



# Health Beat

Monthly Insight on Health and Nutrition

## Diabetes Health



Diabetes has become an epidemic, affecting about twenty-one million Americans according to the American Diabetes Association. Yet more than 30% of the twenty-one million are undiagnosed and don't realize they have it.

According to research, there are also an additional 40 to 60 million Americans with pre-diabetes. People with pre-diabetes are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes later in life unless they change their eating and exercise behaviors.

### What is Pre-Diabetes

Pre-diabetes is a condition in which blood glucose levels are higher than normal but not high enough to be called diabetes. To be diagnosed as pre-diabetic a fasting blood sugar reading of between 100 mg/dL and 125 mg/dL is needed.

### What is Type 2 Diabetes

Your body changes some of the food you eat to sugar that is then carried in your blood. Insulin helps get the sugar from your blood into the cells so you can use it for energy. With type 2 diabetes, the body loses the ability to efficiently use insulin produced by the pancreas and causes your blood sugar to remain too high. For a proper diagnosis of type 2 diabetes a person needs two separate fasting glucose readings of 126 mg/dL or higher. Type 2 diabetes develops slowly and can be prevented or reversed through proper diet, weight management, and exercise. Those at risk for type 2 diabetes include: people over the age of 45, being overweight or obese, a diagnosis of pre-diabetes, having a low HDL (good cholesterol) reading, and having a family history of diabetes.

### How to manage your pre-diabetes and type 2 diabetes

As mentioned before, pre-diabetes and type 2 diabetes can be managed with a proper diet and exercise plan. With diabetes, it is important to keep your blood sugar as close to normal as possible throughout the day. By following a proper meal plan and exercise plan, you will prevent the highs and lows in your blood sugar. Those highs and lows can be very dangerous and can lead to life-threatening effects on health such as, retinopathy including blindness, circulatory problems, kidney disease, heart disease, neuropathy, and in some cases amputation.

### Early Detection is Key

If you think you might have diabetes or pre-diabetes, see your doctor. Early recognition of this disease is important. The longer the body is exposed to high or uncontrolled blood sugar levels, the greater the health problems can be. It's recommended to have a fasting blood glucose test every three years if you are over the age of 45.

**Signs and Symptoms of Diabetes**

- Thirsty
- Frequent Urination
- Blurred vision
- Tired without doing much activity
- Unexplained weight loss
- Irritability

*If you feel like you have any of these symptoms be sure to see a doctor for a fasting glucose test.*

## Spicy Chicken Tacos

**Yields-12    Serving Size 2 tacos**

- |           |                                  |
|-----------|----------------------------------|
| 2 lbs     | boneless skinless chicken breast |
| ½ cup     | low-sodium chicken broth         |
| ½ cup     | diced onion                      |
| 1 package | taco seasoning (McCormick's)     |
| 1 ½ cups  | water                            |
| 12        | 6" whole wheat flour tortillas   |
| 1 ½ cups  | shredded 2% skim cheddar cheese  |
| 2 cups    | diced tomato and chopped lettuce |
| 1 cup     | salsa and sour cream (optional)  |

Boil chicken in chicken broth and onion for 25 minutes or until done. Remove chicken and shred.  
 Return chicken to skillet and add taco seasoning and water. Bring to a boil, then simmer to desired thickness.  
 Heat tortillas in microwave or skillet until warm.  
 Place chicken mixture in the center of each tortilla and top with the remaining ingredients

