

**BELLIN FOR WOMEN**

# **ESSENTIALS** *FOR* HEALTH

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Welcome to Essentials for Health—the monthly newsletter of Bellin For Women. You want to take a more active role in your own health, and this is just one of the ways we like to help. This newsletter is your go-to for all kinds of health-related information, from wellness education to health topics in the news to recipes that are good for you and yet somehow taste good, too.

But it's more than that. It's also your connection to BFW. Bellin For Women is a true community of women working to support each other, and maybe even have some fun, on our path to better health. Essentials for Health puts all that energy in your inbox every month to keep you encouraged and motivated to make every day happier and healthier.



# BFW NOVEMBER MANAGER'S NOTE

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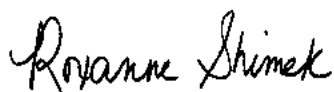
“Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are,” the saying goes. I often heard that from my parents growing up, and to be honest, I thought it was pretty silly. But now that I’m a mother, I get it—Mom knows best! For years I took her lead and strongly encouraged my family to eat lots of fruits and veggies and minimize sweet treats and fried foods. Stressing that way of eating helps us function at a high level and stay as healthy as possible.

As we approach the upcoming holiday season, let’s stay focused on good eating habits—enjoying foods that are yummy and healthy. We’ll feel better, and our families and friends will appreciate it, too! This doesn’t mean you can’t indulge a bit, but do it sensibly—a small serving of your favorite treat versus grabbing one of everything from the buffet.

This month’s BFW newsletter explores why and how we should reduce sugar and eat healthy. Check out the recipe for Berry Pecan Cheesecake—it looks delicious! Perhaps you will join me in serving that for Thanksgiving dessert. In the meantime, we can get in the Turkey Day mindset by kicking back, reading this month’s newsletter and thinking about a beautiful, healthy Thanksgiving feast.

Remember to follow us on Facebook as we provide giveaways and helpful hints—not only during the holidays, but all year long.

Enjoy and Happy Thanksgiving!



Roxanne Shimek

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# Sweet Truth

## How can I prevent diabetes?

Diabetes is a disease that occurs when your blood glucose (blood sugar) is too high. If left untreated, having too much glucose in your blood can cause health problems, such as heart disease, stroke, nerve damage, eye problems and kidney disease.

Type 2 Diabetes is the most common type, but the “sweet truth” is you can take action to delay, prevent and manage diabetes.

If you’re at increased risk of diabetes because you have a sibling or parent with the disease, or you are overweight or had gestational diabetes, it’s particularly important to take action to prevent diabetes.

Fortunately, it’s never too late to start making simple changes to avoid some of the serious health complications from diabetes. There are several things you can do to lower your risk of developing the disease.

### 1. GET MORE EXERCISE

Get at least 30 minutes of physical activity 5 days a week. Talk with your healthcare provider about which activities are best for you.

### 2. LOSE EXCESS WEIGHT

If you’re overweight, every pound you lose can help you prevent diabetes. It may be possible to delay or prevent diabetes by losing just 5-7% of your weight.

### 3. IMPROVE YOUR DIET

Eating plenty of high-fiber foods including fruits, vegetables, beans, whole grains and nuts can reduce your risk of diabetes by improving your blood sugar control.

### KNOW YOUR NUMBERS TO REDUCE YOUR RISK

Talk to your doctor to see if you should be tested for diabetes, since 25% of people with diabetes don’t know they have it. The American Diabetes Association recommends blood glucose screening if:

- You’re age 45 or older and overweight



- You’re younger than age 45 and overweight, with one or more additional risk factors for Type 2 Diabetes—such as an inactive lifestyle or a family history of the disease

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#### Sources:

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<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/preventing-type-2-diabetes/50-ways>

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# Holidays and Carbohydrates



The holiday season is once again upon us! Holidays may be an opportunity to spend quality time with family and friends. Oftentimes, holidays are also focused on food and eating. This can be challenging for people who want to eat healthy. It can also be stressful for people living with diabetes.

People with diabetes can include foods that are part of traditional meals, but they may need to limit carbohydrates. Carbohydrates are found in starchy foods, sugar (both natural sugar—foods like fruit, milk and yogurt—as well as added sugar) and fiber. These foods are part of a healthy diet. We may choose to include some of our favorite foods or limit our portion sizes of these foods. Too many carbohydrates at one time can cause blood sugar levels to rise.

## A SIMPLE WAY TO LIMIT CARBOHYDRATES IS TO LOOK AT YOUR PLATE:

1. Fill  $\frac{1}{2}$  your plate with non-starchy vegetables. These foods are not only delicious, but also have a very small

impact on blood sugar levels. Most vegetables fall into this category, things like green beans, brussels sprouts, carrots, green salads, cauliflower, zucchini and broccoli.

2. Make  $\frac{1}{4}$  of your plate lean protein. This would include turkey, seafood, plant-based meat substitutes, lean beef or pork. Protein will help you feel full longer.
3. Make the last  $\frac{1}{4}$  of your plate carbohydrate-containing foods. This includes starchy vegetables like potatoes, corn, peas, breads, stuffing, sweets and fruits.
4. Choose low calorie/carbohydrate beverages such as sparkling water, unsweetened tea, coffee or water.
5. Remember, all foods can fit.

