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By Loren Fishman



SUNDAY, LOCAL COMMENTARY | MONDAY, TUESDAY, THURSDAY & FRIDAY, POLITICAL OPINION | WEDNESDAY, HEALTH & WELLNESS ADVICE | SATURDAY, POSITIVE LIVING

A VIEW FROM THE VILLAGES HEALTH

**One in three American adults has prediabetes, a condition in which blood glucose levels are higher than desired, but not high enough to be diagnosed with diabetes.**



**Amy Wixted**

COMMENTARY

Without changes in lifestyle habits, many individuals with prediabetes will go on to develop Type 2 diabetes. Prediabetes increases the risk of heart disease, stroke, vision and hearing loss, kidney problems, poorer wound healing, and other complications associated with higher glucose values.

Since prediabetes does not exhibit any physical symptoms, as many as 8 in 10 individuals with prediabetes are not aware of their diagnosis. Prediabetes is defined as Fasting Blood Glucose (FBG) levels between 100 mg/dL and 125 mg/dL or a hemoglobin A1C level between 5.7% and 6.4%.

The great news is that prediabetes can be reversible. Healthy lifestyle adjustments can reduce an individual's risk of developing Type 2 diabetes by 58%. The impact of lifestyle changes on adults aged 60 and older has an even greater impact, with a risk reduction of 71%. There are three primary lifestyle changes that have a significant impact on reducing the likelihood of developing diabetes: moderate weight loss, healthy eating and regular exercise.

**Moderate Weight Loss:** The National Diabetes Prevention Study found that a moderate weight loss of 5% to 7% reduces inflammation in your body, helps your pancreas keep up more easily with your body's insulin needs and assists with better blood glucose control. It is important with any weight loss program to keep the focus on long-term lifestyle change instead of a quick fix through crash diets. Slow and steady wins the weight loss race.

**Healthy Eating:** Healthy eating habits play a key role in your body's overall health and are a primary focus in reducing diabetes risk. Do not worry

about getting too rigid in your eating program. Keep it simple by aiming to fill half your plate with non-starchy vegetables like asparagus, brussels sprouts, broccoli, salad greens, peppers, or others. Make a quarter of your plate an animal- or plant-based protein source and reserve the remaining quarter of your plate for starchy vegetables or grains (preferably whole grains). Round out your meal with a serving of fruit, a low-calorie item that contributes to your daily calcium needs, and a low- (or no-) calorie beverage, like water.

**Exercise:** Exercise reduces your risk of developing Type 2 diabetes by a third. Studies show that 150 to 300 minutes of moderate activity per week is all it takes to reduce the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes and many other chronic conditions. This positive impact is consistent for those at a healthy weight, overweight or obese. Start by setting a goal to do some activity every day and increase the duration of time each day when you're ready.

Be sure to round out your healthy lifestyle by getting a

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good night sleep and taking time each day to relax and recharge. Feeling rested and stress-free

supports your ability to lose weight, eat healthily and exercise more.

The Villages Health provides a free one-hour prediabetes and diabetes prevention classes through our Learning Center Program. The Villages Health also is fully recognized by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention to offer the National Diabetes Prevention Program, Prevent T2.

Prevent T2 is a year-long program facilitated in a small-group format to help you lose weight, eat better, exercise more, and identify healthy habits for long-term success. You do not have to be a patient of The Villages Health to attend any of the Learning Center Programs. More information about the one-hour class and the year-long program can be found on our website at [TheVillagesHealth.com/learning-center/diabetes](http://TheVillagesHealth.com/learning-center/diabetes) or by calling 352-674-1779.

To become a patient of The Villages Health, visit us at [TheVillagesHealth.com](http://TheVillagesHealth.com) or call (844) TVH-WELL (844-884-9355).

Amy Wixted, MPH, CHES, CIC, is population health manager for The Villages Health.

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From left to right are the owners, Tim Gennaro, Kasey Kindle and Scott Lietz.

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