



A PROGRAM FROM MERCK
JOURNEY FOR CONTROL
Advancing Diabetes Education

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How to Change Habits Successfully

For most people, changing long-held habits is extremely hard to do. Just think of the people you know who have tried to quit smoking, cut down on their alcohol consumption, or stop overeating.

When you have type 2 diabetes, it is important to develop healthy eating and exercise habits that can help you keep your blood sugar within a healthy range. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), people go through 5 stages when modifying their lifestyle habits:

1. **Nonawareness**—You haven't even thought about changing your habits.
2. **Realization**—You've realized that there may be benefits to changing your habits.
3. **Ready**—You're ready for action.
4. **Action**—You take steps to change your behaviors.
5. **Maintenance**—You work toward maintaining your accomplishments.

When it comes to learning healthy habits to manage your type 2 diabetes, which stage are you in?

Your action plan for adopting healthy habits

- **Set specific weight and exercise goals** that you can reach. Talk with your doctor to make sure the goals are realistic.
- **Break a big goal into smaller steps**—for instance, start out with a 5- to 10-minute walk 3 times a week, then walk longer and more frequently.
- **Make lifestyle changes you can live with** for the rest of your life, such as the correct portion sizes.
- **Recognize triggers** that prompt unhealthy behavior and plan how you will handle those situations in the future.
- **Reward yourself** for special milestones and progress toward healthy habits.
- **Don't go it alone**—let friends and family know about your plan to take better care of your type 2 diabetes. Talk with them when you need support. You can also find support online from programs such as Journey for Control.
- **Expect obstacles and setbacks**—then learn to deal with them and move on.
- **Go easy on yourself**—type 2 diabetes is a challenging disease to live with. Give yourself some credit for putting the effort into making healthy changes. By doing so, you are taking positive steps to control your blood sugar and live a healthy life.

For more information about diabetes, please visit JourneyForControl.com.

