

Are You Eating Your Way to Diabetes?

21–30: Beware! You could be at a high risk for diabetes.

Based on your answers, you may be at high risk for developing diabetes in the future. That's bad news because this serious illness is quickly becoming one of the leading causes of poor health and premature death around the world. Maybe you haven't thought too much about the connection between your diet and your diabetes risk, or perhaps you know that your eating habits are harmful but you haven't taken any steps to improve them. Either way, it's time to change course if you want to avoid health problems later.

The good news is that it's never too late to start improving your diet — and it may not be as hard as you think. Make an appointment with your doctor or a nutritionist to review your eating habits and to get advice on the dietary changes you can make to improve your health. It's better to make these changes now in the hope that you can avoid diabetes in the future than to have to make drastic changes to manage the disease later.

Remember, you don't develop diabetes in a vacuum. Your risk is based on the accumulated effects of your health habits, including how well you eat, over the years. So don't think only in the short term — healthy eating over the long term should be your goal. Imagine yourself 10, 20, or even 30 years from now: How will your current diet affect your health then? To achieve a balanced and healthy eating plan, aim for a diet high in fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy, and whole grains, and stick with foods that are low in saturated and trans fat, total fat, cholesterol, and sodium. If you haven't already, try to develop a taste for nonanimal protein sources, such as tofu, beans, veggie burgers, and nuts, and reach for them on occasion in place of meat. Other hints? Whenever possible, choose fresh foods over highly processed or altered ones, and switch to whole-grain cereals and breads if they're not already a part of your diet. Finally, don't forget that too much sugar and alcohol can also play a role in the development of diabetes, so consume them in moderation. It'll be worth it!

Source unknown – I am not the author.