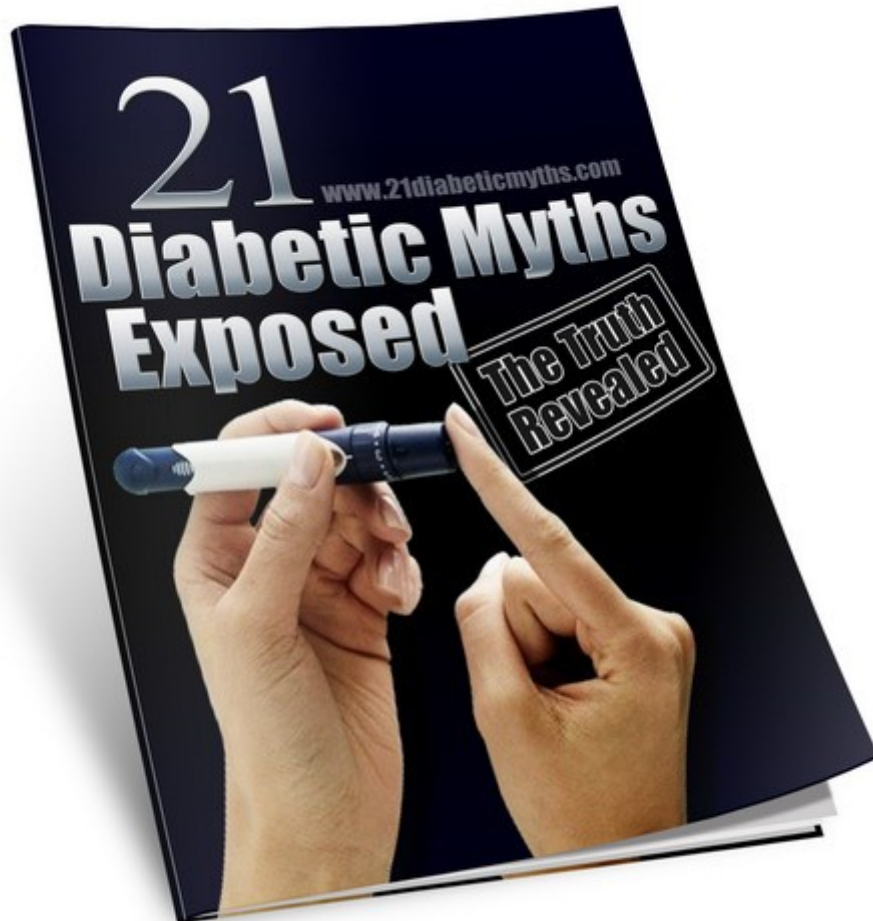


21 Diabetic Myths Exposed



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1. Eating Too Much Sugar Causes Diabetes.

The first myth I want to blow away is the often misused statement that eating too much sugar causes diabetes. It is just not true. That said, it would still be a very unhealthy thing to do. The answer lies in explaining the link between carbohydrates and diabetes. It is important to understand just how carbohydrates effect the blood glucose level.

Insulin production and the way your body uses it, changes when you have diabetes.

With Type 2 diabetes the body still produces insulin but not enough and the body does not use it as effectively as before. The result is that you actually need to produce far more than someone without the disease. It is impossible to keep overproducing and the end result is that the illness worsens. Being overweight does not cause diabetes in itself but it does make the body more likely to have a higher point of insulin resistance. This is why being overweight can lead to the disease.

The hormone Insulin helps glucose move from the blood into the cells, where your body converts this to energy. Too little insulin and the glucose stays in the blood and you don't have the energy that you require. Too much glucose in the blood causes damage to organs in your body over the long term.

Carbohydrates in food is where you get your energy from. All carbohydrates get broken down into glucose. So now you should be able to see the link between carbohydrates and glucose and energy. That is why it is not sugar in itself that is the problem for a diabetic.

It stands to reason that you do not want high spikes of glucose in

the body. So far better to eat carbohydrates that break down slowly over a period of time. This would be wholemeal products and whole foods like potatoes and vegetables. Avoid processed food whenever possible. By doing this, you are at least giving your limited insulin supply a chance to be more effective.

There is no reason to give up eating delicious food just because you are diabetic.

It is simply not true that you have to give up all your favourite treats. Diabetes is not caused by eating too much sugar. Fact.

2. If your overweight you will eventually contract diabetes.

This is a common myth that many people believe. The truth is that most people who are overweight will never contract diabetes. The reality is that being overweight can cause many health problems. Heart disease, Strokes, respiratory problems and an increased chance of late onset diabetes.

