

Parade

SUNDAY, MARCH 2, 2014 | PARADE.COM

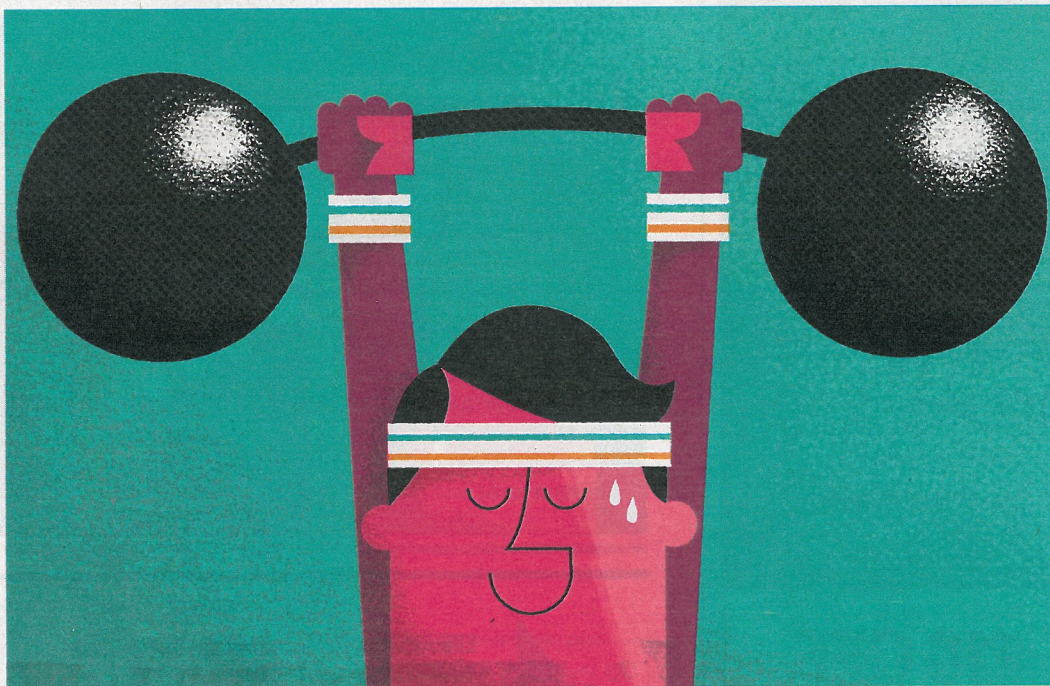
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See our special section on diabetes.





TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH

LIVING WITH TYPE 1 OR TYPE 2 DIABETES? KEEPING IT UNDER CONTROL MAY BE EASIER THAN YOU THINK.

If you've recently been diagnosed with diabetes, you're hardly alone: Nearly 26 million Americans have either type 1 or type 2, according to the American Diabetes Association (ADA). Fortunately, taking even small steps to manage your disease can have big payoffs.

1 STAY ON THE MOVE

"Exercise lowers blood sugar levels, helps prevent heart damage and depression, and can aid weight loss," says David Bradley, M.D., an endocrinologist at the Ohio State Wexner Medical Center. The ADA recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate-level activity (that's the equivalent of 30 minutes a day, five days a week) or 90 minutes of vigorous aerobic exercise (that's 30 minutes, three days a week) each week for those with type 2. Still, "any activity helps, so do what you can and try to increase over time," he says.

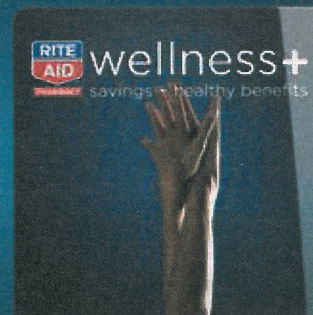
2 KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

Testing your blood sugar at home? The ADA recommends aiming for 70 mg/dl to 130 mg/dl before meals, and less than 180 mg/dl two hours after eating. You'll also need to test for A1C (hemoglobin A1C, which measures your average blood sugar over the previous two to three months), which the ADA says should be around 7 percent.

