

Take control of your diabetes this winter

York County HEALTH & WELLNESS

DIABETES MANAGEMENT & TREATMENT - OCT/NOV 2017

By RACHEL NAIDA, Pharm.D., CDE
Those living with diabetes are intimately aware of how challenging a disease this can be to manage. Between organizing multiple medications and implementing a healthy lifestyle, it can feel frustrating and maybe even impossible to get a grip on lowering your blood sugars. And then summer comes to an end and winter descends upon us, bringing with it multiple holiday events and food temptations. The cold decreases our desire to venture outside of our homes, leaving us often overfed and under exercised. This can make managing diabetes feel like even more of an impossible feat.

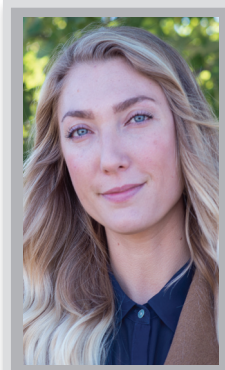
Multiple studies have demonstrated a relationship between the changes in seasons and an effect on blood

sugar control in both type 1 and type 2 diabetes, in all age groups, sexes and races. These studies most strongly demonstrate that the results of patients' hemoglobin A1C (HbA1C), a test that measures how well controlled your sugars are over a three-month time period, are the highest in the winter and the lowest in the warmer months. This confirms that most often people with diabetes experience less control of their blood sugars in the winter months.

Why does blood sugar control decline in the cold months? Worsening blood sugars during these tough seasons can most likely be explained by changes in diet and exercise. The cold winter months make it very challenging to stay on track with diet, as we are often tempted to over indulge in comfort

foods. It also makes it challenging to keep up with an exercise regimen, nonetheless keep steady on our feet while we slip and slide on the icy roads and sidewalks. Studies also show an association with the cold winter months and other worsening metabolic factors, including overall increases in weight, increases in blood cholesterol and increases in blood pressure.

But why does this matter? For optimal prevention of the



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complications that can arise from diabetes, it is important to keep your blood sugar controlled as best as possible and at goal during all seasons and all times of the year. You may not necessarily feel "bad" or like you have "high sugars;" however, elevated blood sugars put you at risk for complications such as heart attack, stroke, worsening eye sight, nerve damage and kidney damage. The best thing you can do to prevent these complications is keep a close eye on your sugar control and maintain a consistent healthy lifestyle regimen.

Here, I hope to provide you with a few tips to help you take control of your diabetes during the winter months so that you can maintain your health and wellness even during the most challenging Maine season. Bring it on, winter!

• Keep up with exercise and activity — This can be one of the greatest challenges in cold months, however one of the most rewarding for your physical and mental well-being. I find the best way to stick to an exercise regimen is to schedule it. For example, schedule in 30 minutes per day as your time to be active. Write it on your calendar; put it in your iPhone schedule; tell your friends and family that this is your time to exercise. Chances are they may even want to join you. Even just light walking and activity can be incredibly beneficial for lowering your blood glucose. Activity allows your body to use the sugars in your blood, and it also increases your natural insulin sensitivity. Additionally, it's a great stress

reliever. Make yourself and exercise a priority.

• Eat for your health — Make it a resolution to fuel your body with good, healthy foods throughout the winter. What we eat has a direct correlation to our health. Diets balanced in fresh vegetables and fruits, low-fat proteins, healthy fats, whole grains and limited processed foods have proven time and time again to reduce risks of many chronic diseases, especially diabetes. When we fuel our bodies with healthy foods, we have higher energy levels and better control of our weight and diabetes. How can you sustain a healthy diet through the cold winter months? Try meal prepping; taking a few hours to meal prep can allow you to make healthy choices throughout the week, as you will have access to home-made foods, all the ingredients of which you know. Eat at home before going to a holiday party, or bring a few healthy snacks to eat while you are there; this will allow you to make better choices and limit temptation to over-indulge. Watch your labels; it is always a good idea to keep an eye on what we are consuming by reading dietary information of food packaging. If you have diabetes you should be looking at the "total carbohydrates" in the foods you eat. Talk to your provider or a dietician to find out the optimal amount of carbohydrates you should be eating per meal and per day to best control your diabetes and your weight.

• Keep testing your blood sugar — Depending on your medication regimen, you should likely be testing your

blood sugars a few times per week up to several times per day. Check with your medical provider to see what times are the most optimal for you to check your sugars. Checking your blood glucose regularly is a great way to keep an eye on your daily control. It can show you when your sugars are high and what may have caused these highs. It can also show you when you are low and what is causing these lows. This allows you to identify trends in your sugar control, such as which foods make it worse and how activity affects your sugars. It will also help your provider to make decisions about your therapy. For example, if you have consistently elevated sugars, your provider may choose to increase a dose of your diabetes medication or start a new one. This data is great information for you and the provider taking care of you. Just make sure you do not expose your meter to extreme cold or hot temperatures. Do not leave your supplies in the car — they may freeze.

As always, make sure you are visiting your medical providers during your regularly scheduled appointments to keep them informed on how you are feeling. Take care of yourself. Staying well and in control of your diabetes will assure you a healthy and happy winter and holiday season ahead!

