

Keeping your health and wellbeing in the know

MyHealthTALK

November is also Lung
Cancer Awareness month
as well!

November 2011

Courtesy of Asset Health

November is National Diabetes Awareness Month November 14th is World Diabetes Day

Diabetes - What is it?

Simply put, diabetes is a chronic (lifelong) disease in which there is increased levels of sugar in the blood. Diabetes is classified as a disorder of metabolism. Metabolism refers to the way our bodies use digested food for energy and growth.

To understand diabetes, it is important that we understand what happens as food is broken down to provide the essential energy we need each day.

Much of the food that we eat is converted or broken down into glucose, a form of sugar. When our food has digested, the glucose or sugar makes its way into the bloodstream creating a temporarily higher "blood glucose" level. This glucose in the bloodstream now must be assisted to enter our bodies' fat, muscle and liver cells in order for it to be used as fuel for energy.

As the blood glucose level rises, the pancreas (a gland that sits behind the stomach) senses the extra glucose in the blood-stream and automatically releases a hormone called insulin. It's the insulin's job to act as a key to open, or unlock, the cells to allow the glucose to move inside them. This in turn helps to bring the amount of glucose in the bloodstream back to a normal level.

People with diabetes have high blood sugar levels (hyperglycemia) because the pancreas either does not make enough insulin, produces no insulin, or the body's cells do not respond properly to the insulin that is made.

Symptoms

Some people can have a high blood sugar level and be unaware, but hyperglycemia can cause a variety of symptoms and may include excessive thirst, frequent urination, blurred vision, fatigue, weight loss despite an increased appetite, slow healing wounds, and numbness or tingling in the feet.

Complications

Undiagnosed, uncontrolled or poorly controlled diabetes can result in many serious complications such as heart disease, stroke, vision loss or blindness, kidney disease or failure, nerve damage and blood vessel disease. Poor blood circulation and loss of sensation in the feet and legs can lead to amputation. It is estimated that more than half of the limb amputations in the U.S. occur among people with diabetes.

Prevention

- Maintain a healthy weight or lose weight; even a modest weight loss can make a difference
- Follow a sensible diet and include plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains each day
- Bake or broil fish and meat, choose only lean cuts of meats
- Switch to low fat dairy products
- Limit snacks and fast food
- Replace sugary drinks with water
- Control stress and exercise at least 20-30 minutes 3-4x/week
- Take medications as prescribed and have regular checkups with your doctor

Types of Diabetes

Type 1 diabetes (T1DM) was previously called insulin-dependent diabetes or juvenile onset diabetes. It develops when the body's immune system destroys the cells in the pancreas that produce insulin.

Type 1 develops most often in children or young adults but can occur at any age. People with T1DM must take insulin to survive. Risk factors for this type may be autoimmune, genetic, or environmental. There is typically a quick onset of the disease over a period of days to weeks and people may be very sick by the time they are diagnosed.

Type 2 diabetes (T2DM), previously called non-insulin dependent or adult onset diabetes, accounts for about 90-95% of all diagnosed cases of diabetes mellitus. It usually begins when the body's cells do not use insulin properly. As the need for insulin rises, the pancreas gradually loses its ability to produce enough.

Although T2DM is associated with older age, it is being diagnosed more frequently in children and adolescents. Some risk factors include family history of diabetes, obesity, physical inactivity, history of gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy). Characteristics include a slow onset over weeks to months.

References: NIH, CDC, Medical News Today



Turkey Talk!

Thanksgiving is just around the corner. It is a day of thanks; filled with family, football and delicious food. The star of any traditional Thanksgiving meal is the turkey. There are many ways a turkey can be seasoned and prepared and each family seems to have their own special recipes or methods passed down throughout the years. A method that has become increasingly popular over the last few years has been the use of a deep fryer as the cooking method for the turkey. It results in a succulent and delicious bird with crispy skin that cooks in less time than when using the oven, about 3 minutes per pound. The down side to this trend is the safety concern when using a deep fryer. Cooking with hot oil can cause injury to people, pets and damage to your property if you are not fully informed of what precautions to take.

There are a few considerations to take notice of, before ditching the roasting pan for the deep fryer.

Selecting your fryer.

