

MCI (P) 033/09/2017

# DIABETES

Singapore

JAN TO MAR 2019 ISSUE 68

## Gearing Up

for the New Year and  
Festive Season

## Changing Your Mindset for 2019

Living a full life despite diabetes  
Mindful eating habits

## Featuring

Chef Eric Low's recipes



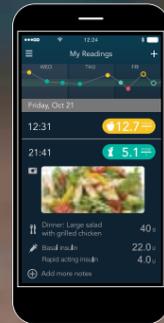
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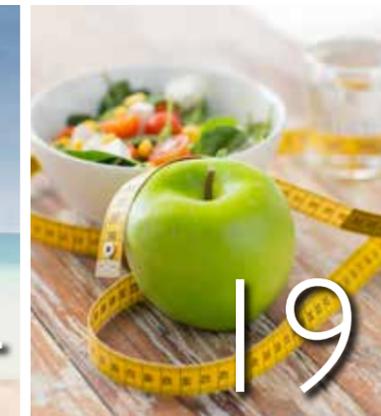
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## WISHING YOU A HAPPY NEW YEAR

The past year was a fruitful one for Diabetes Singapore, and we had several new initiatives which were taken up. In this, we actively worked on the cause for Prevention of Diabetes, as part of the focus on the “War on Diabetes”, by educating and encouraging action amongst the public. During the promotion of our newly launched Diabetes Care and Management course for the public, at various roadshows a common response elicited was “I’m fine, I’ll deal with it when it happens”. We successfully launched the “Diabetes Care and Management: Understanding the Truth and Myths” as part of National Silver Academy, in October 2018 to the public (please see the feature inside our newsletter). The popularity in demand for this course would not have been possible, without our frequent participation in various public education roadshows with island wide grassroots organisations and Government-linked agencies. The course has been well received and provided a comprehensive 360 degree view on diabetes prevention and care.

This demonstrates to everyone about extending one’s sight into the long-term and to make use of available resources to start early in managing one’s health. This helps extend the period which one gets to enjoy the fruits of life, rather than dealing with diabetes or related ailments. This was the theme for our recently concluded World Diabetes Day event as well, which would not have been a success without our members’ keen participation. Thank you all!

We successfully completed our Flag Day 2018 and launched our second new mobile bus for screening services. We have also upgraded our technology infrastructure and you would start to see benefits of these, in terms of our ability to reach out to you via emails and automated SMS.

Our team was invited to participate in the recent Ministerial Conference on Diabetes 2018 and setup a booth at this event. We had keen interest in our activities from international partners, such as Australia, Finland and Hong Kong delegations.

As we venture into 2019, Diabetes Singapore plans to engage even more partners in the community both young and old, of different ethnicity and clan, corporate, school or grassroots organisations. We believe this is the way for us to go forward, as health management is about lifestyle. Do let Diabetes Singapore engage and assist you in 2019 and above all, do keep healthy!

Dr Kevin Tan  
President



On 25 September 1971, Dr Frederick Tan Bock Yam founded the Diabetic Society of Singapore (DSS) to help diabetes patients manage their condition. On 1 January 2018, DSS officially changed its name to Diabetes Singapore.

Diabetes Singapore is (DS) a non-profit organisation affiliated to the International Diabetes Federation and the National Council of Social Service. DS gratefully accepts donations of any amount to help fight diabetes. **All donations are tax-deductible.** Please make **cash donations** in person at any of our centres. **Cheque donations** should be made payable to ‘Diabetes Singapore’. You may also make **online donations** via <https://www.giving.sg/diabetic-society-of-singapore>.

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In November, the long awaited World Diabetes Day events of 2018 finally arrived, with Diabetes Singapore kick-starting its commemoration with its annual event on 4 November 2018 at Suntec City Convention Centre, graced by guest-of-honour Minister for Health Mr Gan Kim Yong. Apart from the committed support of corporate partners such as Novo Nordisk, Sanofi, Lilly Centre for Research, Fresenius and Boehringer-Ingelheim, Diabetes Singapore was fortunate to have the participation of almost all affiliated VWOs and associations, together with Health Promotion Board’s full backing to provide its Diabetes Risk Assessment van, and Chronic and Functional Screening teams. All of these partners helped contribute to the turnout of almost 2000 peoples who attended our event, our largest in many years, together with prominent featuring in the print media of Straits Times and Zaobao the following day.

