

Quality Report Card



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DIABETES CARE

Living Healthy with Diabetes

Diabetes is a disease that affects the body's ability to turn food into energy. More than 122 million people in the U.S. are living with diabetes, and 1 out of 3 individuals do not know they have the disease. Left unmanaged, diabetes can significantly increase the risk of other health conditions, such as heart disease, stroke and damage to nerves, kidneys and eyes. Adopting a healthy lifestyle, monitoring blood glucose levels, and working with a healthcare team can help a person with diabetes manage their condition. These actions also may improve other health factors, such as weight, blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol.

Being overweight can make it difficult to manage diabetes. Making wholesome food choices, including controlling portion sizes and reading food labels, is essential to maintaining a healthy weight. Regular, balanced meals will help keep blood sugar levels within a patient's target range. A dietitian or diabetes educator can assist a patient with diabetes to develop a healthy meal plan. The following foods are recommended for healthy eating and managing diabetes:

Fresh fruits and vegetables

- High-fiber cereals and breads made from whole grains
- Fish and poultry
- High-quality protein, such as eggs, beans and low-fat dairy
- Healthy fats from nuts, olive oil, fish oils, flax seeds, or avocados

Carbohydrates have a large impact on blood sugar levels. Complex carbohydrates, such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts and beans are high in fiber and digested slowly, which keeps blood sugar levels more even. It is important to

avoid simple carbohydrates, such as soda, pre-packaged foods, cake and candy, as these foods can cause blood sugar levels to rise. The glycemic index (GI) measures how carbohydrate foods affect blood sugar levels and can be a helpful tool in determining which carbs are best for maintaining blood sugar levels.

Physical activity is an important part of managing diabetes. Exercise makes the body more sensitive to insulin – the hormone that regulates blood sugar. The Department of Health and Human Services recommends that people with type 2 diabetes complete 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week. Activities, such as brisk walking, playing sports, dancing or swimming increase heart rate and work the large muscles in the body, which is important for overall fitness. Individuals who are not accustomed to a lot of physical activity may start slow and gradually work up to the recommended level of activity. Including strength training two days a week will tone muscles and improve balance. Other benefits of increased physical activity include weight loss, improved sleep and mood, decreased blood pressure and lower cholesterol levels.

Monitoring and regulating blood glucose levels is key to managing diabetes. It allows patients to see what affects their blood sugar levels, such as the foods they eat, exercise or taking certain medications. Regulating blood sugar levels also may improve a person's energy and mood. A physician will be able to tell a patient with diabetes how often to check blood sugar levels and what target ranges are appropriate based on their age, health condition and diabetes diagnosis.

The A1C test measures a person's average blood sugar level, also known as blood glucose, over a three month period and is used in addition to regular blood sugar monitoring. Performed in a physician's office, the A1C test is a critical step in helping patients manage their diabetes. Higher blood glucose levels indicate an increased risk of developing complications related to diabetes. Patients with diabetes will typically have an A1C test twice a year, but it could be more often depending on treatment progress.

When diet, exercise and blood glucose monitoring are not enough to manage diabetes, patients may be prescribed medication, such as insulin, to help. Those who are prescribed medication to manage their diabetes may be referred to the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Medication Therapy Clinic. The Medication Therapy Clinic assists patients with monitoring their blood glucose levels in a variety of ways. Staff work with individuals to create specialized treatment plans that allow patients to understand more about the dosing of their medications. Staff also help patients learn the signs and symptoms to reduce the risk of diabetes-related complications.

Working closely with a healthcare team is a critical step for diabetes management. LMH has clinical pharmacists, nurses and dietitians with specific knowledge and training in diabetes who work together to help patients reach personal goals for better health. Marco M. De Santis, D.O., of Licking Memorial Endocrinology, treats patients with diabetes and other glandular disorders through consultation and Hospital care. Appointments can be scheduled by calling (220) 564-1740.



Patient Story – Cynthia Jenny

Years before being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, Cynthia Jenny's primary care physician, Garth Bennington, M.D., of Licking Memorial Family Practice – West Main, warned Cynthia that she had prediabetes. Patients with prediabetes have higher blood sugar levels than normal, but not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes, and are at increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke. The serious health condition can be reversed by making healthy lifestyle changes, such as eating a healthy diet, exercising and losing weight. Cynthia knew she had to do something to prevent the development of type 2 diabetes, and asked Dr. Bennington about educational opportunities through Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS).

