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Dayton Heart &

Answering a Wake-up Call



Kate Glover dives into water aerobics for fun exercise to lose weight and get her blood sugar levels in line.

Last December

Kate Glover's doctor shocked her with these words: "You've got diabetes." With no telling symptoms and no family history of the disease, she was totally unprepared for the diagnosis.

Her physician referred her to the Samaritan Diabetes Center at good Samaritan Hospital. There, Kate overcame her shock by arming herself with information.

Treatment helps, But doesn't Cure

Diabetes is a disease in which the body does not produce or properly use insulin, a hormone needed to convert sugar, starches and other food into energy needed for daily life. Over time, high sugar levels in the blood can damage the eyes, kidneys, nerves and heart, and sometimes leads to amputation of a limb. A chronic disease, diabetes does not go away even with treatment.

But Kate, 63, soon found out through the Diabetes Center that healthy habits could help control the disease. The more she learned about diabetes, she discovered, the better she could take care of herself and live a healthy,



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productive life.

Taking It All In

Kate became what she calls an “information freak.” She wanted to know everything she could about diabetes and how to manage it. That meant signing up for the Diabetes Center’s class teaching participants about the disease, the impact of blood sugar on a person’s body, and how to manage blood sugar levels.

Led by a nurse and a dietitian, these classes helped prepare Kate to take charge of managing her condition. “Our ultimate goal is to make patients as independent as possible in caring for their diabetes,” says Becky Harrold, RN, MS, CDE, outpatient diabetes nurse educator. They welcome patients 16 and older with type 1 or type 2 diabetes. One-on-one sessions are also available, as are specialty classes covering gestational diabetes and insulin pump training.

Hearing from both a nurse and dietitian enables patients to learn in detail about both sides of the disease – medical and nutritional. “The team approach allows us to blend our expertise to give a more well-rounded treatment,” says Kathie Stevens, MS, RD, LD, CDE, outpatient diabetes dietitian. Kate responded by changing her diet significantly after learning about carbohydrate counting, menu planning, label reading and portion control.

She also decided to try out the center’s “get Moving Again!” exercise class at Good Samaritan North Health Center. It turned Kate, once a fitness-phobe, into an exercise enthusiast. The program showed her the direct impact exercise has on blood sugar levels. She has since jumped into water aerobics and an aqua Zumba class.

Worthwhile Efforts

Kate weighed 219 pounds when she first heard her diagnosis. She has since lost 52 pounds and lowered her hemoglobin A1C. As an average measure of blood sugar levels over several months, Kate’s lower A1C shows she continues to do a good job of controlling her blood sugar. Through changes in diet and exercise alone, she brought her diabetes in check, avoiding medications thus far. She looks forward to shedding another 30 pounds.

“My quality of life is so much better now,” Kate says. “I have more energy, more enthusiasm. My self-esteem is improved.”

And her medical prognosis is good, too. “Kate is doing everything she’s supposed to do and is still at it,” Becky says. That diligence is important in staying healthy and preventing long-term complications from diabetes.

Kate intends to persevere and is grateful for having been

shown the way at good Sam. “Having a support system is so important when you’re diagnosed with any chronic illness,” Kate says. “The Diabetes Center offers that support along with tools to help manage the disease.”

Eat Less, Eat Well

If you’d like to keep your weight in check, or even take off a few pounds, try these helpful tips to eat less and still eat well, courtesy of good Sam dietitian Kathie Stevens.

- Eat slowly. Make meals last 20 minutes to cut back on second helpings.
- Gradually cut down how much you eat. As your stomach shrinks, you’ll have less room to eat too much.
- Eat foods high in fiber to feel full longer.
- Ask “Am I hungry?” before grabbing that cookie. Break routine of eating out of habit, for emotional reasons, or just because the food is there.
- Drink six to eight 8-ounce glasses of water every day.
- Say “NO” to super sizing.
- Limit between-meal snacking.
- Set aside a time to eat. Eat only while sitting at a designated place such as the kitchen or dining room table. Don’t eat while standing, walking, driving, watching TV, reading, or using the phone or computer.
- If you don’t like it, don’t eat it. Life is too short not to enjoy your food!



10 Steps to Better Blood Sugar Levels

People with diabetes can take 10 simple steps to keep their blood sugar levels in proper balance, says good Sam dietitian Kathie Stevens. Committing to them for a defined time – say, six weeks – can ingrain them into your routine of personal habits that keep you healthy.

1. Eat three meals per day, spaced four to five hours apart.
2. Eat a consistent amount of carbohydrates at each meal from day to day.
3. Include protein at each meal and bedtime snack to feel full longer and help stabilize blood sugar.
4. Eat a bedtime snack three to five hours after supper.
5. Avoid skipping meals.

6. Increase fruits and vegetables to at least five servings per day.
7. Eat foods with more fiber, such as whole wheat breads, high fiber cereals, and raw fruits and vegetables.
8. Take medications at the same time each day.
9. Take part in regular physical activity.
10. Check blood sugars to see how you are doing.

Type 1 or Type 2?

Type 1 Diabetes is usually diagnosed in children and young adults, and was previously known as juvenile diabetes. In type 1 diabetes, the body does not produce insulin. Only 5 percent of people with diabetes have this form of the disease.

Type 2 Diabetes is the most common form of diabetes. In type 2 diabetes, either the body does not produce enough insulin or the cells ignore the insulin. Millions of Americans have been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, and many more are unaware they are at high risk. This form of the disease is more common in African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans and Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders as well as the aged population.



Samaritan Diabetes Center dietitian Kathie Stevens and nurse Becky Harrold team up to help patients take control of their diabetes.

Source: American Diabetes Association

The Samaritan Diabetes Center is certified as a Diabetes Education Center by the American Diabetes Association.

Learn more about [Outpatient Diabetes Education at Good Samaritan Hospital](#).

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