The following weekend, Diabetes Singapore participated in Health Promotion Board’s annual Healthy Lifestyle Festival held at Stadium. It was a precious opportunity for Diabetes Singapore to mingle with health professional compatriots in a casual light-hearted manner, while engaging the general public in creative activities to ignite their interest in healthy living. SingHealth’s World Diabetes Day Carnival 2018 held on the third Saturday of November at HeartBeat @ Bedok was another fantastic occasion for Diabetes Singapore to do outreach to the residents in the South-East region of Singapore.

Diabetes Singapore is heartened by the widespread sustained interest in healthy living, preventive diabetes care and management, even beyond the annual World Diabetes Day period, and we are keen to organise and support events of such nature in the coming 2019!



12 OCT 2018

# HP MY COMMUNITY DIABETES AWARENESS EVENT

After our last quarter's successful diabetes awareness corporate health talk with HP, Diabetes Singapore was honoured to be chosen as HP's VVO beneficiary for its corporate responsibility program. More than 15 DSG members joined the 150 HP staff for a fun-filled morning.

The slightly overcast skies did not dampen the moods of anyone, and everyone happily basked in the cool breezes of the walk from Stadium over to Marina Barrage. Upon reaching the venue, HP gifted Diabetes Singapore with a cheque donation of \$10,000, which will go a long way into Diabetes Singapore's future education and outreach efforts.

The event was also an opportunity for our DSG members to display their creativity, through designing various kites, which they would later fly. Indeed as the masterpieces took off to the skies, they were a magnificent sight to DS members and HP staff alike.



29 Sep 2018

# DS FLAG DAY & WORLD HEART DAY

It was a day of excitement and intensive work for Diabetes Singapore staff and volunteers, as we were holding our annual flag day while also supporting Singapore Heart Foundation's World Heart Day. Nevertheless, Diabetes Singapore was not deterred, mobilising staff and volunteers efficiently from our Jurong and Boon Keng centres, to do fundraising around the island, while management committee members Dr Bee Yong Mong and Mr Yong Chiang Boon and Executive Director Mr Venkatesh Narasiah graced the World Heart Day opening ceremony at Toa Payoh Hub, of which our booth also served as a reporting centre.

After a hard day's work, the funds collected were counted and then deposited in the bank. Diabetes Singapore sincerely thanks the enthusiastic volunteers and devoted staff members effort in pulling off the feat, and looks forward to a favourable participation and contribution for fundraising in our coming years.



Diabetes Singapore JAN - MAR 2019

OCT - DEC 2018

# LAUNCH OF "DIABETES CARE: UNDERSTANDING THE TRUTH & MYTHS" 2018



After having done various diabetes management short courses upon the request of our members and collaborating partners, Diabetes Singapore had identified the need for providing a comprehensive diabetes care and knowledge course amongst the general public. In the first three quarters of 2018, Diabetes Singapore collated and re-arranged its teaching materials, met up with renowned speakers in the healthcare and other relevant sectors, sourced for appropriate venues, before finally rolling out our 5-part comprehensive course - "Diabetes Care: Understanding the Truth & Myths", from October through to December this year.

Through our concerted efforts at public roadshows in 2018, we had sign-ups of around 40 participants each for the 2 sessions. During the sessions, the participants and the speakers were inspired and stimulated by the wealth of information and advice being shared around, making this a precious opportunity for interaction between all parties involved. With the extensive range of topics covered, participants voiced out gratitude for the advice they can apply immediately into their daily lives, such that they are empowered to confidently manage and prevent the onset of diabetes.

Following the success of this year's sessions, Diabetes Singapore will hold this course regularly every quarter in 2019. Do follow our website and Facebook to find out the confirmed class dates. You may also call our Jurong West and Boon Keng offices to find out more. See you in 2019!





