November 2023

Live Well, Work Well

The Benefits Resource

November Is American Diabetes Month

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that over 37 million American adults have diabetes, and 1 in 5 don't know they have it.

Diabetes is a chronic disease that affects how your body turns food into energy. Your food is broken down into sugar (glucose) and released into your bloodstream. As your blood sugar goes up, your pancreas releases insulin. This allows the blood sugar to enter your body's cells for use as energy. A person with diabetes doesn't make enough insulin or can't properly use insulin. There are two main types of diabetes:

- **Type 1 diabetes** occurs when the pancreas doesn't produce enough insulin. This type of diabetes is usually diagnosed in children, teens and young adults, but it can develop at any age.
- **Type 2 diabetes** occurs when the cells don't respond adequately to insulin, known as insulin resistance. Of the millions of Americans with diabetes, about 90%-95% of them have Type 2.

It's also important to note that gestational diabetes can develop in pregnant women who have never had diabetes before. Gestational diabetes usually goes away after the baby is born; however, babies born to a mother with gestational diabetes could be at a higher risk for health problems.

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In the last 20 years, the number of adults diagnosed with diabetes has more than doubled, according to the CDC.

Reducing Your Risk for Diabetes

While Type 1 diabetes can't be prevented, you can take the following steps to reduce your risk of developing Type 2 diabetes:

- **Eat a balanced diet.** Consume plenty of fiber and whole grains, and understand how your foods affect your blood sugar levels. Limit your alcohol intake as well.
- **Stay active.** Aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise daily. Incorporate both aerobic and resistance training.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** If you're overweight, weight control can be an essential part of diabetes prevention.

Take control of your health now during American Diabetes Month, and have your blood sugar levels tested by your doctor.

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Understanding Dietary Supplements

The Council for Responsible Nutrition reports that 75% of Americans take dietary supplements. They come in various forms, including gummies, tablets, powders, drinks and energy bars. Supplements can contain vitamins, minerals, herbs, amino acids, enzymes and other ingredients. Some products can be taken to supplement essential nutrients that could be missing if you lack a variety of nutritious foods in your diet. Others may be consumed to enhance athletic performance, strengthen the immune system, manage pain or improve mental health. While there's evidence that supplements may be beneficial in some circumstances, there are also concerns, such as:

- Dietary supplements may be harmful when taken in certain combinations or with prescription drugs.
- There is a lack of federal oversight on dietary supplements.
- High doses of vitamins (e.g., vitamin C) can be problematic.
- Dietary supplements aren't approved to treat or cure a disease.

It's important to consult a doctor or pharmacist before taking any supplements. They can determine if supplements are right for you.

Adjusting to Daylight Saving Time

Most of the United States shifts between standard and daylight saving time (DST) each year in an effort to "save" natural light. Clocks will get set one hour back on Sunday, Nov. 5, when the DST period ends. Although you may be excited about gaining another hour in your day, the disruption of DST can wreak havoc on your physical and cognitive health for several days, weeks or even months.

Your internal clock regulates critical processes, including liver function and the immune system. Interruptions to the circadian rhythm, your body's 24-hour biological cycle that regulates wake and sleep, can also impair your focus and judgment. If your state follows DST, consider these tips for helping your body adjust to the time change:

- Exercise in the morning.
- Prioritize daylight exposure.
- Keep a regular sleep routine.
- Remove sleep disturbances.

Perfect Pumpkin Pancakes

Makes: 12 servings

Ingredients

2 cups flour
6 tsp. brown sugar
1 Tbsp. baking powder
1 ¼ tsp. pumpkin pie spice
1 tsp. salt
1 egg
½ cup canned pumpkin
1 ¾ cups low-fat milk
2 Tbsp. vegetable oil

Preparations

1. Combine the flour, brown sugar, baking powder, pumpkin pie spice and salt in a large bowl.
2. Combine the egg, canned pumpkin, milk and vegetable oil in a medium bowl. Mix well.
3. Add the wet ingredients to the flour mixture, stirring until moist. The batter may be lumpy.
4. Lightly coat a griddle or skillet with cooking spray and heat it on medium.
5. For each pancake, pour about ¼ cup of batter onto the hot griddle. Cook until bubbles burst, flip the pancakes and cook until golden brown. Repeat with the remaining batter.

Nutritional Information (per serving)

Total calories	130
Total fat	3 g
Protein	4 g
Sodium	354 mg
Carbohydrate	21 g
Dietary fiber	1 g
Saturated fat	1 g
Total sugars	5 g

Source: MyPlate