

Alberta Healthy Living Program (Diversity, Mandarin, and Cantonese)

Healthy Eating for Diabetes

(1) How can Alberta Healthy Living Program support the Chinese in the community?

- AHS AHLP provide one-on-one advice via phone, Zoom or in person meeting in both Mandarin and Cantonese.
- We also provide nutrition related health education classes such as Eating for Good Health, Eating Well with Pre-Diabetes and Diabetes and Heart Healthy Eating in both Mandarin and Cantonese.
- All classes take place virtually using the platform Zoom or via telephone.
- These services have no charge and are covered by Alberta Health. You do not need a referral from a health care provider - you can just call to book appointment.
- All of our programs and services can be accessed through one toll-free number: 1-844-527-1160. Please write this number down. Once you are connected to a “live” person, please say Mandarin or Cantonese twice and shortly, you will be directed accordingly to a staff member who speaks this language.
- You can also register free nutrition related classes online by clicking on the class title that interests you in our Class Schedule Guide or our Class Description Handbook at [AHS.ca/ AHLP](https://www.ahs.ca/AHLP).

(2) Overview information on Diabetes:

Diabetes is a chronic disease in which our bodies either cannot produce adequate insulin or cannot properly use the insulin it produces. Insulin is a hormone produced by your pancreas.

Insulin's role is to regulate the amount of glucose (sugar) in the blood. Blood sugar must be carefully regulated to ensure that the body functions properly. Too much blood sugar can cause damage to organs, blood vessels, and nerves. Our bodies also require insulin to help us use sugar flowing in our blood to be used for energy.

Despite popular belief we have received from the social media, diabetes is not caused by eating too much sugar in our diet or people being physically lazy.

There are many various reasons why someone may develop diabetes. The risk factors of diabetes depend on our genes, family history, ethnic background (e.g. Asian, South Asian descent) and other factors such as the environment and your health. It also depends on the type of diabetes you have.

There is no common cause that fits every type of diabetes. The reason why someone will develop type 1 diabetes is very different from the reasons why another person will develop type 2 diabetes.

(3) Can we prevent Diabetes?

When we talk about preventing diabetes, we are usually referring about preventing type 2 diabetes. Safe and effective ways to prevent type 1 diabetes have not yet been identified, despite the amount of research in this area.

Type 2 diabetes, however, can be prevented or delayed for many people, which is great news if you think being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes is unavoidable for you.

A healthy lifestyle includes reaching and staying at a healthy weight, eating a healthy diet that is lower in fat and sugar, high in fibre and being physically active every day.

Today our main focus is healthy eating. Many studies have shown that a healthy and well-balanced meal can help us to lower our risk of by

- o Helping us to better manage blood sugar, body weight effectively;
- o Achieving a healthy blood fat levels and blood pressure;
- o Maintaining a general good health.

(4) What is the first step to take on with healthy eating?

A good first step is to cut out highly processed foods, refined grains such as white bread, sugary food and beverages. Plan your meals around vegetables (frozen included), more plant-based proteins, whole grains, dairy, lean meats, oily fish, nuts and healthy vegetable oils such as olive, peanut oil.

(5) How can Alberta Healthy Living Program support the Chinese in the community?

- AHS AHLP provide one-on-one advice via phone, Zoom or in person meeting in both Mandarin and Cantonese.
- We also provide nutrition related health education classes such as Eating for Good Health, Eating Well with Pre-Diabetes and Diabetes and Heart Healthy Eating in both Mandarin and Cantonese.
- All classes take place in-person and virtually using the platform Zoom or via telephone.
- These services have no charge and are covered by Alberta Health. You do not need a referral from a health care provider - you can just call to book appointment.

- All of our programs and services can be accessed through one toll-free number: 1-844-527-1160. Please write this number down. Once you are connected to a “live” person, please say Mandarin or Cantonese twice and shortly, you will be directed accordingly to a staff member who speaks this language.
- You can also register free nutrition related classes online by clicking on the class title that interests you in our Class Schedule Guide or our Class Description Handbook at [AHS.ca/ AHLP](https://www.ahs.ca/AHLP)

(6) How can Alberta Healthy Living Program support the Chinese in the community?