DS BUZZ

Clare Tan

## 22 & 23 SEP 2018 GRASSROOTS OUTREACH EVENTS

- Kebun Baru CC Health Fiesta
- Jurong Spring Mid-Autumn Festival Dinner
- Nee Soon Central RC Tea Session with Indian Community



DS BUZZ

Juliana Lim

## 17 NOV 2018 WALK IN HORT PARK AND THE SOUTHERN RIDGES

With the forthcoming World Diabetes Day in mind, Diabetes Singapore ramped up its public outreach efforts at promoting diabetes prevention and care.

On 22nd September, Diabetes Singapore was present at Kebun Baru Community Centre's Health Fiesta, where Sr Nurse, Ms Lim Suan Tee engaged the participants at her talk on the importance of disciplined diabetes care and management and the need for regular health screening sessions. This was through her professional experiences being an Advanced Practice Nurse (diabetes) at NUH, doing adult diabetes service for the last 20 years, and a registered Association of Diabetes Educators Singapore (ADES) member, managing, educating and caring for the people with diabetes.

The very next day, we participated in Nee Soon Central Zone 8 RC Centre's Tea Session with Indian Residents, where DS Nurse Srimitha gave an insightful yet relatable talk to the attendees who were of similar ethnic background, wowing them with practical pointers to diabetes prevention, care and

management especially for the Deepavali festive season that was approaching soon. Right after that, we were present at our longstanding partner's event, the Jurong Spring Constituency's Mid-Autumn Festival party. The aim was to showcase DS and its education programs, and above all to caution participants about managing their diet during mooncake festive time of enjoyment.

We also wish to thank SingHealth-CGH and NUHS-NTFGH for inviting DS members to join their Health Peers program. These concerted efforts at raising public awareness and action towards diabetes care and management in daily life have paid off immensely, as we have garnered plenty of grassroots support for 2018's World Diabetes Day, with the island wide community centres broadcasting about the event. DS would like to extend a thanks to the Singapore grassroots community organisations' assistance and support in promoting preventive health management, and will look forward to more of such engagements in the coming year.



Diabetes Singapore JAN - MAR 2019

"Heavy thundery showers with gusty wind over many areas of Singapore between 7.00am and 8.00am" was the Weather Forecast for the Saturday morning of our scheduled walk on 17 November 2018. The bad weather conditions subsided at about 8.00am and so we decided to go ahead with the walk. 10 participants (with 2 already waiting at the Hort Park Visitors' Centre) had gathered in the Queenstown MRT Passenger Service area from 8.30am. At 8.50am, all moved to the bus stop to board bus No. 51 for a 15-minute bus journey to meet those waiting at the Hort Park Visitors' Centre. As we approached the Visitors Centre, we were greeted by a large crowd for its signature event, Gardeners' Day Out. Despite the lure and attraction of the gardening and lifestyle activities, all gathered to a corner to have our pre-walk blood tests taken by Christine Lee with readings taken by Michael Lee.



Due to the wet grounds and consideration for walk participants' safety, the initial planned route to Kent Ridge MRT station was abandoned. It was unanimously decided by all to walk to Mount Faber Park via Telok Blangah Hill Park. The walk started at 10am and all exited Hort Park Visitors' Centre and walked across through the Alexandra Arch. In a sheltered corner of the Arch, a 20-minute exercise session was conducted by Kean. The usage of the resistance bands borrowed from Diabetes Singapore greatly benefited all participants to perform strength-training exercises without weights.

Walk continued after the exercise. No monkeys were spotted along the Alexandra Arch despite the warning signs put up. The walk continued to the Henderson Waves Bridge. A group photo was taken on the charming wood-paneled Henderson Waves Bridge and everyone took a chance to hydrate themselves before carrying on with the journey through Marang Trail. The descending walk of the 70m steps of the trail posed a challenge to some who had weak knee joints. At a resting corner along the Marang Trail, post-walk blood test readings were conducted with improved readings recorded.



