

# THE HEALTHY CPA

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## Reverse Type 2 Diabetes?

**Type 2 diabetes, the most common type of diabetes,** is a long-term condition and occurs when blood sugar is too high. It develops because of insulin resistance, which typically originates from several contributing risk factors, including weight gain, eating habits, a sedentary lifestyle, and/or a hereditary predisposition to insulin resistance.

**Type 2 diabetes symptoms usually appear over time.** Typical symptoms can include frequent urination, blurry vision, fatigue, excessive thirst and unexplained weight loss. However, diabetes can develop without symptoms as well. Screening tests at your regular checkup can find it.

**While type 2 diabetes can't be cured, it can be reversed, according to medical experts.** Reversing diabetes involves carefully controlling blood sugar levels by maintaining them through physical activity and a healthy diet without using glucose-lowering medication. Weight loss can also help sustain blood sugar levels. When nutrition and physical activity are not enough to help with weight loss, some health care providers recommend weight loss medication or bariatric surgery.

### To reverse or put type 2 diabetes into remission, take these steps:

- 1 Exercise frequently.** Get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity a week. Incorporate cardiovascular and strength training into your routine (e.g., use hand weights while walking briskly). **Note:** Always get your health provider's approval before starting a new exercise routine.
- 2 Eat nutritiously.** Enjoy whole foods (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein) and reduce ultra-processed foods (e.g., sweets, salty snacks, fast food). Limit sugary drinks, deep fried foods and refined grains (as found in baked goods). **Tip:** Meet with a dietitian to develop a personalized plan.
- 3 Sleep more.** Experts recommend adults get seven to nine hours daily.
- 4 Drink more water.** The Institute of Medicine recommends a daily intake of 13 cups for men and nine cups for women. How much you need depends on your circumstances.



## BEST bits

• **Reminder: Touching your face with dirty hands can spread infections.** Important times to wash your hands include before, during and after preparing food, after using the bathroom and before and after eating. **Wash your hands with soap and cold or warm water for at least 20 seconds.** Bacteria can hide under your fingernails, so scrub them when washing up, and keep your hands away from your face. Learn more at [cdc.gov/handwashing](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing).

• **Family Health History Day is November 28.** As you enjoy Thanksgiving with family, use the time to discuss your family's medical history. What you learn can help protect the health of you and your family. If relatives have developed cancer, diabetes or other diseases, you may be at a higher risk and need more frequent screenings. To learn more, search [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for **Family Health History**.

• **During Healthy Skin Month in November, review these face-saving tips** from the American Academy of Dermatology. Wash your face gently after you wake up and before going to bed to reduce bacteria buildup. No scrubbing; it can worsen acne and rosacea. Use a mild alcohol-free cleanser, rinse well and apply a moisturizer containing sunscreen. To avoid premature skin aging and skin cancer, don't smoke and don't tan. Outdoors, always use sunscreen labeled **broad spectrum** and SPF 30 or higher. Check for signs of cancer; routinely look for spots that differ from others or that change, itch or bleed. See your health care provider if you spot something odd. Learn more [aad.org](https://www.aad.org).

The **Smart Moves Toolkit**, including this issue's printable download, **Resisting Antibiotics**, is at [personalbest.com/extras/24V11tools](https://personalbest.com/extras/24V11tools).

# Q: Video game addiction?

**A:** Many Americans play video games, but overuse can interfere with sleep and daily responsibilities, and may lead to anxiety or depression. An addiction or gaming disorder may be developing when users:

- Can't stop.
- Spend money on games they can't afford.
- Lie about the extent of their gaming.
- Make gaming a priority over other important life activities.
- Continue gaming even after suffering harmful consequences.
- Become anxious or irritable when prevented from gaming.



**However, the following strategies may help keep gaming in check:**

- Keep video games and other screens out of bedrooms.
- Designate screen-free times, such as meals or during family activities.
- Balance screen time with in-person social activities.
- Install apps to limit screen use or set timers to provide breaks.

**Consider a consultation with a mental health professional** — preferably one with expertise in addictions — if you need more help. If you are someone who self-harms, please seek professional mental health treatment.