## NEED CARE QUICKLY?

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# A Healthy Alternative for Holiday Cheesecake



## BERRY PECAN CHEESECAKE

**PREP: 15 MIN**

**COOK: 35 MIN**

**SERVINGS: 18**

### Ingredients:

#### Crust:

- 1 cup pecans
- 1 tsp stevia-erythritol sweetener (Ex: Truvia)
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
- 2 tbs melted butter

#### Filling:

- 1 egg
- 12 ounces cream cheese
- ½ cup stevia-erythritol sweetener (Ex: Truvia)
- ¼ cup sour cream
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ cup unsweetened almond milk
- 1 tbs melted butter

#### Topping:

- 1 cup mixed berries (fresh or frozen)
- 1 tbs stevia-erythritol sweetener (Ex: Truvia)

### Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Crust Instructions:
  - a. Add pecans to blender and allow for pecans to be chopped finely.
  - b. Add sweetener, ground cinnamon and ground nutmeg to the blender containing the chopped pecans and blend until mixed together.
  - c. Pour mixture into a bowl and mix in melted butter.
  - d. Press crust mixture into the bottom of a 9.4in x 9.4in pan.
3. Filling Instructions:
  - a. With an electric mixer, beat egg until thickened. Slowly add in cream cheese until the mixture has become smooth, and then add sweetener, sour cream, vanilla extract and almond milk. After the mixture is smooth, stir in melted butter.
  - b. Pour mixture in the pan containing pecan crust.
4. Bake cheesecake for 35 minutes at 350°F.
5. After cheesecake is finished cooking allow it to cool.
6. Topping Instructions:
  - a. Heat a small pot over medium heat.
  - b. Add mixed berries and sweetener and bring to a simmer.
  - c. Allow it to simmer for about 5 minutes.
  - d. Stir constantly and allow berries to come apart slightly.
  - e. Allow for berries to cook for about 5 minutes longer.
7. After cheesecake has cooled off, add berry sauce on top.

**Nutrition information per serving: 155 calories, 3 grams total carbohydrate, 5 grams saturated fat.**

# Navigating the Holidays with Diabetes

By Jaimee Larson, PA-C, Bellin Health Endocrinology



“It’s the most wonderful time of the year.” Many would agree the holiday months are the most wonderful time of the year. Unfortunately, our wallets and waistlines may disagree. This is the time of year that all the delicious family recipes are prepared, enticing each of us to take advantage of the once-a-year offerings. Holiday celebrations are food centric. So, what should someone do if they have a diagnosis of Type 2 Diabetes or other predisposing risk factors? Or if they are just trying to maintain health consciousness and/or their weight?

Type 2 Diabetes is described as the inability of the body to properly produce the hormone insulin, which helps regulate blood sugar. Inability to regulate blood sugar causes harmful effects to the organs within the body and, in severe cases, can be toxic. Type 2 Diabetes is a multifactorial disease, meaning there are many contributing factors that lead to its development. One single indulgence of grandma’s peanut brittle will not cause diabetes. Having a family history of diabetes means you are more genetically predisposed. Factoring in environmental triggers, such as limited exercise and many years of a poor diet, can increase the risk of diabetes development. Additional factors include stress, illness and certain medications, all putting an individual at a higher risk for developing diabetes.

The signs and symptoms that your body is struggling with blood sugar control are often very subtle during the initial onset of Type 2 Diabetes. One may experience excessive thirst, urination, cravings for food, weight loss, sweating, low energy, visual changes, headaches, numbness or tingling in extremities. Type 2 Diabetes screening is performed at one’s annual physicals with routine blood work that can assess the sugar presence in the blood.

Again, what is one to do around this time of year with all the temptations? Most of us can always stand to improve with slight tweaks in diet or being able to balance the holiday indulgences. Here are some tips to consider this upcoming season:

1. Incorporate regular movement into your day. Ensure you are staying active. Add in a 15-minute walk or some full body motions. The physical activity above your norm will allow more burn of calories consumed as well as combat some food guilt that you may develop.
2. Stay well hydrated. Choose water instead of calorie-loaded beverages (a rough rule of thumb is drinking about half your weight in ounces of water).
3. Before attending a party, try to have a filling protein snack. This could be a hard-boiled egg, cottage cheese, cheese stick or a handful of nuts. Protein will provide a sense of satiety and consuming prior to carbohydrates can help mitigate blood sugar variance.
4. Grab a smaller plate at mealtime. We tend to fill our plates and using smaller plates can keep portions under control.
5. Load up on vegetables and fruit in moderation. Keep in mind, fruit does contain natural sugars, but is still a healthy alternative to starches.
6. Set boundaries, especially with alcohol. Alcohol can metabolically sidetrack our body.
7. Play a game! Try to do something to keep your hands busy and to prevent mindless snacking.
8. Lastly, schedule your annual preventative physical to ensure your primary care provider is monitoring you regularly.

There will likely be many opportunities to try out these small tips. Notice there is no mention of absolute NO’s. Keep moderation in mind, and don’t beat yourself up if you occasionally get off track. The key is consistency and working each day to be mindful of these suggestions to decrease the risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes.

References: Type 2 overview. Type 2 Diabetes - Symptoms, Causes, Treatment | ADA. <https://www.diabetes.org/diabetes/type-2>. Accessed October 10, 2021.