Finally, we reached the end of the Marang Trail. The whole walk took 2 hours 5 minutes with a total of 4.2km covered. Everyone enjoyed the leisurely walk as a fellowship and bonding session among DSG members. Most of the walk participants had their Lunch in nearby Seah Im Food Centre where a range of good food were available. A few members left after the walk as they decide to head back home instead.

A heartfelt "thank you" to Diabetes Singapore and to Kean, our "HappyFit" trainer for rendering the support to DSG.

# 27 OCT 2018 WALK IN SUNGEI BULOH WETLAND RESERVE



Despite the threat of thunderstorm and heavy downpour upsetting our monthly activities, we went ahead with this walk and gathered at around 2.45pm in the Kranji MRT Passenger Service Area. The “early birds” decided to chat and bond while sipping their afternoon tea in the “Kopitiam” situated outside the MRT station while waiting for the rest to appear. By 3.25pm, all 22 participants had assembled and moved off to the adjoining bus stop to board bus no. 925. After a short journey of 13 minutes, we alighted at Kranji Reservoir “Carpark B” and a short walk brought us to the Sungei Buloh Wetlands Reserve Visitors’ Centre. Mother Nature was very kind to us; the weather did not take a turn for the worse and the walk proceeded in a cool and windy environment.

The Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve is a nature reserve – an “Ecological Gem” in the northwest of Singapore. It is the first wetlands reserve to be gazetted in Singapore. This place is where nature lovers “escape from their city life” to observe the various wildlife and plants in their natural habitat. Many bird lovers

would gather to observe migratory birds, escaping the cold from as far away as Siberia.

Upon arriving at Sungei Buloh Visitors’ Centre, pre-walk blood glucose tests were taken by Christine Lee with the readings noted by Michael Lee.

The walk started from the Visitor Centre via the Canopy walk leading to the Coastal trail. Along the way, squirrels and otters were spotted with various birds flying around. We walked among the mangroves along the Boardwalk. Mud skippers were seen on the river bed and many of us caught an engrossing sight of a beautifully coloured King Fisher taking its time to feed on the fish it had captured. Nature enthusiasts were ready with their long lens cameras capturing the antics of the King Fisher.



After a walk of close to 20 minutes, an exercise session was conducted by Kean on the sheltered walkway along the Coastal trail. All participants benefitted very much from the exercise and a group photo was taken by Hwee Leng, our photographer.

The walk continued and at about the 3km mark, we decided to end the walk at the Wetlands Central in order to catch the Kranji Express Bus at 5.35pm. During the short time before the arrival of the Kranji Express Bus, post-walk blood glucose tests were taken. The readings showed good improvements in nearly all the participants.

Once again a heartfelt “thank you” to Diabetes Singapore and to Kean, our “HappyFit” trainer for rendering the support to DSG.

Diabetes Singapore JAN - MAR 2019

## MEDIACORP FILMING FOR “ON THE RED DOT – FIT FOR KIDS 1”



Diabetes Singapore has made its debut on a MediaCorp feature program! On a September 2018 Saturday afternoon, Diabetes Singapore staff, support group members, were present with Malay celebrity Alias Kadir and a group of Clementi Primary School students.

Mr Kadir first shared with them his own testimonial about the gravity of diabetes complications, cautioning them against complacency and ignorance in managing one’s fitness. To lift the solemn atmosphere, everyone enthusiastically joined in the fitness workout sessions conducted by instructors from EIM Singapore and HappyFit.

The children were surprised by the fitness levels of the diabetes group members, and the workout led them to understand that fun and fitness can actually come together. Our diabetes support group also enjoyed guiding the children.

Diabetes Singapore would like to thank MediaCorp for the opportunity for this collaboration. The feature was broadcast on 9 November 2018, and is available on Toggle at the url <https://video.toggle.sg/en/series/on-the-red-dot-2018/ep26/650302>. In particular watch the film segment between 13:46 to 16:13 minutes.