As an employee of an Ohio restaurant chain, Cynthia worked long hours and had a very lengthy commute. She felt like she had little time to care for herself, and did not understand what steps to take to lower her blood sugar levels. "It was very scary for me. A manager I knew had a foot amputated due to complications from diabetes," Cynthia said. "I did not want that to happen to me, but I did not have the education I needed to make a complete lifestyle change."

Soon, testing revealed her blood sugar levels had risen, and Dr. Bennington diagnosed her with type 2 diabetes. With type 2 diabetes, the body does not use insulin properly causing high blood sugar levels. Insulin is a hormone that regulates blood sugar by helping cells absorb the sugar from foods to produce energy.

Once diagnosed with diabetes, Dr. Bennington referred Cynthia to Licking Memorial Diabetes Self-management Education Services – a series of classes designed by registered nurses, dietitians and pharmacists and approved by the American

Diabetes Association. Patients learn how to care for themselves on a daily basis through topics such as proper nutrition, medication management, blood sugar monitoring, the importance of physical activity, problem solving and reducing risks of diabetes complications.

"The classes were exactly what I needed to understand my diagnosis and the lifestyle changes I needed to make," Cynthia said. "It made knowing I had diabetes less frightening." Learning to read food labels helped Cynthia spot hidden sugars and calculate her daily intake of carbohydrates. She decided to drink more water and give up sugary sodas. "The information I received helped me be more successful in managing my diabetes, and it affirmed what I learned from other people with diabetes who shared their input," Cynthia recalled. The educators also helped Cynthia understand the importance of daily blood sugar monitoring. She learned to recognize how her body reacted to food throughout the day.

The Education Services includes a personal visit with a dietitian. Cynthia took advantage of the visit to ask questions about her nutritional habits. The dietitian was able to create a plan that included a calorie and carbohydrate count. Cynthia learned proper portion sizes and what foods were better for her to consume to keep her blood sugar level from spiking.

Dr. Bennington also referred Cynthia to the Licking Memorial Wellness Center. Staff members at the Wellness Center demonstrated how to use the equipment, monitored Cynthia's workouts and created a personalized exercise plan that began slowly and increased gradually. With guidance from Fitness Coordinator Darcy Nethers, Cynthia recorded her blood sugar level before and after exercising. "Darcy is very knowledgeable and taught me to understand the effects of exercise on my blood sugar and to prevent it from going too high or too low." Cynthia was working late hours, and decided she preferred to exercise after work, so she enrolled at a local gym to work out

on her own. "I spoke to Darcy before I enrolled at the gym, and she told me I had learned everything I needed to know and would do fine on my own." By sticking to her nutrition and exercise plan, Cynthia lost 57 pounds and has been successful in managing her type 2 diabetes.

Cynthia's family has been her biggest support in making lifestyle changes, and she now is sharing her experience. Dr. Bennington warned there is a potential for her family members to develop type 2 diabetes as well. Her daughters, Roxy and Jedda, both have lost weight and made lifestyle changes of their own. Cynthia's son, Nick, introduced her to a fitness app that makes it easier to track food and activities. The family, including her husband, Phil, also supported Cynthia's decision to change jobs. "I felt so good about all the changes I had made, and I was ready to try something that made me happy." Cynthia left the restaurant business and began working as a General Manager at a convenience store and fueling station in Newark. She is grateful to be able to spend time with her children and her grandson, Conner.

LMHS offers Diabetes Self-management Education and Support for newly diagnosed or chronic diabetes patients. The classes, held on Wednesdays, 12:00 Noon to 2:00 p.m., are taught by certified diabetes educators – including nurses, dietitians and pharmacists – and consist of four consecutive two-hour classes. Evening classes are offered twice a year in May and October. The program can be scheduled through central scheduling with a physician's order. Most insurances or uncompensated care cover the cost of the classes. Contact the Diabetes Education Center at (220) 564-4915 to receive more information about the classes. LMH's Diabetes Education Program offers two dietitians to assist with one-on-one patient diabetes management. Appointments may be scheduled by calling (220) 564-4722. A physician referral is required to participate in the DSMES class and nutritional counseling.

Diabetes Care – How do we compare?

At Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS), we take pride in the care we provide. To monitor the quality of that care, we track specific quality measures and compare to benchmark measures. Then, we publish the information so you can draw your own conclusions regarding your healthcare choices.