- AHS AHLP provide one-on-one advice via phone, Zoom or in person meeting in both Mandarin and Cantonese.
- We also provide nutrition related health education classes such as Eating for Good Health, Eating Well with Pre-Diabetes and Diabetes and Heart Healthy Eating in both Mandarin and Cantonese.
- All classes take place in-person and virtually using the platform Zoom or via telephone.
- These services have no charge and are covered by Alberta Health. You do not need a referral from a health care provider - you can just call to book appointment.
- All of our programs and services can be accessed through one toll-free number: 1-844-527-1160. Please write this number down. Once you are connected to a “live” person, please say Mandarin or Cantonese twice and shortly, you will be directed accordingly to a staff member who speaks this language.
- You can also register free nutrition related classes online by clicking on the class title that interests you in our Class Schedule Guide or our Class Description Handbook at [AHS.ca/ AHLP](https://www.ahs.ca/AHLP).

(7) What does a healthy balanced diet/ meal look like?

- 50% of our food portion at each meal include vegetables and fruits such as bitter melon, bok choy/ pak choi, choy sum, gai choy, gailan (Chinese Broccoli), eggplants, tomatoes, carrots, Guava, kiwi, orange, berries, mangoes, papaya.
- Vegetables and fruits are packed with nutrients such as antioxidants, vitamins, minerals and fibre.
- The benefits include helping us to maintain a healthy weight and keeping us full longer.
- 25% of our food portion at each meal should include whole grains + starches such as multigrains bread, rice or brown rice.
- Whole grains are packed with nutrients such as fibre, protein and B-vitamins.
- The benefits include helping us to stay healthy and full longer.

- 25% of our food portion at each meal to include protein such as legumes, tofu, chicken, turkey, fish, shellfish, nuts and seeds, extra lean pork and beef.
- It is important to include protein at each meal.
- The benefit include to help us to build and maintain bones, muscles and skin.

Alternatively, you can also add a cup low fat milk, reduced sugar soy beverage or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of yogurt plain, no sugar added at the same meal.

(8) Which food to avoid?

All foods can be included. It is important to know what to eat, when to eat and how much to eat. Try to limit foods with added sugars, drink water or low fat milk instead of juice, 100% fruit juice (freshly squeezed or store bought) has no added sugar but has lot of natural sugar.

(9) What kind of lifestyle should one adopt after their Pre-and/or Type 2 Diabetes diagnosis?

- Maintaining a healthy body weight. If you are overweight or obese, consider reducing your weight by 5-10% will reduce your risk of developing diabetes by half. If person weights 100kg, you may first aim to lose 5kg. Healthy weight loss is 1 to 2 lbs each week.
- Balanced meals. Try to eat at least 3 meals daily and spread out your food it helps to control blood glucose levels. You may or may not need to include a snack between meals. Healthy meal should have $\frac{1}{4}$ plate of grain products like rice, noodles, potatoes, $\frac{1}{4}$ plate with chicken, fish, lean pork, eggs, tofu and $\frac{1}{2}$ plate with different colourful vegetables. You may also add fruit $\frac{1}{2}$ c and a cup low fat milk or plain soy beverage.
- Be Active. Regular physical activity helps your body lower blood glucose (sugar) levels, promotes weight loss, reduces stress and enhances overall fitness. Try to be more active. The most recent physical activity guidelines suggested to aim for least 30 minutes, 5 days a week. Start with few minutes and slowly increase your time as much tolerated. And also try to do activities such as yoga, lifting weights, at least 2 times a week which can help to strengthen your muscles tones.

If you have not been active for long time talk to your doctor before starting any activity.

- Stress management: Learning to reduce / manage stress levels in day-to-day life can help people with diabetes better manage their condition.

☒ Blood pressure: High blood pressure can lead to eye disease, heart disease, stroke and kidney disease, so people with diabetes should try to maintain a blood pressure level below 130/80. To do this, you may need to modify your eating and physical activity habits and/or take medication(s).

(10) How can Alberta Healthy Living Program support the Chinese in the community?

- AHS AHLP provide one-on-one advice via phone, Zoom or in person meeting in both Mandarin and Cantonese.
- We also provide nutrition related health education classes such as Eating for Good Health, Eating Well with Pre-Diabetes and Diabetes and Heart Healthy Eating in both Mandarin and Cantonese.
- All classes take place virtually using the platform Zoom or via telephone.

☒ These services have no charge and are covered by Alberta Health. You do not need a referral from a health care provider - you can just call to book appointment

☒ All of our programs and services can be accessed through one toll-free number: 1-844-527-1160. Please write this number down.

☒ You can also register free nutrition related classes online by clicking on the class title that interests you in our Class Schedule Guide or our Class Description Handbook at [AHS.ca/ AHLP](https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/AHLP)