— Eric Endlich, PhD

**Coughs are normal with colds or flu.** But coughing can interfere with sleep.

Over-the-counter cough medications have side effects and aren't recommended for young children. Instead, use these non-drug remedies: Drink lots of warm liquids to soothe your throat and thin mucus. Using a humidifier and taking warm showers calm coughs by putting moisture in the air. For adults and older kids, cough drops or hard candy can decrease cough-triggering throat tickles. Don't go to bed or lie down with a hard cough drop or candy in your mouth. Elevate the head while sleeping. If coughs persist or worsen, call your health care provider.



# Your Personal Exercise Plan

**You know exercise is key for living your healthiest life.** Most adults should aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity weekly and two days of muscle-strengthening activity, according to the CDC.

**It makes sense to get checked by your health care provider,** who can also provide any needed guidance for your exercise goals and determine what kind and amount of exercise you can safely do before you start any new exercise regimen.

**It's important to determine your short- and long-term goals** as you create a personal exercise plan, according to the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Do you need to lose weight? Gain stamina? Lower your risk of specific health problems or improve your health in general? Writing down your goals can help you focus and track your progress over time.

**While that may not seem too difficult** at least on paper, real life can get in the way. But there are ways to fit in regular exercise into your schedule by figuring out a workable exercise plan.

**Bottom line:** Improving your fitness level is doable, no matter how busy your life is. It takes planning and finding activities that work for you and that you look forward to.

**NIH's tips for making and sticking to a workout plan:**

**You can strengthen your bones with weights at home or at a gym.** Start slowly and increase over time. Stretch to improve flexibility. Protect heart health with aerobic activity.

**Finding ways to exercise that you enjoy is key to success.** Do you like solitary walks? Want to work out in classes at a local gym? Always wanted to try yoga? See what makes both your body and your brain feel good. Don't struggle with a workout you hate. Look for other options.



**Enlist social support by connecting with others.** Enlist an exercise partner or two. Other people can help us start, continue or increase how much we exercise. People with greater social support tend to exercise more, according to the NIH.

**After a month or two, review your goals.** You may be surprised to see you have made progress. Are you sleeping better? Feeling stronger? Have you increased your muscle mass? Are your clothes a little bit looser?

**If you haven't met your goals, don't give up.** Consider other options, such as a personal trainer, or classes online or in person.

## Ultra-Processed Foods and Long-Term Health

Research reveals that eating ultra-processed foods can have long-term health risks. A 30-year study confirmed that ultra-processed foods, in particular packaged baked goods, ready-to-eat meat, sugary cereals, snacks, sweetened drinks and dairy desserts, are associated with a slightly higher risk of death. These foods often contain added sugar, artificial flavors and other additives while lacking vitamins and fiber. The study involved 74,563 women and 39,501 men with no history of cancer, cardiovascular disease or diabetes.

**Research results:** Participants consuming the least ultra-processed food (three servings daily) had a lower risk of death compared to those consuming the most (seven servings daily). The latter group had a 4% increase in overall mortality risk and a 9% rise in the risk of other deaths, including an 8% higher risk of neurodegenerative diseases.

**Reducing ultra-processed food intake benefits long-term health,** though research is needed to refine ultra-processed food categorization and to verify these findings in different populations.

## TIP of the MONTH

### Turkey Stuff(ing)

Turkey and stuffing are traditionally found on the Thanksgiving dinner table. Did you know it's better (and safer) to cook these two foods separately? Stuffing cooked inside the turkey cavity slows down the cooking time for an already long process. Plus, the stuffing and inside of the turkey may not reach a safe internal cooking temperature (165°F), which increases the risk of salmonella. Enjoy both, but cook them separately. To learn more, go to [www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/) and click on **Safe Food Handling and Preparation**.

# Jazz Up Your Breakfast

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

eating smart

## Your morning meal helps break the fast after a night's rest.

Breakfast provides energy to start your day, plus breakfast eaters have a lower risk of developing heart disease and type 2 diabetes compared to breakfast skippers.

**Many traditional breakfast foods, such as eggs, yogurt and fruit, offer lots of beneficial nutrients.** In fact, studies show that people who eat breakfast get more nutrients in their diet because of their nutrition boost in the morning. Here's how you can plan the best morning meal.

