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Are You at Risk for Prediabetes?

November is Diabetes Awareness Month. Many people will first be diagnosed with prediabetes—a condition that affects approximately 96 million American adults—and which can become type 2 diabetes if no action is taken. People with prediabetes have blood sugar levels that are significantly higher than normal but not yet high enough to be classified as type 2 diabetes. In addition to diabetes, being prediabetic puts you at a greater risk for heart disease and stroke. It can also have harmful consequences for the health of your feet.

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Assessing Your Risk Factors

One of the scariest facts about prediabetes is that more than 80% of the people that have it do not know it. Below are some factors that put you at greater risk for this condition:

- Being overweight
- Family history of type 2 diabetes
- Over the age of 45
- Previously had gestational diabetes or gave birth to a baby who weighed more than nine pounds
- Being physically active less than 3 times a week
- Diagnosed with polycystic ovary syndrome
- African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Americans, Pacific Islanders and Asian American ethnicity
- Sleep apnea
- Smoker

Preventing Diabetes

The first step to reducing your risk and preventing diabetes is to get your blood sugar tested. There are a number of different blood sugar and glucose tests. Your doctor will recommend the right test for you. The A1C blood test is an important tool in diagnosing and preventing prediabetes and diabetes. It measures your average blood sugar levels over the last 3 months. The Centers for Disease Control recommend that everyone over the age of 45 and those under the age of 45 with one or more prediabetes risk factors get a baseline A1C test. If you are at risk, testing at regularly scheduled intervals can be an important tool in preventing diabetes. Other steps you can take include:

- Following a healthy and nutritious eating plan
- Losing weight if you are overweight
- Being physically active
- Not smoking
- Maintaining appropriate blood pressure and cholesterol levels

Podiatric Health and Elevated Blood Sugar

Your feet are amazing structures! They often act as a warning system for diseases that affect the rest of your body and diabetes is one of those. Patients with abnormally high blood sugar levels may notice one or more of the following symptoms in their feet:

- Cuts and wounds that are slow to heal. Decreased circulation is often associated with diabetes and means your feet are not getting all the nutrient-rich blood they need for healing appropriately. A sore or wound that does not seem to be getting better may be a sign of a blood sugar issue.
- Unusual sensations in your feet. Feelings of pins and needles, burning, tingling and sometimes pain or soreness can be symptoms of diabetes.
- Swelling in the feet or ankles.
- Excessively dry skin, especially around your heels.
- An increase in the frequency of ingrown toenails and toenail fungus



Prediabetes often does not have any symptoms. Some people may notice some areas of the body where their skin appears to be darkening like in your armpits or on the sides of your neck. An abundance of skin tags in those areas may be a further indicator of prediabetes. Other possible signs include milder forms of diabetes symptoms including:

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- Excessive thirst
- Increased frequency in urination
- Fatigue
- Blurred vision
- Increased hunger
- Unintentional weight loss

If you have concerns about your feet and prediabetes or diabetes talk to your podiatrist. The podiatrist can help assess your risk for prediabetes and evaluate any unusual podiatric symptoms you may be experiencing. If you are diagnosed with prediabetes or diabetes your podiatrist plays an important role in helping you manage this disease and control your blood sugar.

To find a podiatrist near you use our [online directory](#). To learn more about prediabetes and your feet [contact us](#) and subscribe to our free [e-newsletter](#).

If you do sustain an injury or experience any new or unusual symptoms in your feet, be sure to contact your podiatrist for an appointment at your earliest convenience. If you don't currently have a podiatrist our [online directory](#) can help you locate one in your area. To learn more about keeping feet healthy [contact us](#) and subscribe to our free [e-newsletter](#).

Find a Podiatrist

Your feet work very hard for you and taking care of them is essential for your overall health. At NY Foot Health, we put together a list of highly recommended podiatrists committed to helping you with your foot or ankle issues. Click on the button below to find a podiatrist near you!

[Find A Podiatrist Near You](#)

Maple-Roasted Chicken & Acorn Squash

Ingredients:

- 1 medium acorn squash
- 4 medium carrots, chopped (about 2 cups)
- 1 medium onion, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 6 bone-in chicken thighs (about 2-1/4 pounds)
- 1/2 cup maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon coarsely ground pepper

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 450°. Cut squash lengthwise in half; remove and discard seeds. Cut each half crosswise into 1/2-in. slices; discard ends. Place squash, carrots and onion in a greased 13x9-in. baking pan; top with chicken, skin side down. Roast 10 minutes.
2. Turn chicken over; drizzle with maple syrup and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast 25-30 minutes longer or until a thermometer inserted in chicken reads 170°-175° and vegetables are tender.



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Nutrition Facts:

1 serving: 363 calories, 14g fat (4g saturated fat), 81mg cholesterol, 497mg sodium, 36g carbohydrate (23g sugars, 3g fiber), 24g protein. Diabetic Exchanges: 3 lean meat, 2 starch, 1 vegetable.
Recipe courtesy of tasteofhome.com



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