

Happy New Year!

Looking ahead, we want this year to be one of good health and fun times. These go together, so don't forget to take a good look at your diabetes control.

If your diabetes is not in optimal control (A1C ,6.5%, Fasting Blood Sugars <110 mg/dl), then let's make small cumulative changes over the next few months so your next A1C will improve. It will take some focus on your part and some organization to make these changes.

1. First, make a list of habits or lifestyle changes you want to improve on.
2. From that list, choose one that you know you can improve without much effort (i.e. not eating in evening after dinner).
3. Make a list of specific changes you will make (i.e. find a non-caffeine, no carbohydrate beverage you can have in the evenings in lieu of food)  
If you don't eat regularly throughout the day, going longer than 4 hours between meals, then you may need to eat breakfast or have snacks with you to use during the day, so you aren't as hungry in the evenings.
4. After one week of making the first change, evaluate your progress or obstacles.
5. Identify how to change or overcome the obstacles and continue making progress on the change.
6. In 1-2 weeks, choose another change you are ready to focus on (i.e. starting a regular physical activity program).
7. Identify 20-30 minutes in each day you can devote to physical activity (your dog always loves to go for a walk, so is a good motivator for you).
8. Maybe start with 3 weekdays and the weekend days to designate time for exercise. Start slow and increase your duration 2 minutes each week.
9. Continue adding new changes every 1-2 weeks as needed and monitor your progression with the other changes you have made.

By continuing these changes over the next month, you are doing great to positively impact your diabetes control and overall health. The positive changes you make today will influence the state of your health in years to come.

Take charge of your diabetes and invest in your future health!

*Susan Smith, Ph.D., CDE, is a nationally Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE) and a specialist in the field of diabetes since 1988. Since 2002 she has worked with patients individually through all of the internal medicine and family practice providers at Visalia Medical Clinic.*  
[ssmith@vmchealth.com](mailto:ssmith@vmchealth.com)