**Make sure it contains protein,** which provides a feeling of fullness and keeps you satisfied for hours. Aim for 20 to 30 grams of protein from foods including:

- Greek yogurt.
- Fish, such as smoked salmon or tuna.
- Beans or tofu.
- Eggs.
- Cheese.
- Nuts, seeds and nut butters.

**Choose foods with fiber,** which helps keep you full, helps manage cholesterol levels and keeps you regular. Foods with fiber include:

- Fruits and vegetables.
- Nuts, seeds and nut butters.
- Whole grains, such as oats, whole-grain wheat and brown rice.

**Meal ideas:** Here are five tasty ways to combine these ingredients into delicious, nutritious breakfast options:

- 1. Overnight oats:** Refrigerate a mix of yogurt, oats and fruit overnight for easy mornings (see recipe below).
- 2. Avocado toast:** Skip butter. Add fiber-rich avocado instead. Top with eggs, cheese or mashed beans for protein.
- 3. Breakfast burritos:** Wrap eggs, black beans, sweet peppers and tomatoes in whole-grain tortillas. Freeze ahead and defrost on busy mornings.
- 4. Panwiches:** Use high-protein pancakes as bread to make sandwiches. Fill with peanut butter and banana, or scrambled eggs and vegetables.
- 5. Smoothie bowls:** Serve smoothies in bowls topped with granola, nuts and fruit.



## Mixed Berry Overnight Oats

- 2 cups 2% Greek yogurt
- ¾ cup old-fashioned oats
- ½ cup nonfat milk
- 2 tbsp chia seeds
- 1½ cups mixed berries, fresh or frozen

In a mixing bowl, combine yogurt, oats, milk and chia seeds.

In a small container or jar with a lid, add a layer of yogurt mix, then a layer of berries. **Repeat** layers until container is full (usually 3 layers of each). **Top** container with lid and store in the refrigerator overnight. **Enjoy** for breakfast. **Optional:** Add a drizzle of honey or maple syrup.

**Makes 2 servings. Per serving:** 335 calories | 25g protein | 9g total fat | 3g saturated fat | 3g mono fat | 3g poly fat | 38g carbohydrate | 15g sugar (0g added sugar) | 10g fiber | 20mg sodium

## EASY recipe



## Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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## EXPERT advice

— Elizabeth Smoots, MD

### Q: What are off-label meds?

**A:** Using a drug in a way that is not FDA-approved is referred to as “off-label” use. A medication is used off-label when it’s employed for a condition that it’s not approved to treat, given in a different way, or given at a different dose. Medications approved only for adults that are prescribed for children is another example of off-label use.

**Off-label use may pose some risks.** Most medications go through a rigorous review of safety and efficacy before the FDA approves them. This process is omitted when drugs are used off-label. The FDA has not determined that the drugs are safe and effective for unapproved uses. There could be long-term side effects, interactions with drugs or diseases, or other unknown risks.

**Before using off-labels medications, talk to your health care provider.** What other treatment options are available? It’s important to weigh the potential risks and benefits for your individual situation with your provider before taking off-label medicine.

## November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month.

Lung cancer is a main cause of cancer deaths in the U.S. Although smoking is the leading cause of lung cancer, other risk factors include exposure to radon and pollution. The American Cancer Society urges you to learn about symptoms, including nagging coughs, and why low-dose CT screening for lung cancer is crucial if you are age 50 or older and are a current or former smoker and have at least a 20-pack-a-year history of smoking. Learn more at [cancer.org](http://cancer.org).



## SAFETY CORNER

SAFETY

### Lithium Battery Safety

Did you know that lithium batteries can overheat and release toxic gases, as well as cause fires and explosions? Follow these guidelines to prevent a disaster from happening:

- ✓ Follow manufacturers’ guidelines when charging lithium batteries.
- ✓ Stop charging once the battery is fully charged. Use only the charger that came with your device.
- ✓ Don’t charge your device on a soft surface, such as your bed, sofa or pillow.
- ✓ Keep batteries and devices at room temperature if possible.
- ✓ Discontinue using your device if it shows signs of battery damage, including unusual odor, change in color or shape, and leaking or odd noises.
- ✓ Store batteries away from flammable items.



- ✓ Recycle your used batteries. For a recycler near you, contact your municipal waste agency. Never put lithium batteries in the trash.
- ✓ Don’t let discarded batteries pile up in the same place.