

Achieve

A Newsletter
for AvMed
Members

▶ YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE WITH DIABETES

Should I take statins if I have diabetes?

Think statins are just for people with high cholesterol? Think again.

I imagine a medication that could cut your risk of heart attack or stroke by up to 50% — and help manage your diabetes. Statins do just that by lowering LDL (“bad”) cholesterol, which reduces plaque buildup in arteries and improves blood flow.

When you have diabetes, your body produces less “good” cholesterol (HDL), resulting in higher levels of LDL cholesterol. This puts people with diabetes at a higher risk for heart attack and stroke. According to recent guidelines from the American College of Cardiology, statins can help lower the risk of cardiac

events for people living with diabetes who have an LDL of 70 mg or higher.

Statins are remarkably safe drugs. However, many people who could benefit from statins aren’t taking them. The American Heart Association found that more than 10% of patients who could benefit from statins weren’t taking them because they were worried about side effects. However, the actual side effects of taking statins are fairly minor and usually simple to address. For example, side effects like muscle pain are

often resolved by adjusting the medication.

If you have diabetes, talk to your doctor about whether statins may be right for you. The American Diabetes Association recommends statins for people with diabetes who are between ages 40 and 75, even if they don’t have atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease.

Don’t let fear of side effects stop you from getting life-saving treatment. Statins may be one of the most important decisions for your heart health.



Ask the pediatrician

Q My tweenager is pushing for independence on managing their condition. What are some safe first steps?

A They're no longer little kids but not yet teens. When your child enters their tweenage years (ages 9 to 12), it's normal for them to want a bigger role in their disease management plan.

Remember: Age doesn't equal maturity. You know your child best. When you decide they're ready, these strategies can help you support your child as they adjust to taking on more responsibility.



Ease into it. There's a lot that goes into managing diabetes. Sharing too much at once will likely overwhelm your child. Consider starting off by letting your child administer their own insulin before they eat. Add one task to their routine at a time.

Stay in the loop. For example, if your child has a continuous glucose monitor, it can send you phone alerts. Let your

child know that within 15 minutes of an alert, they must text you to share how they treated that reading. If you don't hear from them within that timeframe, reach out.

Set realistic expectations. Your child, no matter how responsible, is still a child. Have good communication concerning their routine and ask them to share with you after they complete each step.



To reach a Case Manager

Simply call 1-833-609-0735 or email DM@AvMed.org or scan the QR code provided.



Healthy Eating Made Simple



WHICH ARE HEALTHIEST?

Starchy vs. non-starchy vegetables

Vegetables are essential to a healthy diet. But knowing which veggies are “starchy” and which are “non-starchy” can help you make choices that support steady blood sugar levels. Here’s what to know about these types of veggies and how to incorporate them into balanced meals.

STARCHY VEGETABLES

While all vegetables have health benefits, starchy ones contain more carbohydrates. This may lead to a quicker rise in blood sugar. They’re still packed with nutrients, which makes them an important part of a balanced diet — just in smaller portions. Examples include:

- Potatoes and sweet potatoes
- Corn
- Beans and lentils
- Winter squash (like butternut and acorn)

NON-STARCHY VEGETABLES

Non-starchy vegetables are naturally lower in carbs, which makes them less likely to cause blood sugar spikes. They are often rich in vitamins, minerals, and fiber, which supports digestion and overall health. Examples include:

- Leafy greens (spinach, kale)
- Broccoli and cauliflower
- Bell peppers
- Summer squash (like zucchini)
- Mushrooms
- Asparagus

BALANCED EATING FOR BLOOD SUGAR CONTROL

Control portions: Limit starchy vegetables to one cup per meal. Use a measuring cup to help you stay on track.

Pair with protein: Eating starchy veggies with a protein, like chicken or tofu, helps keep blood sugar stable.

Listen to your body: Do certain veggies leave you feeling sluggish or energized?

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Recipe



Black beans and rice

Serves 16 | Prep time: 15 min

This classic dish is hearty, flavorful, and filling.

Ingredients

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, diced
- 1 large green bell pepper, diced
- 4-5 aji cachucha, pierced
- 2-3 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 culantro leaves
- 4 bay leaves
- ½ Tbsp ground cumin
- 4-5 Tbsp prosecco wine vinegar or sweet white wine vinegar
- 4-5 Tbsp regular white vinegar
- 8 15-16 oz cans black beans (low sodium, undrained)
- Salt to taste

Instructions

- 1.** In a large Dutch oven or soup pot, heat the oil over a low to medium setting, then add all ingredients except the beans and water. Sauté until the onions soften and turn yellow (about 5 minutes).
- 2.** Add the undrained beans and water. If you like thicker beans, omit the water. Raise the heat and simmer (or boil) for 20 minutes. Add salt and adjust seasonings to taste.

Nutrition facts Calories 205
Fat 3 g | Carbs 35 g | Fiber 10.5 g
Protein 11 g