefruit 25 Kiwi 52 Mango 55 Orange 43 Peach 42 Plums 39 Prunes 39 Grapes, green (1c) 46 Strawberries 40	Apricots (3 med.) 57 Banana 56 Cantaloupe 65 Papaya 58 Pear 58 Pineapple (2slices) 66 Raisins (1/4c) 64 Fruits, mixed, dry 60 Fruit Cocktail 55	Dates 103 Watermelon (1 cup) 72
Common Snack Foods	Chocolate Bar 49 Peanut Crunch Bar, Usana 26 Popcorn, light microwave 55 Pound Cake 54 Snickers Bar 41 Strawberry Jam 51 Cashews 22 Peanuts 14 Walnuts 15 Oatmeal Cookie (1) 55 Apple Muffin 48 M&M's Chocolate, peanut 33 Nutella spread (2oz) 30 Fruit strips 29	Croissant 67 Oatmeal Cookie 57 Arrowroot Cookie 63 Potato Chips (14p) 56 Power Bars 58 Shortbread Cookies 64 Wheat Thins 67 Rye crackers 68 Mars bar 68 Granola bar, chewy 61 Muffin, Bran 60 Muffin, Carrot 62 Pastries/Pastry 59 Marshmallows 62	Corn Chips 72 Donut 76 Graham Crackers 74 Jelly Beans 80 Life Saver 70 Pretzels 83 Saltine Crackers 74 Vanilla Wafers 77 Rice cakes, plain (3) 82 Rice crackers 91 Soda crackers 74 Melba Toast 70 Cupcakes 73 Skittles 70
Common Drinks	Apple Juice 40 Orange Juice 50 Grapefruit Juice 48 Tomato Juice 38 Lemonade, sweetened 54 Chocolate Milk 34	Fanta soft drink (1can) 63 Fruit Punch 67 Orange soft drink (1can) 68 Cranberry Juice Cocktail 68	Coca-Cola (1can) 77 Gatorade (8oz) 78 Energy Drinks 136
Milk Products	Skim Milk 32 Soy Milk 31 Whole Milk 30 Yogurt, fruit 36 Yogurt, plain 14 Low fat Ice cream 35	Ice cream, vanilla 60	Tofu Frozen Dessert 115



### Fact Sheet: Glycemic Index

GI numbers may differ by the type of food, its ripeness, processing, the length of storage, cooking methods, and its variety. The numbers provided below should be considered as a guide indicating which category a specific food item is most often rated as.

	Low GI (55 and Under)	Medium GI (56 to 69)	High GI (70 and Over)
Vegetables & Beans	Carrots, fresh, boiled 49 Peas, fresh, boiled 48 Broccoli / Cabbage 10 Lettuce / Mushrooms 10 Onions / Red peppers 10 Sweet potato 54 Artichoke / Asparagus 15 Spinach / Tomatoes 15 Zucchini / Cucumber 15 Bean Sprouts 25 Green Beans 38 Chick Peas (can) 42 Kidney Beans (can) 52 Baked Beans 48	Corn, sweet 56 Beets 69 Potato, new 62	Parsnips 97 Potato (baked) 93 Potato (mashed, instant) 86 Potato (French fries) 75 Pumpkin 75 Broad Beans 79 Chips 75
Breads	Pumpernickel 49 Sourdough 54 English Muffin, whole grain 45 Multigrain Breads 45 Wholegrain Bread 40	Croissant 67 Rye Bread 64 Wheat Bread 68 Blueberry Muffin 59 Pita Bread 57 Hamburger Bun 61 Hotdog Buns 62	Bagel, plain 72 French Baguette 95 Dark Rye 76 White Bread 70 Kaiser Roll 73 White Rolls 73 Bread stuffing, Paxo 74
Pasta / Rice	Spaghetti 43 Ravioli (meat) 39 Fettuccini (egg) 32 Spiral Pasta 43 Linguini 46 Macaroni 47 Uncle Bens Converted Rice 44 Brown Rice 55 Noodles, Instant 46 Barley, pearled (1/2c) 25	Rice Vermicelli 58 Couscous (1/2 c) 65 Macaroni & Cheese (KD) 64 Wild Rice 57 Long Grain White Rice 58 Udon Noodles 62 Barley, flakes 66 Gnocchi 68	Instant Rice 87 Short Grain White Rice 72 Sticky Rice 90 Millet 71
Sugars / Sweeteners	Fructose 23 Lactose 46 Raw Honey 30 Maple syrup 54	Honey 58 Sucrose (white sugar) 65 Brown sugar 64	Glucose 96 - 100 Maltose 105
Other Staple Foods	Chicken Nuggets, frozen 46 Pizza, Pizza Hut Supreme 36 Cannelloni, with spinach and ricotta 15 Chili Con Carne 34 Chow mein, chicken 55 Fajitas, chicken 42 Beef Casserole 53	Taco Shells 68 Sheppard's Pie 66 Cheese Pizza (Pilsbury) 60 Hamburger (McDonald's) 66 McChicken (McDonald's) 66	Stir Fried Vegetables with Chicken and White Rice 73

