

Ten Ways to Shape Up Your Family Reunion to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes

Family reunions offer a chance to bond with relatives, learn about your heritage, share recipes, and celebrate with your whole family. When learning about your heritage, it is also important to find out if type 2 diabetes runs in your family. Having a family history of type 2 diabetes increases your risk for developing the disease. Take the first step today toward lowering your risk for type 2 diabetes and improving your health and the health of future generations. Find out if you have a family history of the disease.



Diabetes affects the lives of millions of African Americans in the United States. But there's hope for you and your family. Research shows that losing a small amount of weight – 5 to 7 percent of your current weight or 10 to 14 pounds for a 200-pound person – can reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes *by more than half*. The key step to preventing or delaying the onset of type 2 diabetes is to lose a small amount of weight by making healthy food choices and being physically active 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week. Beginning with your next reunion and afterwards, follow these 10 tips from the National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) to shape up your family, lose weight, and prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes:

Choose activities your entire family will enjoy.

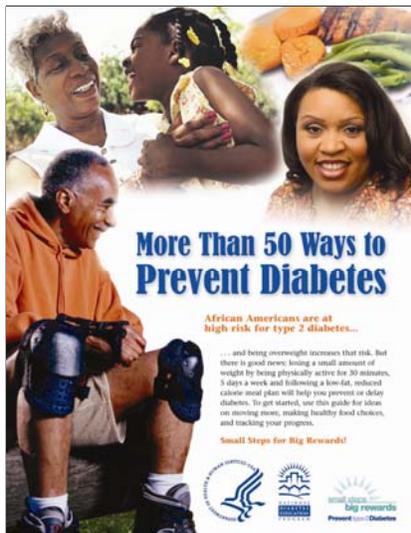
1. **Dance it away!** A dance contest is a fun way to show the younger people in your family the dances you used to do when you were their age – and they can show you some of their moves as well! Or turn up the music and do the Electric Slide, the Cha Cha Slide, and other favorite group dances.
2. **Be physically active with younger relatives.** Play with younger children, nieces, nephews, and cousins. Go swimming, toss a softball, or do jumping jacks.
3. **Get up, get out, get moving!** If your family reunion is held in a park, go for a bike ride, a brisk walk on a nature trail, or any other activity that helps get your heart rate up.
4. **Focus on fun!** Activities such as scavenger hunts, potato sack races, and double-dutch contests are easy ways to have fun and be physically active.
5. **Make it a family affair.** Involve everyone in a friendly game of basketball, flag football, volleyball, or tag.

Have a plan for what, when, and how much you will eat.

6. **For starters, try a salad with a twist.** Prepare a [rainbow fruit salad](#) with a large peeled and diced mango; 1 peeled and sliced kiwi; 2 cups blueberries, halved strawberries, and seedless grapes; 2 nectarines; and 2 sliced bananas. Top with a small amount of honey-orange dressing made with $\frac{1}{3}$ cup unsweetened orange juice, 2 tablespoons lemon juice, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground ginger, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon honey, and a dash of nutmeg. Number of servings: 12
Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's *Stay Young at Heart Recipe Collection*
7. **Why fry when you can bake, broil, or grill?** Instead of fried chicken, fire up the grill and remove the skin and fat from chicken breasts, drumsticks, or thighs and lightly coat them

with barbeque sauce. Instead of fried catfish, try baked fish seasoned with herbs, spices, or lemon juice.

8. **Try low-fat versions of your favorite side dishes.** Prepare homemade macaroni and cheese with nonfat and low-fat milk and cheese. Smother greens with smoked turkey or low-sodium chicken broth instead of fatback.
9. **Re-think your drink.** Whenever possible drink water – the healthy, no-calorie beverage. Instead of a regular 20-ounce soda or sweetened fruit drink, choose sugar-free soda.
10. **Reach for a healthy treat.** Instead of cobblers, cakes, or pies for dessert, eat a piece of fresh summer fruit such as peaches, nectarines, or apricots. Also, try [old-fashioned bread pudding](#) prepared with 1½ cup skim milk, 10 slices whole-wheat bread, 3 egg whites, ½ teaspoon cinnamon, ¼ teaspoon nutmeg, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, and a little brown sugar. To prepare bread pudding, preheat oven to 350 °F. Lightly coat 8"x 8" inch baking dish with vegetable oil spray. Lay slices of bread in baking dish in two rows, overlapping like shingles. In medium bowl, beat together egg whites, milk, brown sugar, and vanilla. Pour egg mixture over bread. In small bowl, stir together cinnamon, nutmeg, and clove and sprinkle over bread pudding. Bake pudding for 30 to 35 minutes at 350 °F, until it has browned on top and is firm to touch. For a topping, simmer apple-raisin sauce prepared with 1¼ cup apple juice, ½ cup raisins, ½ cup apple butter, ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon, ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg, and 2 tablespoons molasses in a medium saucepan for five minutes. Number of servings: 9
Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's *Keep the Beat: Heart Healthy Recipes*



To order your free copy of the [More than 50 Ways to Prevent Diabetes tip sheet](#) and other free resources to help African American families lower their risk for type 2 diabetes, contact the National Diabetes Education Program at 1-888-693-NDEP (6337) or visit www.YourDiabetesInfo.org. You can also check out the National Kidney Disease Education Program's [Make Health a Family Reunion Affair](#) guide by visiting www.nkdep.nih.gov or calling 1-866-454-3639.

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