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## SPECIAL FEATURE

Dr Matthew Tan

# CHEW MORE, EAT LESS... AND EXERCISE MINDFULNESS...

If you ask most doctors what must I do in my eating habits to prevent diabetes or to control diabetes, and the simple straightforward answer is usually “Eat less”. Eat less of carbohydrates forms the cornerstone of diabetes management, be it the typical Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus or the less common Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus. Avoiding sugary drinks is key, hence debate rages on in Singapore and rest of the world whether to impose taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages or to even ban them, in a bid to help society be healthier and reduce population burden of diabetes.

While clever government health policies may indeed be helpful to raise awareness and incentivise the people to live healthily, it is usually still beholden on each person to make his or her personal choices that would influence his or her health trajectory.

It is of course easier said than done, and oftentimes theory finds itself at odds with practical challenges including hedonistic desire to feast in an environment of plenty. Practical tips that have been offered to combat this desire include “To eat slowly”. In a study by Zhu, participants who increase their baseline number of chews by 150% and 200% of their baseline number of chews were seen to reduce their food intake by 9.5% and 14.8% respectively, compared with their usual baseline chews. It certainly pays therefore to be seen as a “slow eater”, to feel satiated with less intake.

Eating speed develops from a young age, and in Growing Up in Singapore Towards Healthy Outcomes (Gusto) study, children age 4 to 5 were videotaped to evaluate their eating habits and it was again shown their the faster eaters end up eating more and having a higher body mass index (BMI) z-score and adiposity. It would suggest that eating habits that should start from young - to chew more and to eat slowly, and perhaps avoid joining “The Clean Plate Club”, which is ingrained in our Asian society – must finish everything that is on the plate even if it means going beyond our physiological full level.

It has been suggested that a possible approach “To eat slowly” is to introduce mindfulness in our way of life, including meal times. Mindfulness is a concept that has been dangled since the 1980s and has gained popularity ever since. If you go on the Health Promotion Board HealthHub webpage on “Mindful about Mindfulness” (<https://www.healthhub.sg/live-healthy/1193/mindful-about-mindfulness>), it gives a succinct explanation of mindfulness which is the practice of being aware of the present. And jumping into the specific section of “Raisin Your Consciousness”, it explains in practical step by step how to apply mindfulness using this popular mindfulness exercise designed by mindfulness guru, Jon Kabat Zinn. Essentially, popping raisins straight into the mouth and swallowing which should usually be a quick endeavour lasting no more than seconds, could possibly be converted instead into a mental enjoyment exercise that last for minutes! If utilized properly, it is a technique that can be helpful to curb excessive eating, combat obesity and fight diabetes.

Diabetes Singapore JAN - MAR 2019

## Quality of carbohydrates matter

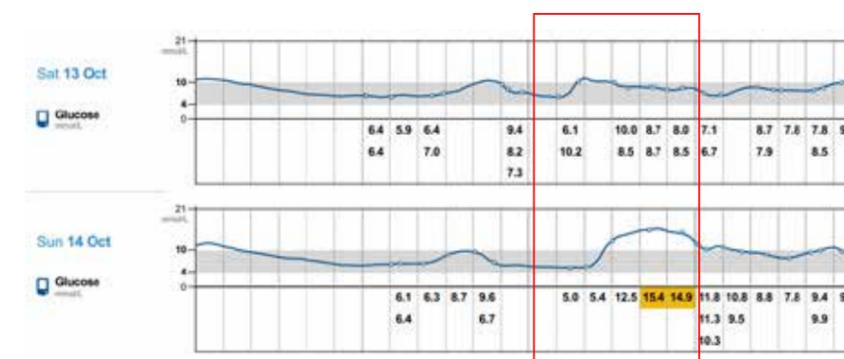
Besides eating slowly and eating less carbohydrates, perhaps the quality of the carbohydrates or even the glycemia index of the carbohydrates consumed plays an important role. To help illustrate this point, I would like to share the journey of one of my patients who first consulted me in July 2018 for diabetes mellitus which he developed at a relatively young age - in his 30s. He was in some ways fortunate that his diabetes was largely driven by obesity which arguably is easier to manage compared to thin diabetic individuals whose main problem is inadequate insulin production. We explored various ways to help him manage the weight and diabetes, including close monitoring of his glucose profile before and after meals and reflecting on the type of meals that tend to cause huge spikes in his glucose and type of meals that tend not to cause huge spikes. My patient discovered a website that describe this concept fairly well (<https://www.otsuka.co.jp/en/health-and-illness/glycemic-index/glucose-level/>) and he followed the principles to include food that are low in glycemic index and he did find it very helpful in keeping his post-meal sugar spikes modest. He lost 9 kg of weight in the process over a period of 3 to 4 months and his blood sugar level normalized without medications.