The glycemic index is not just a tool for diabetics. Using it can help anyone control their weight and live a longer, healthier life. It takes time and some experimentation to find the right way to use the glycemic index chart, but using it to plan your diet is really worth the effort.



### Fact Sheet: Glycemic Index

#### Does the Glycemic Index apply to all foods?

No, only foods with measureable carbohydrates are rated. Some foods contain almost no carbohydrates so it is not possible to get a GI value from them. These foods include meats, fish, chicken, eggs, cheese, most nuts, oils, cream, butter and most vegetables.

#### How is the Glycemic Index of foods calculated?

The GI rating is attained in the following way: Measured portions of food containing 50 grams of carbohydrate are fed to 10 healthy people after an overnight fast. Blood samples are then taken at 15-30 minute intervals over the next two hours, giving the blood glucose response curve for the two hour period. That response is then compared against a reference food and averaged across all 10 subjects to get a relative index value.

#### Does it matter how much low Glycemic Index foods I consume at once?

Yes, the quantity of food consumed at any one time does matter. It is not just the GI that leads to the increase in blood sugar, the amount you consume is equally important. This is referred to as the glycemic load or GL.

#### What is the Glycemic Load - GL?

Glycemic Load is the application of the GI to a standard serving of food. The GL ranks food according to actual carbohydrate content in a typical portion-size, not how fast a 50 gram amount of carbohydrates raises blood sugar levels. Simply put, the GI combined with total intake is referred to as "Glycemic Load" or GL.

#### How is the Glycemic Load measured?

To attain the GL of a typical serving of food divide the GI of that food by 100 and multiply this by the useable carbohydrate content (in grams) in the serving size.

Formula: GL = GI/100 x Net Carbs

A GL of 20 or more is high, a GL of 11 to 19 is medium, and a GL of 10 or less is low.

**Can you give me an example of the Glycemic Index and the Glycemic Load?** Yes, we will use a favored summer fruit for this example, the watermelon.

According to the GI chart, watermelon has a high GI at 72. But remember, the GI is calculated based on a consumption of 50 grams of carbohydrates. A normal 120 gram serving of watermelon contains only 6 grams of available carbohydrates. The GI chart was measured on 10 people consuming just over 8 servings each!

So let's do the math: GL = GI/100 x Net Carbs4.32 = 72/100 x 6

Rounded, the GL of a serving of watermelon is 4.

**Does this mean I can eat as much high Glycemic Index foods as I want?** No. Each food is very different, most high GI foods rate as high GL foods. The above example is unique and is used to emphasize the importance of taking the time to calculate the GL of foods consumed. Always consult with your doctor or health care professional when considering any changes to your diet or diabetes management plan.

#### Glycemic Index Online Resources

Canadian Diabetes Association: www.diabetes.ca

Official Glycemic Index Website and GI Database: www.glycemicindex.com

Fifty 50: *Plenty of great information!* www.lowglycemicdiet.com

Online Glycemic Index Database: www.gilisting.com

The Glycemic Index & Low GI Recipes: www.glycemicindex.ca

> The Glycemic Gourmet: www.glycemicgourmet.com

Glycemic Edge: www.glycemicedge.com

The GI Diet Guide: www.the-gi-diet.org

Carbs Information: www.carbs-information.com

Low Glycemic Load:

#### Making the Switch!

Don't care for math or complicated calculations? A simple rule for eating low GI/GL way is the "switch method".

Simply, switch from eating high carbs for low carbs on the GI chart!

#### NWAC Diabetes Self-Management Toolkit for Aboriginal Women - Fact Sheet: Foot Care

### Fact Sheet: Foot Care

This fact sheet has been put together to help you gain a better understanding of foot care. Always consult your Health Care Professional before making any changes to your diabetes management plan.

#### Why is Foot Care important to people with diabetes?

Over time, high sugar levels caused by diabetes can damage the blood vessels and nerves in your body, causing diabetic neuropathy. This can lead to diabetic neuropathy (nerve damage) which may cause muscular weakness, loss of feeling or sensation, and loss of autonomic functions such as digestion, erection, bladder control and sweating among others. Poor circulation can also result due to damage to the blood vessels. For your feet, this means that they may not be getting a good supply of blood.

