

Reclaiming Our Health in North America

Brought to you by the NA Health & Wellbeing Team



Workgroup Wellness Moments Pre-Diabetes/Diabetes

Let us help you with a “wellness” moment as a perfect way to start your meetings. To help get the dialogue flowing, choose one of the following six scripted sub-topics on **pre-diabetes/diabetes**. Share all or parts in your work-group meetings.

1. A Call to Action

Action is the best medicine. Before developing and diagnosis of diabetes, people will almost always have blood sugar levels that are higher than normal—**Pre-Diabetes**. There may be no clear symptoms but if you suspect or at risk of diabetes – *act* now, check with your doctor and get tested.

What are the major forms – a simplified look?

- **Type 1:** body *does not* produce insulin. Blood glucose from foods eaten must enter the cells. Insulin is the key to unlock the cell for entry. Since insulin is not present in Type 1 diabetes, blood sugar dangerously builds up in blood stream.
- **Type 2:** the most common form of diabetes—the body does not use insulin properly. Some people can control their blood sugar levels with healthy eating and exercise, others may need medication or insulin to help manage it.
- **Gestational Diabetes:** the cause is unknown. The placenta supports the baby as it grows. Sometimes, these hormones also block the action of the mother’s insulin to her body, and it causes a problem called *insulin resistance* making it hard for the mother’s body to use insulin. She may need up to three times as much insulin to compensate. [Read more](#) on the types of diabetes and how to help manage...

Where can I go for help and resources?

- Take the American Diabetes Association’s [60 Second Type 2 Diabetes Risks Assessment](#)
 - **Additional Assessment Tool:** Omada’s quick [health screener](#)*
- **Health Resources for New & Active Employees** – [Learn more](#) about the Diabetes Management Coverage that may be available to you as a Dow employee

Omada is a lifestyle change program and is personalized to help you reach your health goals—whether that’s losing weight, staying on top of your type 2 diabetes, or improving your overall health. **Please note, eligibility requirements apply, [Learn more](#) about the Omada wellness benefit from Dow!*

Additional Canadian Resources:

- Two-minute [test](#) to find out your risk
- Check out the [Diabetes College](#)
- [THRiVE](#) is a free, 12-week program designed for people living with diabetes. THRiVE supports people to make small changes each day toward better health

2. Dead Foods vs. Alive Foods

What is *Dead* food? It can sit on the counter for days/weeks and not go bad. They are refined, highly processed, often synthetic and have little-to-no nutritional value. They are linked to increased inflammation in the body. A steady diet of dead foods leads to chronic inflammation, which can result in increased blood pressure, weight gain, **elevated blood sugar levels** and arthritis, to name a few. Our bodies are not designed to function properly under stressful conditions (poor nutrition) and will react and respond to these inflammatory foods eventually, which manifest itself in aches, pains, brain fog, poor sleep and hormonal imbalance.

What is *Alive* food? It is close to its original, natural form—plants (fruits and vegetables), nuts and seeds, fish, poultry and whole grains; rich in inflammation-fighting antioxidants and phytochemicals. They help the body produce and activate enzymes and are rich in probiotics and prebiotics. They are also considered “alive” as they help promote the healthy bacteria in our bodies that are the first line of our immune system. [Read more](#) for help on choosing Alive over Dead foods.

Additional Resources:

- [Five Dietary Approaches That May Help With Inflammation](#)
- [Myths and Facts About a Plant Based Diet](#)
- [What You Need to Know About Plant Based Protein](#)

3. Reducing the Risk

Most will agree it is always best to “*build the fence around the cliff*” versus “*placing the ambulance in the valley*”. Does it take a bit more effort at first? Sure! But so worth it! Small changes now to your lifestyle will lower your risk.

Start simple and build from there as you develop the sense of empowerment. Focus on one or two targeted goals.

- *What small changes can you make in the way you eat without giving up the foods you love?*
- *How can you increase your physical activity levels to 30 minutes a few days a week? [Read more on reducing risk...](#)*

Additional Resources:

- Pre-diabetes doesn’t always lead to a Type 2 diagnosis. [Read](#) for more helpful strategies.
- Sometimes it’s too much to handle on our own and we need help to sort through it all. [Read more](#) on how a Registered Dietician-RDN or Certified Diabetic Educator-CDE can help.
- [THRIVE](#) (Canada): a free, 12-week program designed for people living with diabetes. THRIVE supports people to make small changes each day toward better health

4. Sleep, Stress and Recovery

Sleep is our recovery “rock star” – powerful in fighting chronic inflammation that lead to disease. A state of sleep may seem, on the surface, to be a quiet and tranquil experience. But your body is working hard to repair, recover, build, strengthen, grow and defend.

Paying attention to our bodies is similar to the attention we give our vehicle – but even more important. Keep it running well by investing in daily, preventive maintenance and upkeep.

- **Battery:** *Sleep.* Recharge your battery with plenty of sleep
- **Shocks/Tires:** *Stress.* No road in life is without potholes. We need shock absorbers to deal with stress along with social support – like tires on our cars – to provide balance and a smooth ride.

- **Engine:** *Exercise.* Regularly exercise your body so that it will work well when you need it just like we do when we run the engine on our cars.

Stress is cumulative and many things can be stressors. The “small things” add up and often go unnoticed. But together they can shape our deep health, behaviors, and overall outlook on life. Everything is... *well*, just better if we can improve our sleep, focus on stress management and recovery. [Read more](#) on the power of sleep.

Additional Resources:

- Sleep can be elusive for some. Calm your mind for better sleep – [How?](#)
- [Power Naps](#) – Yes, please!
- How [exercise](#) helps us sleep better?

5. Mastering Meal Planning

A healthy approach to eating is important for all of us. But, if you are at risk for developing diabetes or have pre-diabetes, healthy food choices are crucial. That’s where [meal plans](#) can help. When you plan, you make healthier choices throughout the day and know what’s on the table for the week. Does it take a little effort initially...yes? But that effort pays off and takes the stress out of the rest of the week. Plus...it can be kind of fun 😊

Additional Resources:

- Print out and make good use of our attached planner to help get organized.
- Too tired to make a stop at the market for dinner? Are you standing in front of the fridge wondering what to make for dinner with what you have on hand? [Super Cook](#) app to the rescue! There’s a desktop version as well. Check it out!
- [myplate tools](#) will help build your nutrition skills and make a healthy eating plan for you and your family

6. 'Tis the Season for Healthy Eating

Holiday season is in full swing, and for many people that means a busy schedule. While holiday festivities are meant to be fun and upbeat, feelings of stress and anxiety often find their way in

If you’re also trying to manage diabetes, seasonal stressors can also make taking good care of your health even more challenging. In addition to trying to eat right and manage your blood sugar, you may find you have less time to exercise, are feeling more stress and not getting enough sleep.

Take control of holiday stress before it takes control of you. These [five tips](#) can help you stay on top of your diabetes—and your overall health—during this busy season.

1. Set priorities
2. Plan
3. Celebrate in moderation
4. Stick to your exercise program
5. Be prepared if you travel

Additional Resources:

- [Diabetes-friendly Food Swaps](#)
- [6 ways to unwind over the holidays](#): Looking for ways to unplug and recharge that don’t involve binge watching TV? Here are a few activities our team will be up to over the holiday