So you make yourself more vulnerable because your body will have to produce more insulin than normal. In fact many people who are overweight suffer with diabetic symptoms, because their insulin production is not able to cope. If they lose weight they go back to normal. This often leads to the illusion that diabetes can be reversed. If this is the case they do not have diabetes in the first place, just an increased insulin resistance. If you are diabetic, then you stay diabetic. Being overweight will not cause diabetes in it's self though.

3.Type 2 is a mild form of diabetes.

Both types of the disease are very serious conditions and should

be treated as such. The differences are this. In type 1 the body makes no insulin and the patient has to inject insulin on a regular basis. In type 2 some insulin is made, but not enough and the cells do not use it as effectively as it should. The treatment for type 2 can be insulin injections, medication, or sometimes just diet control. Type 1 often referred to as juvenile diabetes because it is normally diagnosed at a very early age is always controlled by injecting various amounts of insulin depending on lifestyle and food intake. Type 2 is a progressive disease in which the patient will have to gradually increase medication or change from one type to another. Although lifestyle changes can go a long way in keeping blood glucose under control.

The main problem with type 2 or late onset diabetes is that a sufferer may have had the illness for some time before being diagnosed. Some damage to nerve ending and organs can have occurred already. Both types of diabetes are very serious conditions.

4.Diabetics should eat diabetic food.

This one always makes me smile. The marketing men are at large again. I have to say it diabetic food is just a marketing ploy. Most diabetic foods and by this I mean foods that have been labelled as for diabetics, is in my experience not as tasty as the product that it imitates, and usually very expensive. Then add the fact that most products just contain some kind of sweetener instead of sugar. Or in many cases just reduced sugar, which of course is missing the point of what diabetes really is. My advice is to enjoy your food in moderation as we are all supposed to anyway.

5. People with diabetes eventually go blind.

When I was first diagnosed with diabetes this was the first myth that I came across, and it frightened the life out of me. It is true that diabetes is a major cause of blindness but you have to look at the reality. If you make no effort to control your glucose levels. Then of course damage will be done. Regular eye checks and following a healthy way of life will keep the serious side effects of diabetes at bay.

6. If you have diabetes then you must soak your feet daily.

While it is essential that you look after your feet and do regular checks for cuts or sores. Especially if they are not healing quickly. It is definitely not a good idea to soak your feet everyday. In fact this is likely to soften your feet, and make them more prone to skin damage.

7. Insulin can cause men to become impotent.

Insulin will never cause erectile dis-function. The cause of impotence in men suffering from diabetes is caused by nerve damage due to constant raised blood glucose levels.

8. You can catch diabetes through someone else.

Diabetes is not a contagious disease. You can not catch it from someone else. It is also not hereditary. Although if family members have diabetes then this will increase your chances of contracting the disease. Simply put, it is not being passed on to you, but you may have a similar body type to a relative who has diabetes, thus increasing the likely hood of you also suffering.

9. Diabetics are more likely to catch flu or colds.

No reason at all to think this. We as diabetics are no more likely to catch a virus than anyone else. The only extra problem we do have is that our blood glucose levels will often go up quite dramatically. So extra monitoring is needed if you catch a bug or two.

10. You can eat as much fruit as you like.

While fruit is a very healthy food and contains vitamins and fibre. Many fruits also contain a lot of fructose which is a natural sugar. So again it is important to spread what you eat throughout the day to avoid spikes in the blood glucose levels.

11. Diabetes can be cured through diet.

This is a false statement. Diabetes can not be cured. It can however be controlled in many cases through diet. A healthy diet is very important in your diabetic management plans. I think this particular myth comes from the case where an overweight person has shown many of the signs of diabetes and having lost some weight gone back to normal. What has happened here is that they have not actually become diabetic, but have shown some insulin resistance due to being overweight. Once you have been diagnosed as diabetic, then you are diabetic for the rest of your life.

12. You can be a borderline diabetic.

This one is as above really. You are either diabetic or your not.

13. Diabetics can no longer play sport.

This is absolutely not true. In fact the opposite is true. Healthy activity should be encouraged. While your playing sport you a burning calories and keeping weight off. I find if I go for a jog (really more of a shuffle these days) I burn off excess glucose in the blood. However we are all different and you should monitor yourself when you exercise. Especially if you have not been active for a long time. Your doctor would advise you on this. The myth itself is rubbish though. If you have been playing a sport before you were diagnosed then carry on playing.