## Can it be done even in a hawker culture?

Singapore hawker culture is to be nominated for Unesco listing. Our Prime Minister likened hawker centres to be Singapore’s “community dining rooms”. This highlights how much of our food consumed as a nation are hawker delights ranging from chicken rice to nasi lemak to roti prata. Awards are given for gustatory delight, and the biggest reward is truly the never ending long queue till the last plate is sold which can be seen outside places like Tian Tian Hainanese Chicken Rice. This is indeed a real challenge between satisfying the palate and preventing the accumulation of fat around the belly.

One of my patients in his late 60s habitually consumes hawker food as part of his routine, particularly lunch time, and when we monitored his sugar profile, we notice differing response to different types of hawker food, and in different combination which is how we usually eat our food! The food groups (protein, carbohydrates, vegetables etc.) are not clearly demarcated when we eat them in a “rojak” mix of different hawker dishes, in contrast to the clear demarcation in the food groups portions seen on the Harvard Healthy Eating Plate or the Health Promotion Board My Healthy Plate.

Let’s take a look at a snapshot...



About the author: Dr Matthew Tan is Medical Director and Consultant Endocrinologist at Dr Matthew Tan Diabetes and Endocrine Care. His clinical interests include diabetes mellitus, thyroid, general endocrinology and sub-specialty interests in osteoporosis and calcium disorders. Dr Tan also enjoys jogging and spending time with his two daughters.



## 13th October Lunch (1pm)

- He ate *Yong Tow Foo Soup* followed by *Pulut Hitam* and drank *Teh See Kosong*

## 14th October Lunch (1pm)

- He ate *vegetarian hor fan*, *olive fried rice* and *prawn mee soup*

I think it is clear at a quick glance which combination was “friendlier” to his diabetes control...

Through monitoring, reflection and adjustment over time, it is possible to find perhaps the right “hawker food combination” that is diabetes friendly, or perhaps allowing for the occasional cheat meal combination once in a blue moon.

In summary, to eat is to live or perhaps to live is to eat. And how fast you eat, what quality of carbohydrates you choose and perhaps what “hawker food combination” you select would determine how successful you are in preventing diabetes and controlling the disease should you be unfortunate to develop the disease.

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<https://www.healthhub.sg/live-healthy/1193/mindful-about-mindfulness>

<https://www.otsuka.co.jp/en/health-and-illness/glycemic-index/glucose-level/>

# LIVING A FULL LIFE DESPITE DIABETES



How often have we heard someone having diabetes say “Because I have diabetes now, I can’t enjoy my life as I used to!” or “Diabetes has made my life miserable! I am very restricted in my choice of food and lifestyle moments!” Those who say such things may sound miserable and desperate for they have made diabetes seem like a dreaded disease that they believe would prematurely end their lives without ever having fulfilled their ambitions or their passions.