With the addition of electric deep fryers, the process of frying a turkey has become increasingly safer. Electric deep fryers can be used in-doors, but always take precaution when using hot oil. Choosing an electric deep fryer with built-in safety standards, such as break-away power cords that detach if the cord is pulled, will prevent the unit from tipping. Be sure to keep the fryer in full view while the burner is on. Place the fryer in an open area AWAY from all walls, fences, or other structures and never use IN, ON, or UNDER a garage, breezeway, carport, porch, or any structure that can catch fire. Follow the manufacturer's instructions to determine the proper amount of oil to add to your fryer.

Speaking of oil...

It's vital to select oil with a high smoke point, such as peanut oil. The higher the temperature of the oil, the less oil the turkey will absorb. Peanut oil is the preferred choice, since it's naturally trans fat-free, cholesterol free, and low in saturated fats. If peanut allergies are a concern, you can use canola or sunflower oil. Oil that gets too hot can combust so make sure that you monitor the temperature. Oil should be kept between 365 degrees and 375 degrees Fahrenheit and the turkey should cook until its internal temperature is 170 degrees. Keep children and pets away from the fryer during and after use. Oil can remain hot for hours after you turn the fryer off; let it cool completely before removing it and storing for re-use. If oil begins to smoke, immediately turn gas supply OFF. *If a fire occurs, immediately call 911. DO NOT attempt to extinguish fire with water.*

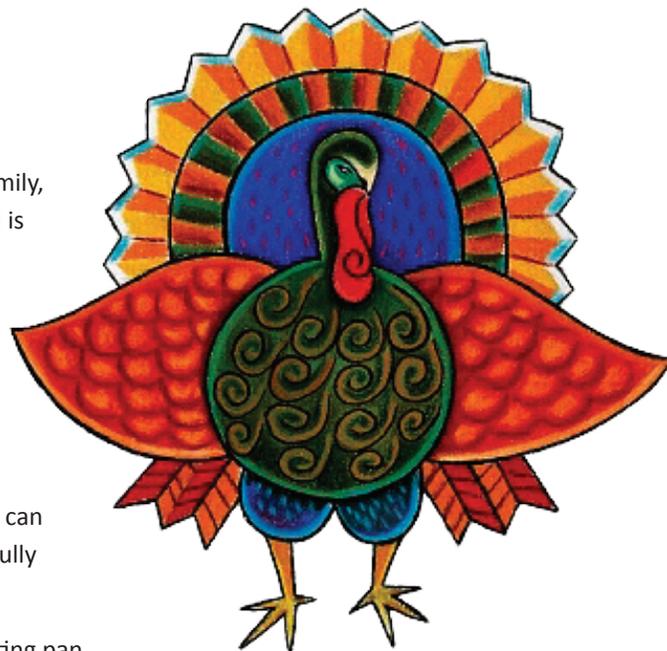
Don't Supersize it!

You'll need a smaller turkey to properly fry. An 8-10 lb, fully thawed turkey, is recommended to insure that it will fit into your fryer. Completely thaw your turkey before frying it. Partially frozen turkeys or watery marinades can react dangerously with the oil, causing it to bubble over and spill.

Preparation is key!

There are many different ways to prep your turkey, and a quick Internet search will provide ample options. Brining is very common, as well as marinating. As long as you are informed and prepared as to how to safely deep fry your turkey, you should have great success this Thanksgiving.

Sources: <http://www.rosieonthehouse.com>, <http://www.turkeyfrying.net>, The US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)



Cutting Board Safety

With the holiday season fast approaching, many of us will be in the kitchen more than usual. With all of the chopping, slicing, and dicing, you'll need a few good cutting boards. Here are some things to keep in mind when purchasing and using a cutting board.

- Consider stocking your kitchen with a variety of boards from small to large. You can grab the appropriate one for the task at hand.
- While people have different preferences on wood vs. plastic cutting boards, the most important thing to keep in mind is keeping the board as clean as possible. Wooden boards should be discarded if they show any cracks.
- All materials should be washed in very hot soapy water and thoroughly dried. They should be sanitized periodically with bleach or white vinegar. Non-wooden boards can also be run through the dishwasher.
- Never use the same board and knife again that was used earlier to prepare raw food such as meat or chicken. Always use a clean board and knife to prevent contamination.
- A good rule to follow is to prep fruits and vegetable first, followed by meat, chicken, or fish.
- Cutting boards do wear down your knives so be sure to get your knives professionally sharpened at least once a year. A sharp knife is safer than a dull knife.

References: <http://housewares.about.com/od/kitchenwareaccessories/a/boardbasics.htm>, http://www.reluctantgourmet.com/cutting_board.htm