



# Newsletter

November 2017  
Issue 20, Vol. 1



It's Your Life.  
Treat Your Diabetes Well.

**Nursing Talk**

**Protect Against  
Respiratory Syncytial Virus**

# It's Your Life. Treat Your Diabetes Well.



**November is National Diabetes Month.  
Here's to managing your diabetes for a longer, healthier life.**

There isn't a cure yet for diabetes, but a healthy lifestyle can really reduce its impact on your life. What you do every day makes the difference: eating a healthy diet, being physically active, taking medicines if prescribed, and keeping health care appointments to stay on track.

## **The Basics**

More than 30 million people in the United States have diabetes, but 1 out of 4 of them don't know they have it.

There are three main types of diabetes: type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes (diabetes while pregnant, which can put the pregnancy and baby at risk and lead to type 2 diabetes later).

With type 1 diabetes, your body can't make insulin (a hormone that acts like a key to let blood sugar into cells for use as energy), so you need to take it every day. Type 1 diabetes is less common than type 2 diabetes; about 5% of the people who have diabetes have type 1. Currently, no one knows how to prevent type 1 diabetes.

Most people with diabetes—9 out of 10—have type 2 diabetes. With type 2 diabetes, your body doesn't use insulin well and is unable to keep blood sugar at normal levels. If you have any of the risk factors below, ask your doctor if you should be tested for diabetes. The sooner you find out, the sooner you can start making healthy changes that will benefit you now and in the future.

Type 2 diabetes risk factors include:

- Having prediabetes (blood sugar levels that are higher than normal but not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes).
- Being overweight.
- Being 45 years or older.
- Having a parent, brother, or sister with type 2 diabetes.
- Being physically active less than 3 times a week.
- Ever having gestational diabetes or giving birth to a baby who weighed more than 9 pounds.

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# It's Your Life. Treat Your Diabetes Well.

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## Diabetes by the Numbers

- More than 30 million US adults have diabetes—and 1 out of 4 of them don't know they have it.
- At least 1 out of 3 people will develop diabetes in their lifetime.
- Medical costs for people with diabetes are twice as high as for people without diabetes.
- Risk of death for adults with diabetes is 50% higher than for adults without diabetes.
- Get more facts about diabetes [<http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/home/index.html>].

Race and ethnicity also matter: African Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, American Indians/Alaska Natives, Pacific Islanders, and some Asian Americans are at higher risk for type 2 diabetes.

You can lower your risk for developing type 2 diabetes by losing a small amount of weight if you're overweight and getting regular physical activity. A small amount of weight loss means around 5% to 7% of your body weight, just 10 to 14 pounds for a 200-pound person. Regular physical activity means getting at least 150 minutes a week of brisk walking or a similar activity. That's just 30 minutes a day, five days a week.



Keep it fresh by shopping the outside aisles of the grocery store for fruits, veggies, lean meat, and dairy.

## You've Been Diagnosed with Diabetes. Now What?

It's a balancing act—food, activity, medicine, and blood sugar levels—but you can do it. Meeting with a diabetes educator is a great way to get support and guidance, including how to:

- Follow a healthy eating plan.
- Get physically active.
- Test your blood sugar.
- Give yourself insulin by syringe, pen, or pump, if needed.
- Monitor your feet, skin [134 KB], and eyes to catch problems early.
- Get diabetes supplies and store them according to package directions.
- Manage stress and deal with daily diabetes care.

Ask your doctor about diabetes self-management education and support, and to recommend a diabetes educator. You can also search the American Association of Diabetes Educators' nationwide directory for a list of educators in your community.

## Know Your ABCs

Work with your doctor to manage your diabetes ABCs, and keep a record of your numbers. Results will help determine if your treatment plan is working and you're able to stay in your target range—for example, an A1C of 7% or less—or if adjustments need to be made. Staying on track will help lower your risk of additional health problems.

- A—the A1C test, which measures average blood sugar over 2 to 3 months.
- B—blood pressure, the force of blood flow inside blood vessels.
- C—cholesterol, a group of blood fats that affect the risk of heart attack or stroke.
- s—stop smoking or don't start.

## Prevent Complications

People with type 1 or type 2 diabetes are at higher risk for serious health complications, including:

- Heart disease and stroke: People with

# Nursing Talk

## HOW CAN I IMPROVE MY HANDWRITING

Dear Cassandra,

My supervisor asked me to come to the office last week. When I got there, she had a stack of my nursing notes on her desk. She said the schedulers had assured her that I had worked the shifts, but she said it is almost impossible to read my clinical notes. She said she tried to decipher my handwriting, but it was hard for her to make out what I had written.

