

Cairn Medical Practice Pre-diabetes Patient Information Leaflet

Key Messages:

- Pre-diabetes is a serious condition with a risk of progressing to diabetes and heart disease
- The good news is that these risks are often preventable
- To prevent progression, patients need to make positive lifestyle changes in terms of healthier eating, weight loss and increased physical activity



NHS Highland's Information pack 'Live it Highland – living with diabetes' is a very comprehensive information resource. It has been written to support people with diabetes and pre-diabetes and is available on our website: www.cairnmedical.gp.scot > Practice services > Clinics – Diabetic. Alternatively you can type this address into your browser: <https://cairnmedical.gp.scot/media/4fxnfyqv/live-it-highland-participants-pack-digital.pdf> .

What is diabetes and Pre-diabetes?

- Diabetes can come in type 1 and type 2. Type 2 is more common and is likely to develop as we get older. Around 3 in 100 people develop it.
- People with Type 2 diabetes have something called 'insulin resistance'. Insulin is a hormone the body produces to help us regulate our blood sugar. If we don't respond to it then our blood sugar remains too high. Over time high blood sugar can damage our blood vessels and heart.
- People with pre-diabetes do not usually have any symptoms.
- In pre-diabetes our blood sugar is too high, but not high enough to be called diabetes. 'Pre' means 'before' – so you can think of pre-diabetes as being a warning that type 2 diabetes may be ahead.

Don't panic!

'Being told you have pre-diabetes can be an alarming experience. The good news is that at this early stage, the condition is often reversible by making some relatively simple changes to your lifestyle.'

What can I do to prevent my pre-diabetes progressing?



Being more active

Try to do something you enjoy. Aim for 30 minutes of activity at least 5 days of the week as a goal and this should be something that makes you breathe faster and your heart beat faster. However even short brisk walks can make a big difference! Active health link workers can provide specific motivational support and guidance on becoming more physically active. Simply send your name, DOB, email and phone number to Velocity's Active Health team at activehealth@velocitylove.co.uk

Healthy eating

People with pre-diabetes should eat food that is high in fibre (e.g. vegetables, wholemeal foods), low in sugar, low in saturated fats (i.e. found in meat, butter, dairy products) and low in salt. Most food contains some sugar (even carrots and potatoes) and so it is impossible to avoid it altogether. Sugar in cakes and sweets is released quickly, raising your blood sugar higher than other foods. Sugars in rice, brown bread and pasta are called complex carbohydrates and raise blood sugar more slowly and are therefore better in pre-diabetes.



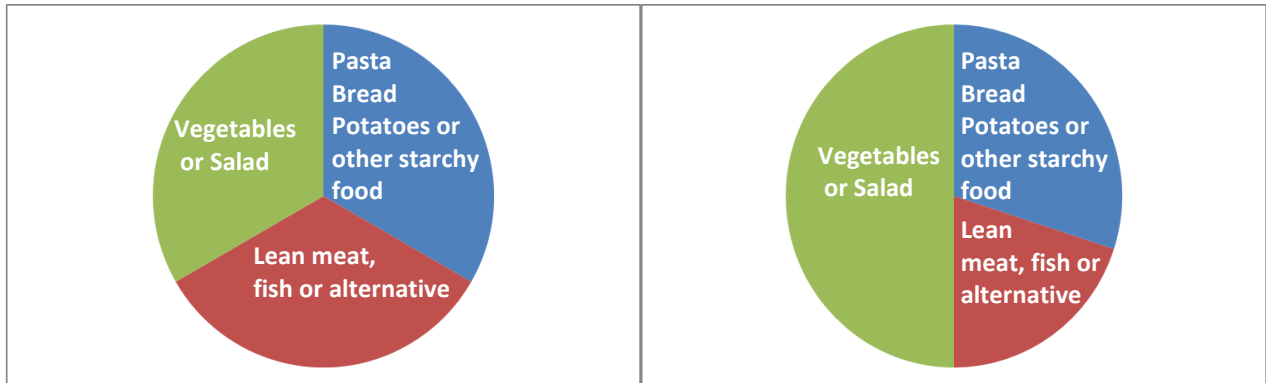
Aim for a high daily fruit and vegetable intake. Many packaged foods are high in salt, fat and refined sugars so be careful. Replace sugary drinks and fruit juice with water or sugar-free drinks.

It is also important to restrict the amount you eat with portion control.

You may also need to change to proportion of food on your plate to help you lose weight or maintain your current weight.

If you are trying to maintain your weight

If you are trying to lose weight



Losing weight



This is one of the most important factors in improving your pre-diabetes. Be realistic about your target and find a plan that suits you. Some people do it in gradual steps and some people prefer more rapid weight loss. Remember however that you are aiming to make changes to your diet you are likely to stick to for the rest of your life. Look at your daily calorie intake, and think about how you can reduce this to allow weight loss.



Stop smoking

- Visit your local pharmacy to explore the options and make a clear plan before setting a firm date to stop. Other support available at: www.smokefreehighland.co.uk and www.nhsinform.scot

Drink wisely

The alcohol limit for men and women is the same. Both should not regularly drink more than 14 units per week. Alcohol contains sugar (beer more than wine) and can raise the blood sugar quite quickly.



Why is it important to avoid diabetes?

- Diabetes is a serious illness. It can be treated with medication or insulin but often it gets worse over time.
- There is an increased risk of heart attack and stroke of around 3 times more than the general population
- Many diabetics develop serious complications such as impaired eyesight, kidney failure and cataracts.
- Diabetes is the leading cause of amputation in the UK and the chief cause of blindness in middle-aged people.

Does my pre-diabetes need monitored at the GP surgery?

Once we have diagnosed your pre-diabetes we would aim to check your blood sugar level once a year to ensure you have not developed diabetes. We don't need to see you otherwise, unless you have any queries you wanted to discuss with us, and often we can do this over the telephone.