

# BETTER FOR YOU



Healthy Mac & Cheese P. 3

YOUR HEALTH PLAN NEWSLETTER TO HELP YOU GET AND STAY HEALTHY! • WINTER 2014

## Diabetes: What You Should Know

Don't wait for a diagnosis before taking steps to avoid diabetes

Even if you haven't been diagnosed with diabetes, you may be one of nearly 79 million people in the United States who has pre-diabetes, which means your blood sugar levels are higher than normal. Many people with pre-diabetes don't even know it. "Without attention to lifestyle factors, it is almost inevitable that most of these people will progress to diabetes," says Nora Saul, MS, RD, a certified diabetes educator at the Joslin Diabetes Center in Boston.

The good news is you can take preventive steps to help you avoid type 2 diabetes. Here's what you need to know about diabetes, and what you can do about it.

**1 What diabetes is:** It's a condition caused when the body can't make or

use insulin. With type 1 diabetes, the body doesn't make insulin at all. With type 2 diabetes, the body doesn't make enough insulin or use it the way it should. Sugar, or "glucose," builds up in the blood. Diabetes can lead to fatigue, infections, and complications such as blindness and stroke.

**2 Know your risk:** A big part of diabetes prevention is simple awareness of your risk level. Talk to your doctor about your family history, lifestyle habits, and current health.

**3 Watch what you eat:** "A balanced diet that is low in saturated fat, low in processed carbohydrates, and contains many fruits and vegetables is important," Saul says.

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You can take steps to avoid diabetes.

## Welcome!

We are happy to have you as a member of New Hampshire Healthy Families

We are looking forward to delivering quality health insurance coverage to you. We are here to help you lead a healthy, fulfilling life.

Inside this newsletter, you will find easy steps to boost your health and help you feel better! You will also find coupons inside to help you save money. For even more coupons, visit our website at [www.NHHealthyFamilies.com](http://www.NHHealthyFamilies.com) and click on the Coupon Saver Program icon.

If you have any questions, please contact us at any time:

**1-866-769-3085 (Member Services)**

**1-855-742-0123 (TTY/TDD)**

Here's to a healthier you this year!

Caroline Vitiello, RN, BSN, CCM, CMAC  
Vice President, Medical Management

We are sending you the enclosed coupons for extra support in addition to your benefits. Each of the companies issuing the coupons is an independent company that does not provide products or services for New Hampshire Healthy Families. New Hampshire Healthy Families does not receive any payment from the selection or distribution of any coupons included as part of this service. New Hampshire Healthy Families is not responsible for nor endorses the coupons or products and services offered.

Deseamos que sea y se mantenga saludable. Nuestro boletín informativo le puede ayudar a alcanzar sus objetivos de salud y está disponible en su idioma de preferencia. Póngase en contacto con Servicios para los Miembros al 1-866-769-3085, TDD/TTY 1-855-742-0123.

हामी तपाईं स्वस्थ हुनुहोस् तथा रहनुहोस् भन्ने चाहन्छौं। हाम्रो समाचारपत्रले तपाईंलाई तपाईंका स्वास्थ्य लक्ष्यहरु पूरा गर्न सहयोग गर्न सक्छ। तपाईं यसको लागि आफ्नो प्राथमिक भाषामा माग गर्न सक्नुहुन्छ। सदस्य सेवालाई 1-866-769-3085, TDD/TTY 1-855-742-0123 मा सम्पर्क गर्नुहोस्।



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**4 Start moving:** “Exercise makes your body much more sensitive to insulin,” Saul says. “Even small amounts of exercise are helpful.” Start by scheduling 15-minute walks four times a week.

**5 Keep a healthy weight:** “Obesity is one of the factors that can trigger pre-diabetes and diabetes in genetically susceptible individuals,” Saul says. If you’re overweight, losing just 7 percent of your body weight can help.

## Learn About Your Health Plan

Learn about these topics in your Member Handbook:

- Important information about your plan benefits
- How to access emergency care and other medical services
- How to file an appeal
- Your rights and responsibilities

To learn more about your rights and responsibilities, your benefits, and how to access the care you need, look in the Current Members section of our website or call Member Services at 1-866-769-3085, TTY/TDD: 1-855-742-0123, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

You can also get a paper copy of the Member Handbook and your rights and responsibilities by calling Member Services.

## How to Help Your Health

Vaccines. Cancer screenings. Blood pressure checks. These are all types of preventive care. They help you and your doctor stay ahead of big health problems.

If you haven’t seen a doctor in a while, call your doctor’s office to find out if you are due for a preventive care exam or screening. You can also check our website ([www.NHHealthyFamilies.com](http://www.NHHealthyFamilies.com)) or your Member Handbook for recommended preventive care, or call Member Services to get a paper copy.

## TEST YOUR DIABETES AWARENESS

Find out if these statements are TRUE or FALSE.