I'll admit that my handwriting is not the best. Some would say it looks like chicken scratches. What can I do to improve my handwriting?

### *Wants to Improve in West Chicago*

Dear Wants to Improve,

When you went to elementary school, you probably learned to write using the Palmer Method. This method of writing was developed and promoted by Austin Palmer in 1894. It was a simplified style of writing meant to replace the Spencerian Method, which had been the major style of handwriting since the 1840's.

The Palmer Method was widely adopted in schools throughout the United States. The textbook, [The Palmer Method of Business Writing](#), sold one million copies in 1912. The method won awards including the Gold Medal at the Panama Pacific Exposition in San Francisco in 1915. It also won the Gold Medal at the Sesquicentennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1926.

A 2010 report by the Miami-Dade public school system found that cursive writing has been slowly declining nationwide since the 1970's. With the introduction of computers into the elementary schools, teachers focused upon teaching typing and computer skills rather than penmanship.

In an article in the [Washington Post](#) April 9, 2013, Michael Hairston, president of the Fairfax Education Association, the largest

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diabetes are twice as likely to have heart disease or a stroke as people without diabetes, and at an earlier age.

- Blindness and eye problems: Diabetic retinopathy (damage to blood vessels in the retina), cataracts (clouding of the lens), and glaucoma (increase in fluid pressure in the eye) can all result in vision loss.
- Kidney disease: High blood sugar levels can damage the kidneys over time, long before you start to feel bad.
- Amputations: This means you could lose a foot or leg. Diabetes causes damage to blood vessels and nerves, particularly in the feet, and can lead to serious, hard-to-treat infections. Amputation may be necessary to keep the

infection from spreading.

But controlling your blood sugar levels can help you avoid or delay these serious health complications, and treating complications as soon as possible can help prevent them from getting worse.

## Put Care on Your Calendar

**Every day:** stay active, eat a healthy diet, and take medication if prescribed; check feet for redness, swelling, pain, or sores.

**Each health care visit** (several times a year): get a blood pressure check and foot check.

**Twice a year:** get an A1C test and dental checkup.

**Once a year:** get a cholesterol test and kidney function test, visit your podiatrist (foot doctor) and eye doctor, and get a flu shot (and other vaccines as recommended by your doctor).

Living with diabetes has its ups and downs, but healthy lifestyle choices can give you more control over them. And more control means fewer health problems down the road and a better quality of life now.

## More Information:

- CDC's Division of Diabetes Translation [<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/home/index.html>]
- Diabetes Basics [<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/index.html>]
- Living with Diabetes [<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/managing/index.html>]
- Staying Healthy with Diabetes [<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/managing/health.html>]
- Putting the Brakes on Diabetes Complications [<https://www.cdc.gov/features/preventing-diabetes-complications/index.html>]
- CDC Diabetes on Facebook [<https://www.facebook.com/CDCDiabetes/>]
- @CDCDiabetes on Twitter [<https://twitter.com/CDCDiabetes>]

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/features/livingwithdiabetes/index.html>

## Nursing Talk

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teachers union in the county, called cursive “a dying art.” “Cursive writing is a traditional skill that has been replaced by technology. Educators are having to make choices about what they teach with a limited amount of time and little or no flexibility. Much of their instructional time is consumed with teaching to a standardized test.”

Nevertheless, there are signs of a resurgence of cursive writing. The March 6, 2017 issue of *Business Insider* contained an article called “Cursive is making a comeback in American elementary schools.” The author, Karen Matthews of the Associated Press, writes that “Alabama and Louisiana passed laws in 2016 mandating cursive proficiency in public schools, the latest of 14 states that require cursive. And last fall, the 1.1 million-student New York City schools, the nation’s largest public-school system, encouraged the teaching of cursive to students, generally in the third grade.”

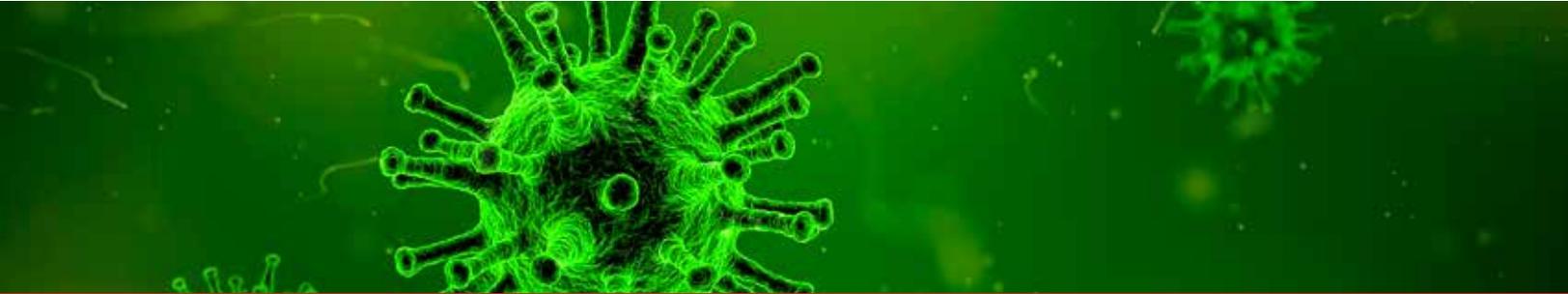
What can you do to improve your handwriting?

