



This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Only your doctor can diagnose and treat a medical problem.

***Stick  
to the Plan...  
for a  
Healthier You***



## Stick to the Plan...

Who's the most important member on your healthcare team — is it your doctor, your nurse, or your loved one? Surprise — it's you!



No matter how good a doctor's treatment plan is for your diabetes, it's usually up to you whether or not to follow it. In fact, more than half of all Americans with chronic diseases don't follow their doctor's medication instructions and lifestyle

guidance.<sup>1</sup> That can be a big mistake: according to the American Diabetes Association, "you're in charge" of sticking to a daily treatment plan for controlling diabetes — including watching what you eat, being active, checking blood sugar, and taking your medicine.<sup>2</sup>

For people who need to take control of their diabetes, it may be especially tough if they need to quit smoking, cut calories, and/or be more physically active. So today, healthcare providers are working to help patients stick to their treatment plan by encouraging them to actively agree to work with their doctor on treatment options, instead of not following (or ignoring) a doctor's advice.<sup>3</sup>



### References:

1. American Heart Association. Statistics you need to know. Available at: <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=107>. Accessed March 8, 2007.
2. American Diabetes Association. Top story: diabetes experts say "you're in charge." Available at: [http://www.diabetes.org/all-about-diabetes/chan\\_eng/16/16p1.htm](http://www.diabetes.org/all-about-diabetes/chan_eng/16/16p1.htm). Accessed August 3, 2007.
3. Case Management Society of America. Case Management Adherence Guidelines version 2.0. Available at: <http://www.cmsa.org/PROGRAMSEVENTS/CaseManagementAdherenceGuidelinesCMAG/HistoryofCMAG/tabid/210/Default.aspx>. Accessed March 9, 2007.
4. Adapted from: American Heart Association. Are you compliant? Available at: <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=110>. Accessed March 8, 2007.
5. Adapted from: American Heart Association. Quick tips for compliance. Available at: <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=165>. Accessed March 8, 2007.

### **Quick Tips for Lifestyle Changes<sup>5</sup>**

- ▶ Ask your doctor or healthcare provider to help you with your diet and physical activity plan
- ▶ Read food labels to keep tabs on fat, sodium and other ingredients in your diet
- ▶ Keep track of your improved eating and activity — seeing your successes written down will encourage you to keep them up!
- ▶ If you don't feel like you're making progress, ask your doctor why your progress is slow
- ▶ If you're having trouble giving up smoking, ask your doctor if you can take a medical treatment option to help you stop smoking
- ▶ Get more involved in making treatment decisions and solving problems that help you follow the doctor's orders

## **for a Healthier You**

Here are a few steps you can take to stick with your treatment plan — it's what doctors call "adherence" to treatment, and it's good for health's sake!

### **How's your adherence? Answer the following...<sup>4</sup>**

1. Do you forget or ignore your doctor's advice to eat healthier and get more physical activity?
2. Have you ever walked out of your doctor's office with only vague instructions about having a healthy diet and regular physical activity?
3. Are you confused about what type of physical activity you should be doing?
4. Do you have questions about what you can and should eat or what types of food to avoid?
5. Are you confused about how much alcohol is OK to drink, considering your medical conditions and medicines?
6. If you are a smoker, are you confused about how to quit?
7. Have you tried to quit, but can't seem to stick with it?
8. Have you thought about asking your doctor for help, but haven't yet?



If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, then you may need additional help to better understand the treatment you and your doctor have developed to improve your health. And remember — asking for help is a sign of strength to want to make changes for the better.

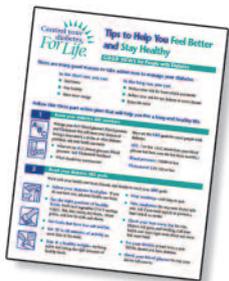
### **Start reading—and start reducing risks**

Empower yourself. Take charge of your own health. Ask your doctor specific questions about diet, physical activity, smoking, medications and risk factors for diabetes. Remember, knowledge is power, so put it to good use against diabetes.

The National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse of the National Institutes of Health provides free patient information on controlling your diabetes at:

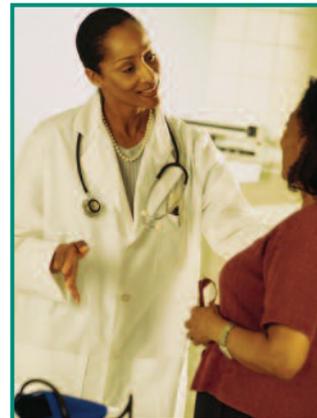
**[http://ndep.nih.gov/diabetes/pubs/TipsFeel\\_Eng.pdf](http://ndep.nih.gov/diabetes/pubs/TipsFeel_Eng.pdf)** or call **1-800-438-5383**.

You will find lots of information to help you follow through with lifestyle changes, reach your diabetes goals, and keep diabetes under control.



### **Your doctor, your coach, your health**

It's **your** health, so it's up to you to do the right things to protect it. Ask your doctor's advice, follow it carefully, and feel free to question anything you don't understand.



You and your doctor may wish to fill out a *Diabetes Therapy Adherence Contract* that both of you sign as a pledge to work together. Once on your treatment plan, it may also motivate you to use *A Blood Sugar Diary* to keep track of your blood sugar levels. (Your doctor or health plan can provide you with copies of these useful adherence tools.)

Finally, think of your doctor as your coach to help guide you to a healthier lifestyle. Remember to stick to your treatment plan; it can give you an edge against diabetes!