— Rachel Naida, Pharm.D., CDE, is an assistant clinical professor of Pharmacy Practice at the University of New England College of Pharmacy.

BIDDEFORD + SACO CHAMBER NEWS

Fall Festivities

October is flying by and soon we will be preparing for the holiday season. We have been extremely fortunate with the beautiful fall weather. I hope you have gotten outside to enjoy the scenery and visit some fun places in the Biddeford+Saco Region.



Craig's Update

Mayor's Ball

I had a great time at the Mayor's Ball. There was a decent turnout of people. The Chef and the Gardener provided delicious food. Banded Horn and Dirigo Breweries provided locally brewed beer. Round Turn Distillery provided locally distilled gin and uncorked Wine Bar had a fine selection of red and white wines. Sweetcream Dairy was open for those who wanted to enjoy a locally crafted ice cream.

Pepperell Center provided a unique setting for the event. It allows you to get a feel for the Mill District but is finished enough to make the event comfortable.

Thank You to all the volunteers that helped make this event a success and Congratulations to Mayor Alan Casavant and Mayor Ron Michaud as they complete their

terms in office and were gracious enough to share an evening with us all.

90th Anniversary Celebration

Thank you to everyone that attended this Chamber's 90th event. The nearly sell-out crowd enjoyed a wonderful selection of food prepared by Flick Dining, an assortment of adult beverages and a mountainous dessert table. The event was highlighted by guest speaker Geoff Howe of Howe and Howe Technologies followed by business awards presented to the following six winners.

Family-Owned Business of the Year – Reilly's Bakery; Large Business of the Year – Deering Lumber; Small Business of the Year – River Drive Cooperage and Millwork; Excellence in Entrepreneurship – Jim Albert; Excellence in Business – City Theater; Chamber Member Volunteer of the Year – Maureen St John

Thank you to all our sponsors and volunteers who helped make this event a success.



Biddeford + Saco Chamber of Commerce + Industry
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Upcoming Events

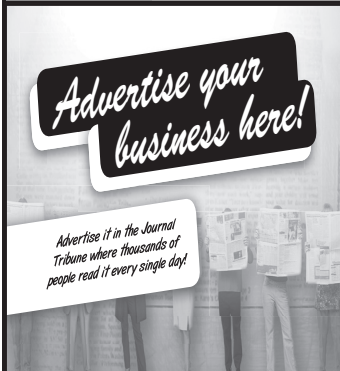
Business After Hours
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Gold, from A2

did for this performance. The symphony was followed by a performance of "The Book of Matthew" by Mason Bates (b. 1977) by the Choral Arts Masterworks Chorale (Robert Russell, director.) accompanied by an unidentified organist.

The Chorale is an excellent choral group and strong in each section and distinguished themselves. They followed the inspired direction by Moody throughout. Their intonation and cohesion were evident not only in this work but in the Jenkins work which followed after intermission. (However in one section of the Jenkins, the soprano section could have used some reinforcements in tackling notes above the staff.)

The Bates is a well written piece and received a moving performance after intermission the sole work to be performed was "The Armed Man" by the British composer, Karl Jenkins, b. 1944. It might be a stretch to call this work a masterpiece, but if it isn't it comes awfully close to being one. I confess that I had not even heard of Jenkins but now I would welcome hearing other works by this first-rate composer.

The title of this profound anti-war opus is taken from a melody that was known during the Middle Ages and even Palestrina used the tune in a mass he wrote (L'homme Arme.)

There are a variety of styles Jenkins used in each of the 13 sections of the work corresponding to various sections of the Catholic mass. There is the tune first stated in the opening, including the tramp-tramping of marching troops in the opening; the unaccompanied Moslem call to worship; and the screaming of burning animals later on. Each section of the orchestra has challenges which they met head-on, although I thought that the percussion section played a bit too enthusiastically in sections. I would single out the gift by Jenkins has for moving melody. One need not look for better evidence of this gift than in the Kyrie and Agnus Dei, however at the top of the list is the Benedictus which featured a solo cello ravishingly played by James Kennedy.

This moving melody is then taken up into the chorus supported by the orchestra. However dramatic and emotional this work is, the challenge for the composer is

how to bring the work to an end. He did this with a stunning unaccompanied chorale.

I have written many immodest words of praise for the clear, moving and expert conducting of Robert Moody. I did not believe he could outdo himself. I was wrong. It is a given that he knew the music he was conducting very well. He seems to be more at home without a baton than with one. (So did Stokowski and often Bernstein.)

There was no evidence of a showman. He conducted with authority, with sympathy and empathy throughout. He received a prolonged and well deserved ovation and shared his triumph with Dr. Russell, Ms. Davis, and the various orchestral soloists. He will be heading to serve as music director of the Memphis Symphony next year. Even though he has several concerts to give here, I miss him already. He was good when he got here to be sure. Now, he is a major talent.

This program will be aired on Maine Classical radio on Nov. 8.

— Dr. Morton Gold is a composer/conductor, retired educator and an arts reviewer for the Journal Tribune.



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