

Foot Sense

Offices of Dr. Rion Berg

206-368-7000

FOOT AND ANKLE CENTER OF LAKE CITY



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Learn About Diabetes During National Diabetes Month

In November we start thinking about Thanksgiving. But did you know that November is also National Diabetes Month? As a Seattle podiatrist who treats hundreds of people with Type 2 diabetes, it's extremely important to me to get out the word about how to prevent and manage it.

How many people have it?

As of 2015, 30.3 million Americans or 9.4% of our population had diabetes. The vast majority of those people had Type II diabetes. About 7.2 million Americans have it but go undiagnosed. Americans over 65, bear the largest burden of diabetes with over 25% or 12 million diagnosed and undiagnosed.

The number of cases of diabetes continues to rise, most alarmingly in young adults ages 10-19. A study done by the Centers for Disease Control looked at youth from 2002-2012. Newly diagnosed cases of type 2 diabetes had increased by 4.8 percent. (over)

Sweet Potato Souffle

- 3 lbs whole sweet potatoes, washed and dried
- ¼ cup low sugar (or freshly squeezed) orange juice
- ¼ cup ground flax seed
- ½ cup shelled walnut pieces
- 2 Tbsp butter
- 6 egg whites
- ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit. Coat a deep 8-inch round or square casserole dish with cooking spray. Set aside.
2. Bake sweet potatoes for 50-60 minutes on oiled baking sheet and peel the skin after removing from oven.
3. Blend potatoes with orange juice. Set aside to cool.
4. Using a food processor or chopper, grind the walnuts and flax seed Add butter to the mixture and pulse to incorporate but don't overmix.
5. Combine egg whites and cream of tartar in a large glass or metal bowl, and beat with an electric mixer until egg whites form soft peaks.
6. Working in batches, incorporate one third of the egg whites into the sweet potato mixture using a large flat rubber spatula and gently folding them in until combined. Repeat that process two more times until all of the egg whites are incorporated into the sweet potatoes.
7. Pour sweet potato soufflé mixture into the prepared casserole dish and top with the walnut mixture.
8. Place the soufflé into the oven and bake at 400 degrees Fahrenheit for 20 minutes, then turn the oven down to 350 degrees Fahrenheit and continue to bake for 15 more minutes.



From the American Diabetes Association

How do I know if I'm at risk?

You can check your risk by taking this test from the American Diabetes Association.

1. How old are you? If you are 40-49 years old give yourself 1 point, 50-59 (2 points), 60 years or older (3 points.)
2. Are you an man or a women? If you're a man your at greater risk. Give yourself 1 point.
3. If you are a woman, have you ever been diagnosed with gestational diabetes. If so, give yourself 1 point.
4. Do you have a mother, father, sister or brother with diabetes? If yes, give yourself 1 point.
5. Have you ever been diagnosed with high blood pressure? If so, give yourself 1 point.
6. Are you physically active? If not, give yourself 1 point.
7. What is your weight category? (Go to <http://bit.ly/1HAJmKC>) for this information.

If you score greater than five on the test, talk to your doctor so you can find out if you have diabetes.

What to do if I'm diagnosed?

To manage and prevent the condition from causing other health problems such as heart disease, kidney disease, and foot ulcers (which can lead to amputation if not treated) your doctor will very likely send you to an endocrinologist that specializes in diabetes. In the meantime, check out the American Diabetes Association website.

Managing your foot health

As mentioned above diabetes can cause dangerous foot ulcers. Here are my "Top 10 Tips for Diabetic Feet".

1. See your primary care physician/diabetic specialist regularly. Control your blood sugars by taking your diabetic medication as prescribed, and eating properly
2. Check your blood sugars daily in the morning before eating, and record them.
3. Inspect your feet daily. Use a mirror to see the bottom of your feet. If there are any areas that are red or cracked, open sores, drainage in your socks, or pain, contact your podiatrist immediately.
4. If our doctors identify "hot spots" on the pressure stat or temp stat system, they'll recommend that you stay off your feet as much as possible to cool them down. If you notice a breakdown of your skin or an opening of the skin that won't heal, call our office immediately as these are signs of a serious wound, ulcer, or infection.
5. Check the inside of your shoes daily to be sure no small object has fallen into them.
6. Skin Care: Diabetes also causes the skin to dry excessively. It's essential that you begin a regular program of moisturizing your feet. Our doctors will recommend creams specifically designed to help the diabetic foot.
7. Socks: It has been shown, that cotton socks can cause too much friction, retain moisture, do not insulate your feet, and constrict your legs. **Diabetic socks can save limbs.** Ask our staff for recommendations.
8. Your shoes and inserts will be inspected by Dr. Berg. Diabetes causes clawing of the toes and increased pressure on the tips of the toes and balls of the feet. Diabetic therapeutic shoes with deeper toe boxes along with special inserts can go a long way to preventing ulcers of your feet. You may qualify for coverage of these under your Medicare policy.
9. Balance: Diabetic patients are more likely to have poor balance due to loss of sensation in the feet. A new lightweight device has been designed that can greatly help improve balance and prevent devastating falls. Let your doctor know if you are experiencing balance problems or falls.
10. Keep your regular appointments for foot care and your complete diabetic foot evaluations. These appointments give us the opportunity to ensure that no new problems are developing, and should they occur, to treat and resolve them as quickly as possible. If you have diabetes and need to be **seen, call us today at 206-368-7000 for an appointment.**