

## **Fellow Hispanics, eat smart, avoid diabetes.**

The number of people with Diabetes type 2, continues to rise among our Hispanic population. Pre-diabetes is also gaining more territory as our waist continues to get bigger. This later one being a step to get Diabetes. Sadly, this is not only an adult condition, but is also seen more and more in children, overweight children. No wonder, health authorities are alarmed at the increasing weight-height ratio of our young generation.

And, what is Diabetes type 2? In Diabetes type 2 the body does not produce enough of the insulin hormone to keep blood glucose levels within the normal. It may happen also, that the body produces enough insulin and in excess of need, but cannot use it properly. This is very common in people that are overweight. Diabetes type 2 can present itself with the following symptoms: excessive thirst, hunger, urination, and blurry vision among others. Some people develop dark marks around the neck and other areas where the skin folds. These dark marks could be what is called "Acanthosis nigricans" this is related to an overproduction of insulin. Reducing weight in a healthy way not only will help take care of these marks, but also will help you reduce the risk of Diabetes, heart and kidney disease, and other diseases related to excessive body weight.

The following are also risk factors for Diabetes type 2, that warrants a doctor's visit for a physical and blood tests. They are also an opportunity to start favorable changes in your eating habits and physical activity. The risks are: being physically inactive, overweight, family members with Diabetes, give birth to babies of 9 pounds or more, and gestational Diabetes.

Diabetes is on the rise, but it does not have affect you!

In the mean time, be health conscious with food, drinks and level of physical activity. The following are some pointers for you to start a turn for the best:

- ☐ Drink water instead of carbonated beverages that are loaded with sugar.
- ☐ Limit juice to no more than 6 ounces per day.
- ☐ Drink low fat (1%) or fat free milk (if older than 2 years of age)
- ☐ Eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables daily (an orange counts as one serving, half cup of vegetables count as a serving).

- ▣ Bake more, fry less.
- ▣ Start the day with breakfast.
- ▣ Do not skip lunch or dinner, although make them light.
- ▣ If feeling low in energy, snack smart.
- ▣ Enjoy walks, challenge yourself to accomplish 10,000 steps over time ( a pedometer can help to track the steps)
- ▣ Recruit your family to spruce up your home and surroundings (cut the grass, trim the plants, paint the house, clean the patio, clean windows all for the sake of exercise).

Call Closing the Gap (407-343-2082 or 407-343-2076) for information on sessions and innovative activities that deal with nutrition and physical activity.

We just started a community garden with the folks at Osceola County Extension Service.

All Closing the Gap activities are at no cost. If you have school children elementary through high school make sure you ask about the "Smart Kids Slim Down" Program.

For more information on nutrition issues, call Closing the Gap (407-343-2076), Family Nutrition Program- Extension Service (321-697-3000), or WIC (407-343-2085). Or you can log on to: [www.osceolahealth.org](http://www.osceolahealth.org), <http://osceola.ifas.ufl.edu>, [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org), [www.kidsnutrition.org](http://www.kidsnutrition.org), [www.nutritionforkids.com](http://www.nutritionforkids.com), [www.cdc.gov/youthcampaign](http://www.cdc.gov/youthcampaign), [www.5aday.com](http://www.5aday.com), [www.deliciousdecisions.org](http://www.deliciousdecisions.org)

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