1. Much of the care that patients with diabetes receive takes place in the outpatient or physician office setting. The physician offices of Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) measure the most critical indicators for diabetes care.

	LMHP 2017	LMHP 2018	LMHP 2019	National
LMHP patients with diabetes receiving eye exam	59%	59%	74%	58%⁽¹⁾
LMHP patients with diabetes having HbA1C test	94%	94%	95%	88%⁽¹⁾
				LMHP Goal
LMHP patient with diabetes having lipid profile	89%	90%	90%	90%
LMHP patient with diabetes having microalbuminuria test	82%	86%	86%	85%
				National
LMHP patient with diabetes having foot exam	84%	86%	86%	80%⁽²⁾

2. The hemoglobin A1C (HbA1C) test is a simple lab test that shows the average amount of sugar (also called glucose) that has been in a person's blood over an extended period of time. While having the testing done is important, the test results (or outcomes) indicate how well the physician, in collaboration with the patient, is managing the diabetes. While the goal for most people with diabetes is 7% or less, anything less than 8% is considered a good degree of control of blood sugar levels.

	LMHP 2017	LMHP 2018	LMHP 2019	National ⁽¹⁾
LMHP patient with diabetes with HbA1C less than or equal to 7%	51%	53%	55%	38%
LMHP patient with diabetes with HbA1C less than or equal to 8%	72%	74%	76%	59%

3. People with diabetes are at high risk for heart disease. An elevated LDL ("bad") cholesterol test reveals if an individual has unhealthy fat levels, which increase the risk for heart disease – a very serious complication of diabetes. An LDL level of 100 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL) is considered best for heart health.

	LMHP 2017	LMHP 2018	LMHP 2019	National ⁽¹⁾
LMHP patient with diabetes with LDL less than or equal to 100 mg/dL	65%	67%	75%	48%

4. The Community Case Management (CCM) program at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) provides services to people in the community with diabetes. The American Diabetes Association recommends that a person with diabetes should have an HbA1C blood test at least every six months to monitor glucose levels. LMH staff members work closely with patients and their physicians to ensure that this test is performed as recommended in order to manage each patient's condition better.

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	LMH Goal
CCM patient with diabetes who obtained an HbA1C test	100%	99%	100%	Greater than 85%

5. A1C is the standard for measuring blood sugar management in people with diabetes. Studies show higher A1C levels to be associated with the risk of certain diabetes complications (eye, kidney and nerve disease). For every one percent decrease in A1C, there is significant protection against those complications.

	LMH 2017	LMH 2018	LMH 2019	LMH Goal
Diabetes Self-Management Education & Support participants with a decrease HbA1C or within normal limits	98%	97%	94%	greater than 80%

Data Footnotes:

(1) Average of reported Commercial, Medicare and Medicaid/HEDIS measures.

(2) National Committee for Quality Assurance – NCQA Diabetic Recognition Program

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Health Tips – Proper Medication Management

The goal of diabetes treatment is to return blood sugar to a safe level and reduce the risk of complications while helping a person with diabetes live a healthy lifestyle. In addition to diet and exercise, patients often are prescribed medication, which may range from oral medicine to insulin therapy, to help manage their diabetes. A physician can determine which medication will best help a patient manage their diabetes. Adhering to dosage, taking medication on time and regular visits with a physician are all important factors of managing diabetes medication. Forgetting to take prescribed medicines or taking such incorrectly can cause serious health consequences and have an impact on quality and length of life, as well as healthcare costs.

The Licking Memorial Hospital Medication Therapy Clinic assists patients with diabetes in creating treatment plans that will help them understand more about their medications and dosing. Patients learn to manage the disease using insulin and monitoring blood sugar levels. Staff members offer patients different options on how to monitor and report blood glucose levels and educate patients on how to perform finger stick tests, proper injection techniques and insulin dosing. In addition, patients with diabetes learn the signs and symptoms to reduce the risk of diabetes-related complications.

Referrals to the Medication Therapy Clinic are accepted from Licking Memorial Endocrinology. Patients may call the Clinic at (220) 564-1898 for information and to schedule appointments.



Please take a few minutes to read this month's report on **Diabetes Care**. You'll soon discover why Licking Memorial Health Systems is measurably different ... for your health!

The Quality Report Card is a publication of the LMHS Public Relations Department. Please contact the Public Relations Department at (220) 564-1572 to receive future mailings.

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