- 1. Men are more likely than women to not realize that they have diabetes.**  
**TRUE.** One theory is because men go to the doctor less.
- 2. Thin people don’t have to worry about diabetes.**  
**FALSE.** Diabetes can affect anyone regardless of weight, but being overweight increases the risk.
- 3. If you don’t eat sugar, you can’t get diabetes.**  
**FALSE.** Diabetes is caused by the body’s inability to keep glucose at healthy levels.
- 4. Weight gain is a symptom of diabetes.**  
**FALSE.** But increased hunger and thirst, blurred vision, and fatigue are symptoms.
- 5. The leading cause of death for people with diabetes is heart disease.**  
**TRUE.** That’s why eating well, staying active, and avoiding stress are so important for people at risk for diabetes.
- 6. Diabetes can be cured by eating well and exercising.**  
**FALSE.** Diabetes is an ongoing condition. But eating well and exercising can help keep diabetes under control.

## Take Time to Assess Your Stress

Recognize your body’s warning signs that you need to take a break

Stress isn’t all in your head. The rest of your body is often the biggest indicator of the pressure that you are feeling. “When you’re under stress, a part of your brain picks up threatening signals, creating a fear response,” says Gregory L. Fricchione, MD, of Massachusetts General Hospital.



Knowing these stress signs may help you realize when you’re becoming overloaded. “The important thing is to know yourself,” Dr. Fricchione says. “Pay attention to what your body is trying to tell you.” You can’t eliminate stress, but you can manage it better.

Look out for these signs:

- Sighing
- Shallow, rapid breaths
- Tension headache
- Jaw, neck, or shoulder pain
- Stomach problems

Try these strategies:

**Look at the good.** Focus on the things for which you are grateful.

**Remember to breathe.** Pause to think about every breath you take.

**Do something for someone.** Volunteering can take the focus off your own concerns. Kind and helpful people tend to feel more satisfaction and happiness, says Eva Kahana, PhD, a professor of sociology at Case Western Reserve University.

## Creamy Macaroni and Cheese

With two kinds of cheese plus cauliflower, you'll love this made-over classic

Nothing says “comfort food” like a dish of baked macaroni and cheese. Keep the flavor and cut the bad stuff with our lower-fat version. With a simple white cheese sauce, you control how much cheese goes into the dish, and skip heavy ingredients such as eggs and cream. Cauliflower adds texture and nutrients.

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tbsp unsalted butter
- 4 Tbsp flour
- 3 cups skim milk, warmed
- ½ cup + 2 Tbsp grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- Pinch grated nutmeg
- ¼ tsp paprika
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 large head cauliflower, cut into small florets
- 2 cups whole wheat macaroni

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.

In a medium saucepan, melt the butter. Add the flour and stir until the mixture bubbles, about 2 minutes. Slowly pour in the milk,

stirring constantly with a wooden spoon until mixture thickens and boils, about 10 minutes. Add the cheeses and spices. Stir until just melted. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Set sauce aside.

2. Add cauliflower to a large pot of boiling water and cook until tender, about 5 minutes. Remove cauliflower from pot and return water to boil. Add pasta and cook until tender. Drain noodles. Return noodles and cauliflower to pot. Stir in cheese sauce.

3. Pour into a cast iron skillet or other baking dish, about 8 inches in diameter. Sprinkle with remaining



Parmesan. Bake until golden and bubbly, about 35 minutes.

**MAKES 8 SERVINGS**

**PER SERVING:** 188 calories, 7 g fat, 4 g saturated fat, 12 g protein, 22 g carbohydrates, 4 g fiber, 242 mg sodium

## A Pinch of Good Health

Salt alternatives pump up more than flavor

Eating less salt lowers the risk of high blood pressure and related heart problems. But cutting salt can also lead us to try appealing flavors and improved health. Herbs and spices “count as plant foods themselves,” says Jackie Newgent, RDN, author of *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes*.

**ALLSPICE** High in antioxidants, allspice has been shown to fight pain, inflammation, bacteria, and possibly cancer. Sprinkle some on roasted carrots.



**CAYENNE PEPPER** Cayenne and other chili peppers might set your taste buds aflame, but they can help prevent inflammation. The main ingredient, capsaicin, has been shown to open congested nasal passages. Cayenne is also associated with reducing cholesterol levels.

**CINNAMON** One of the most studied spices, cinnamon reportedly

reduces blood sugar and triglycerides. It may also protect against Alzheimer’s disease. Try a dash in your morning coffee.

**CLOVES** As the spice highest in antioxidants, cloves also protect against inflammation and tissue damage caused by high blood sugar. They are perfect in hot apple cider.

**GINGER** It’s long been used to reduce nausea, and new research suggests it may also decrease appetite and protect memory. To soothe your stomach, make a tea out of water and a few slices of raw ginger.



### Join Our Member Advisory Committee

Throughout the year New Hampshire Healthy Families will meet with members to get feedback on our services and programs. Call Member Services if you want to come to a Member Advisory Committee meeting. At the meeting we enjoy snacks and share stories. We discuss ways to make our services better for you and ask for your opinions on our programs and communications. If you are interested in participating, please call Member Services.



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