14. It is not safe to drive if your diabetic.

As long as you have control over your diabetes and are not suffering from dizzy spells, blurred vision or hypos, then there is no reason that you can not drive just as safely as anyone else. It really is just about common sense. If your in control then it's fine.

15. Diabetics should not eat certain fruits.

As mentioned in an earlier paragraph. Fruit is a healthy part of your diet in moderation. There are some fruits that are higher in sugar than others. Melons, grapes and pineapple are examples. Still no reason why you can not eat these fruits. It is just a case of being sensible and eating small portions.

16. Diabetics should not cut their own toenails.

Diabetics do need to be extra careful when dealing with their feet, but simply no truth in the above statement. Your more in control of what happens when you cut your own toenails that is for sure.

17. You should not eat sugary products.

You will hear this one all the time. People associate diabetes with sugar. As I have mentioned above. Carbohydrates turn into glucose that the body then uses for fuel. The link to sugar comes from that fact that the urine of some diabetics smells sweet, and the disease came to be known as sugar diabetes. Eating too much sugar can never lead to diabetes.

18. Diabetics should never eat chocolate.

This myth is linked to the one above. Nobody diabetic or otherwise should be consuming large amounts of chocolate. Any benefits are outweighed by the large amount of calories contained in each bar. However in moderation a little bit of what you fancy will do you no harm. One word of warning. Do not be misled into thinking that diabetic chocolate is better for you. It is not, and will be more expensive and not taste as good. Far better to enjoy a little of the real thing.

19. If you have to go on insulin then you are not looking after yourself properly.

Type 2 diabetes is an ongoing disease that progresses as you get older. Although good control is possible. Inevitably the medication will change through the years. Sometimes your doctor may suggest that you go onto insulin. This is no reflection on how you have been treating yourself. It just means that your body is no longer producing enough insulin of it's own to keep your blood glucose in a safe zone.

20. You should never take Aspirin if your diabetic.

There is a lot of research going on about the effects of taking aspirin when you are a diabetic. To keep up to date with new information you should consult your doctor, but at the time of writing it is deemed perfectly safe to take an aspirin if required for a normal situation.

21. If your diabetic then your doomed.

This is the most frightening myth of all. I have heard people saying that what is the point of trying to control my diabetes when we all know that it just gets worse until you eventually fall seriously ill or die. What an awful outlook to have, and completely untrue. You have as much chance as anybody else in living a long and happy life. A healthy diet and exercise coupled in many cases with medication will keep the side effects of diabetes at bay. At this time in writing we can not cure diabetes, but we have all the knowledge and tools to be able to control it. Make your life as adventurous and complete as you can. I know I will.

I hope you gained some benefit from reading this short report. Many of the myths above worried me a great deal when I first became diagnosed as a diabetic.

It was confusing enough just dealing with how I felt. Let alone the minefield of information out there. My doctor did not seem to be able to clear many of my worries up and in many ways added to them.

I took it upon myself to learn everything I could about this disease. I keep up with every bit of new information that gets released to the public, and some that does not.

I am guessing that if your reading this, then you have gone through similar emotions. What you have to remember is your not alone. My main intention is to build an online community which shares knowledge and inspiration.

When first diagnosed with diabetes many people follow this pattern.

1. Relief.

Strange as it first seems it is completely natural, because the relief comes from actually knowing why you have been feeling this way. You have at last got an answer.

2. Denial.

Often there is that niggling feeling in the back of your mind that you can not really have diabetes. Maybe you have always been fit, or never been overweight. You do not like sweet foods. Can you see how the myths about diabetes influence how we think? If you do go through a denial period it is more often than not a link to false knowledge about the disease.

3. Depression.

Again not everyone will go through this, but it is important to point out that there is a link to accepting that you have to spend the rest of your life with this illness and the massive amount of false information about. Just understanding that can be the answer to depression. Of course if you are suffering then you should always seek medical advice.

4. Acceptance.

Once you have reached this stage. You can start taking control of your life and managing your diabetes in much more effective manner. It is so important to reach that point of understanding that diabetes is with you forever, but can be controlled with exercise, diet and medication. There is no reason not to live a full and active life.

As I said before, not everyone will go through these different stages. You may be in a position to accept that you have diabetes and move on to a plan that will help you take control straight away.

However many people including myself have and will go through these stages and understanding the real facts about diabetes will go a long way to helping you get to that acceptance stage.