1. Write with the paper on a desk or table, not with the paper on your lap or on your knee.
2. Do not try to write in a moving vehicle.
3. Use a ballpoint pen. A simple BIC Cristal pen is fine.
4. Sit up straight. Relax your shoulders. Flex your wrist.
5. Hold the pen correctly. The pen should rest on your middle finger and be held in place by your thumb and index finger.
6. Don't wrap all your fingers around the pen. Don't “choke” the pen. Relax!
7. Turn the paper on an angle.
8. Use lined paper.
9. Watch tutorials on the internet.
10. Practice, practice, practice.

*Cassandra*

We invite you to submit questions for this column. E-mail [edward.lara@ahhc-1.com](mailto:edward.lara@ahhc-1.com).

# Protect Against Respiratory Syncytial Virus



RSV usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms. But it can lead to serious illness, especially for infants and older adults. Wash your hands often to help protect yourself and others from RSV.

Respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, can cause severe lung infections, including bronchiolitis (infection of small airways in the lungs) and pneumonia (an infection of the lungs). Each year in the United States, more than 57,000 children younger than 5 years old are hospitalized due to RSV infection. Additionally, about 177,000 older adults are hospitalized annually in the U.S. with an RSV infection, and about 14,000 of them die from it.

Those who have a higher risk for severe illness caused by RSV include:

- Premature babies
- Older adults, especially those 65 years and older
- People with chronic lung disease or certain heart problems
- People with weakened immune systems, such as from HIV infection, organ transplants, or specific medical treatments like chemotherapy

## Know the Symptoms

Many of the first symptoms of RSV infection are similar to the common cold. Infants and young children may have:

- Fever
- Reduced appetite
- Runny nose
- Cough
- Wheezing

Call a doctor if you or your child is having difficulty breathing, not drinking enough fluids, or experiencing worsening symptoms.

RSV is most common during fall, winter and spring. It can spread through coughing

and sneezing. You can also get RSV by touching surfaces that have RSV on them, then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Almost everyone gets RSV by the time they are 2 years old. Healthy people usually experience mild, cold-like symptoms and recover on their own within a week or two.

## Help Prevent the Spread of RSV

You can help protect yourself and others from RSV infection by following a few prevention tips:

- **Wash your hands often**  
Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, and help young children do the same. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Washing your hands will help protect you from germs.
- **Keep your hands off your face**  
Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Germs spread this way.
- **Avoid close contact with sick people**  
Avoid close contact, such as kissing, and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who have cold-like symptoms.
- **Cover your coughs and sneezes**  
Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Throw the tissue in the trash afterward.
- **Clean and disinfect surfaces**  
Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that people frequently touch,

such as toys and doorknobs. When people infected with RSV touch surfaces and objects, they can leave behind germs. Also, when they cough or sneeze, droplets containing germs can land on surfaces and objects.

- **Stay home when you are sick**  
If possible, stay home from work, school, and public areas when you are sick. This will help protect others from catching your illness.

If you have cold-like symptoms, you should take extra care to stay away from people who have a higher risk for severe illness caused by RSV. Whether this is possible or not, you should carefully follow the prevention tips above.

Children often pass the virus to one another at their school or childcare center. Limiting the time that high-risk children spend in these settings during the RSV season may help protect them from infection. For more information, see *Reducing the Spread of Illness in Child Care*.

There is no vaccine to prevent RSV infection yet, but scientists are working hard to develop one. And there is a medicine that can help protect some babies. This medicine (called palivizumab) is a series of monthly shots. Doctors usually give the shots once a month during RSV season to infants and young children who have a higher risk for serious illness caused by RSV. If you are concerned about your child's risk for RSV, talk to your pediatrician about these shots.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/features/rsv/index.html>

# WANTED 468 PEOPLE

TO READ THE BLOG EACH WEEK

MUST BE CURIOUS, INTELLIGENT,  
THOUGHTFUL INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE OPEN TO  
NEW IDEAS. LEARN NEW NURSING PROCE-  
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