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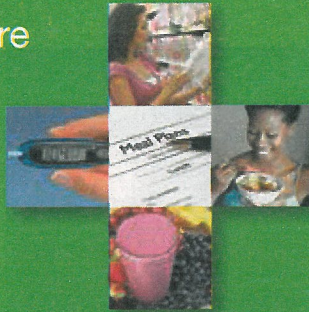
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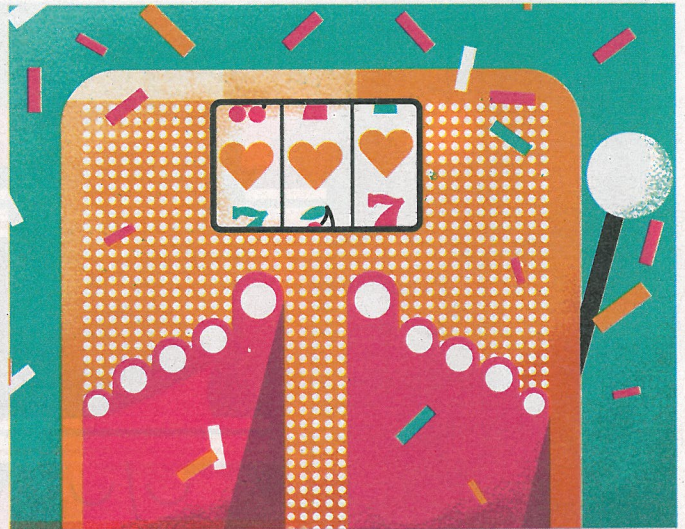
Effective Sales Dates: March 2 through March 29, 2014

ONETOUCH® is a brand marketed by LifeScan, Inc.

*for prescriptions processed through Medicare Part B and most supplemental insurance.

3 AIM FOR SMALL VICTORIES ON THE SCALE
You don't have to shed half your weight to control the symptoms of diabetes. "Research shows

that even a five- to 10-pound weight loss can have great benefits," says Robin Goland, M.D., codirector of the Naomi Berrie Diabetes Center at Columbia University in New York.



4 EMPOWER YOURSELF
"The more you know, the better your health will be," says

Joel Zonszein, M.D., director of the Clinical Diabetes Center at Montefiore Medical Center in New York City. Ask your doctor to suggest a diabetes education class or team up with a diabetes educator (find one near you at diabeteseducator.org).

WHAT IS DIABETES?

Diabetes mellitus—a.k.a. "diabetes"—is a metabolic disorder. Normally, your body breaks food down into glucose (sugar) using insulin (a hormone created in the pancreas). Diabetes means either that your pancreas doesn't produce insulin (type 1, an irreversible immune disorder), or that your cells don't respond appropriately to the insulin it does make (type 2, a progressive disease marked by insulin resistance). Both forms cause blood sugar levels to rise dangerously high.

5 CHECK YOUR COVERAGE OPTIONS
Diabetes medications and supplies can be pricey, but you may have more coverage options than you realize. If you qualify, Medicare Part B will pay for supplies, including blood sugar monitors and test strips. Or if you have private insurance, ask your employer about a pretax flexible spending plan, which can help defray costs. Above all, if you're struggling to pay for your treatment, don't just skip it. Instead, let your doctor know, and check with a social worker at your local hospital or health center, too. "[Health professionals] often have access to resources (like free samples and reduced price prescription programs) that can help," says Bradley.

6 MIND YOUR MOOD

Individuals with diabetes are twice as likely to suffer from depression, which can dampen your motivation to follow your treatment plan, resulting in high blood sugar, weight gain, and complications like kidney damage. If you're feeling sad or upset for more than two weeks, talk to your doctor; she may recommend exercise, antidepressants, and/or talk therapy.

7 TAKE A TEAM APPROACH

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Diabetes is best managed by a treatment team. "Patients can and should work

with other diabetes-related professionals (such as a nurse-educator, a social worker, a dietitian, and an eye doctor) to manage their condition and keep complications at bay," says Goland.

8 DON'T EQUATE DIABETES WITH DEPRIVATION

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"Most people think that a diabetes diagnosis means never eating at your favorite restaurants ever again," says Goland. Not true. Balanced meals are key, but you can also enjoy occasional splurges—provided you use your medication and stick to your recommended number of carbs (ask your dietitian).

9 BE HEART SMART

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High blood sugar damages blood vessels and arteries throughout your body, putting you at a high risk for heart attack and stroke. Because of this, "your doctor should screen for high blood pressure and cholesterol once every three months until all your numbers are under control," says Zonszein. To help keep your ticker in tip-top shape,

exercise and eat healthfully; take prescription medications like statins if your doctor prescribes them; and if you smoke, stop.



10 WATCH FOR COMPLICATIONS

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At least once a week, scan yourself from head to toe to check for skin infections, foot sores, inflamed or bloody gums, blurred vision, or tingling

in your hands or feet—these are all complications of high blood sugar, and they can lead to more serious problems. If you spot something, don't wait until your next checkup to tell your doctor, says Bradley. "Better to be safe and call right away."

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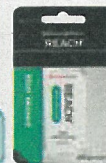
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