

Stop Diabetes Before It Starts

According to the most recent Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data, 23.6 million people in the U.S. have diabetes. That's over seven percent of the population. If the rate of increase in the number of new cases continues, one in three Americans will have diabetes by the year 2050. There are ways to prevent this, however. An active lifestyle and healthy diet will combat weight gain and obesity, which are major risk factors for Type II Diabetes. Also, studies have shown that mothers who choose to breastfeed their infants and people with sufficient vitamin D in their diets are at a lower risk.

Vitamin D:

Diabetes is one of the many diseases whose risk can be lowered with adequate levels of Vitamin D. Especially in Northern states like Montana, it's difficult or impossible to get the recommended amount of Vitamin D solely from sun exposure because at these Northern latitudes, the skin can only make Vitamin D during the summer months.



Vitamin D can be found in some foods, like oily fish, or foods or fortified foods, like orange juice, milk, and cereal. Probably the easiest way to ensure that there is enough vitamin D in your diet is to take a daily supplement based appropriately on your blood levels, as recommended by your health provider.

Breastfeeding is good for mom and baby.

Type I diabetes is usually thought of as a disease you can't do anything to prevent. But it seems that longer duration and exclusive breastfeeding is a protective factor against the development of Type I and Type II diabetes in children. This may



be because breast milk has the best nutritional properties a mother can provide for her baby as well as important hormones for metabolism. Infants that were fed with commercial formula or cow's milk had a significantly higher incidence of diabetes.

Breastfeeding also has a protective effect for

the mother against Type II diabetes. The longer a mother breastfeeds her baby, up to one year from birth, the less risk she has of developing Type II diabetes. Among other benefits, breastfeeding greatly increases the caloric expenditure of the mother. This makes it much easier for her to lose the pregnancy weight and return to a healthy weight after her baby is born. Moms who breastfeed also have improved glucose homeostasis, or blood sugar regulation, which is disordered in diabetics.

The benefits of breastfeeding are extensive and protection from diabetes is just one of them. When you consider the importance of your baby's health, breastfeeding is clearly a smart choice.