If you have diabetes, take care of your feet daily to avoid problems.

#### Diabetic neuropathy and poor circulation can turn small foot problems into serious complications.

These complications can include:

- Ulcers (sores) that don't heal
- Corns
- Calluses
- Cracked heels
- Hammertoes
- Bunions
- Ingrown toenails

#### Talk to your Doctor about Foot Care:

Treating diabetes includes daily prevention practices, and foot care is one of them. During visits to your doctor, nurse or health care provider, have your feet checked and ask about treatment options if your skin is cracked, or if you have calluses, corns or bunions.

Report all foot care problems and call your doctor right away if you have:

- Signs of redness
- Swelling
- Pain that doesn't go away
- Numbness or tingling in any part of your foot
- Loss of feeling
- Corns, calluses or sores
- Cuts
- Ingrown toenails

Remember: Never treat corns or calluses yourself and do not use medicated pads or attempt to "fix" feet issues on your own. Make an appointment with your doctor as soon as possible if you suspect something is wrong with your feet.



Best word of advice:

By taking care of yourself, you take care of your diabetes; this will go a long way in keeping your blood sugar levels in control and reduce complications! F















Talk to your doctor, or health care professional about Foot Care today.

#### NWAC Diabetes Self-Management Toolkit for Aboriginal Women - Fact Sheet: Foot Care

### Foot Care: Hints & Tips

- $\square$  Inspect your feet every day, use a mirror to help you see the bottoms of your feet.
- ✓ Wash your feet every day with lukewarm water and mild soap, never use hot water as you may easily burn yourself in without. A good temperature, is the temperature you would use to bathe a newborn baby.
- ☑ Use a soft towel to dry your feet well, patting gently, do not rub your feet. Don't forget to make sure the space between your toes is dry.
- ☑ Use cream or lanolin lotion to keep the skin of your feet smooth. Pay special attention to your heels. Do not apply lotion between your toes, this may promote fungal infection.
- Keep your feet dry at all times. Dusting them with nonmedicated powder before putting on shoes, socks or stockings will help.
- Always wear clean, dry comfortable socks and change them daily. Avoid socks that are thick or bulky, and those with tight elastic bands. Many department stores now

### #1: Keep your blood sugar level as close to normal as possible and follow your doctor's advice on diet, exercise and medication.

carry socks for diabetics at a reasonable price. Some health care providers may provide a sample pair free for your use.

- Cut toe nails carefully. Avoid ingrown toenails by cutting them straight across.
- Always have something on your feet—do not go barefoot, even in your own home.
- ☑ Be aware of the temperature; don't let your feet get too hot or too cold. If your feet get cold at night, wear socks to bed. Never use heating pads or hot water bottles to warm your feet.
- ☑ If you smoke, quit. Smoking restricts blood flow to your feet and other extremities.
- Have your feet checked regularly at every doctor's visit, and take advantage of health fairs and mobile diabetes clinics.
- Be careful to avoid injury, such as bumping the foot or overdoing an exercise program.

### Charcot Foot:

Charcot foot is a serious condition that can lead to foot deformity, disability and amputation. Because of this it is very important that people with diabetes take preventive measures and seek immediate care if signs or symptoms appear. Charcot foot develops as a result of neuropathy.

#### How does Charcot Foot happen?

Charcot foot is a condition caused by weakened bones in the foot and can occur in people with significant neuropathy (nerve damage). As the bones in the foot weaken, they fracture and with continued walking will cause the foot to change shape. As this condition progresses the joints will collapse and the foot takes on an abnormal shape (see image).

### Early diagnosis of Charcot foot is important for successful treatment. It is very important to follow your doctor's treatment plan for Charcot foot. Failing to do so can lead to the loss of a toe, foot, leg, or life.

#### **Symptoms of Charcot Foot**

- Warmth to the touch (affected area will feel warmer than other areas and other foot)
- Redness in the foot
- Swelling in the foot
- Pain or soreness in the foot

#### Non-surgical treatment care for Charcot foot consists of:

- Immobilization: the foot is fragile in the early stages, follow your doctors advice on mobility issues.
- Custom shoes and bracing: this can include special shoe inserts, your doctor will see to your custom needs.
- Activity modification: this may be required to avoid repetitive trauma to both feet.

#### **Charcot Foot Prevention**

Daily foot care is important in preventing complications of the foot, such as Charcot foot. Follow the hints and tips above and report all foot care problems to your doctor immediately. Never ignore foot problems, think you sprained your foot? See your doctor!

Talk to your doctor, or health care professional about Foot Care today.