



David Fairlamb

THE FIT FACTOR

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

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FITNESS TIP

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PREVENTING type 2 diabetes is crucial, given its rising prevalence and significant impact on health. Type 2 diabetes occurs when the body becomes resistant to insulin or when the pancreas fails to produce sufficient insulin, leading to elevated blood sugar levels.

Fortunately, several strategies can effectively reduce the risk of developing this condition:

Healthy diet

One of the most effective ways to prevent type 2 diabetes is through a healthy diet. Consuming a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins can help maintain stable blood sugar levels.

It's essential to avoid processed foods and those high in added sugars and unhealthy fats, as these can lead to weight gain and insulin resistance. Incorporating fibre-rich foods, such as legumes and whole

grains can slow the absorption of sugar into the bloodstream, preventing spikes in blood glucose levels.

Regular physical activity

Engaging in regular physical activity is another key factor. Exercise helps regulate blood sugar levels by increasing insulin sensitivity and facilitating glucose uptake by muscles. A combination of aerobic exercises, such as walking or cycling, and resistance training, such as weightlifting, can be particularly beneficial.

The NHS recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity each week, along with muscle-strengthening activities on two or more days a week.

Maintaining a healthy weight

Weight management is crucial in preventing type 2 diabetes. Excess body fat, particularly around the abdomen, is a major risk factor for

the disease. Losing even a modest amount of weight - 5-10% of total body weight - can significantly improve insulin sensitivity and reduce the risk of developing diabetes.

Regular health screenings

Regular health screenings are vital for early detection and management of prediabetes, a condition where blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not yet high enough to be classified as diabetes. Screenings should include checks for blood glucose levels, cholesterol, and blood pressure, as these are all interrelated factors in diabetes risk.

Reducing stress and ensuring adequate sleep

Chronic stress and inadequate sleep are often overlooked but can significantly impact blood sugar levels and insulin sensitivity. Stress management techniques, such as mindfulness, meditation, and yoga, can help reduce stress levels. Ensuring adequate, quality sleep around 7-9 hours per night for most adults is also important for metabolic health.

Why are type 2 diabetes rates so high in the uk?

One major factor is obesity. The



UK has one of the highest obesity rates in Europe, with over 60% of adults and a third of children being overweight or obese.

Another contributing factor is the increase in sedentary lifestyles. Many jobs involve prolonged sitting, and leisure activities are often screen-based, reducing overall physical activity levels. Dietary habits have also shifted, with increased consumption of processed and convenience foods high in sugar, fat,

and salt. Socioeconomic factors play a role too.

People from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may have limited access to healthy food options, safe environments for physical activity, and healthcare resources.

Lastly, there is a genetic component to type 2 diabetes. Certain ethnic groups in the UK, such as South Asians and Afro-Caribbeans, have a higher genetic predisposition to the disease.

A healthy lifestyle not only changes your body, it changes your mind, your attitude and your mood

Motivational quote of the day