## Diabetes and mental health

Diabetes is a disease that occurs when your blood glucose, also called blood sugar, is too high. Blood glucose is your main source of energy and comes from the food you eat. Insulin, a hormone made by the pancreas, helps glucose from food get into your cells to be used for energy. Sometimes your body doesn’t make enough—or any—insulin or doesn’t use insulin well. Glucose then stays in your blood and doesn’t reach your cells. Source: <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/what-is-diabetes>

Diabetes (all types) has become a terrible scourge of modern man all over the world. In traditional societies diabetes was not much heard of as it is now. It has been generally accepted that there is no real cure for diabetes (both types) unless one has pre-diabetes and appropriate medication and personal effort to control the condition is taken timely and consistently to get it out of one’s body totally. Yet there’s no guarantee the condition does not come again if one does not monitor his health routinely and often, and lives carefree and frivolously consuming food full of carbohydrates, meat, gluten, sugary

stuff, soft and aerated drinks, liquor, amongst others, that promote or exacerbate the conditions leading to the problem ever more over time, relative to one’s age, BMI and changes in weight, blood pressure, and some other physical health factors. Seldom is there mention that the mind is a very potent factor in all these considerations that cause or make diabetes a serious health issue for so many.

Yes, mental health is a very important factor, perhaps the most important, as it could influence and affect those with diabetes to make lifestyle changes to cope with the condition right up to the last moments of their lives. Mind – power (also called will- power) could be harnessed with practice to influence the healthy way one could live and keep diabetes at bay or reduce its intensity or potency for life, rather than going with what the heart wants, in order to live as per normal or nonchalantly, without any care for oneself or any others. Of course, discipline and conscientious effort need to be garnered as well in order to achieve best results over time depending on the individual, group, familial, community or nation-wide campaigns to fight diabetes in all its forms.

Diabetes Singapore JAN - MAR 2019

## Mindfulness

Mindfulness is being fully present in the moment, fully aware of where we are and what we are doing. It is an essential component of mental health and is definitely a great help to those with diabetes to be careful and aware of their civic and moral responsibilities to themselves, their loved ones, friends and colleagues at work or play to ensure that they follow a self-made code of conduct to strictly observe diabetes – control and care in order to cope with and maintain their health at the optimum level according to medical and health experts.

## Optimum level of health?

By maintaining an optimum level of health I mean having the right BMI, eating right with a balanced diet: less carbs and gluten, reducing the intake of oily and fried food, increasing the consumption of fruits and vegetables and having less or no meat, getting enough sleep (at least 7-8 hours every night), observing, conscientiously, work-life balance, having a regular and consistent exercise routine, etc., all of which should ultimately lead to a healthy living habit which would surely go a long way to negate the onset of diabetes or if already there to better cope with it to lead a full life.

## Simple actions to take - mindfully

Mindfulness can help alleviate feeling overwhelmed, stressed or anxious by the challenges of living with diabetes. Being mindful helps one to enjoy the moment one is living in, which benefits one’s mental and physical health consequently. Here are a few simple ways one can practice mindfulness and take charge of diabetes as well:

**Focus on how you are feeling in the moment.** How are you feeling right now? Tired, Lonely? Sad? These feelings could lead you to eat and drink more and to becoming obese (a great risk factor for the onslaught of diabetes and heart problems) as studies have shown there is a causative effect of depression leading to eating more/gluttony and being obese as a result, both of which conditions could lead to the onslaught of diabetes in the individual. Hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) could also be monitored by this awareness and quick action can be taken to consume some sweet drink (as a first immediate step) or seek medical help immediately once the symptoms appear – slurred speech, hunger, fast heartbeat, sweating, headache, panic attack, irritability, being confused, weakness, nausea, etc. The condition could be life-threatening and being focused in the moment is very important indeed!

Written by:

Dr Siva Mahendran (EdD, cum laude), Professional Counsellor, Uniphimatrix Educational and Counselling services

**2** Concentrate on what you sense in the moment. Use your senses to feel, hear, smell, touch, see things around you that create a craving for food or drinks and know how they are all influencing you to try some or indulge in gluttony at times. As above, be on a constant ‘lookout’ for any of the symptoms of hypoglycemia as mentioned above.

**3** Spend a minute every day trying to clear your mind. Plan your meals carefully so as not to waste or indulge in them eg. having small portions of food at intervals to stave off hunger pangs whenever you feel like it – could reduce the chance of getting stomach cramps or ulcers too. Stress and being tired from doing work could lead to one eating without consideration to one’s diabetic condition and this could lead to the worsening of the problem over time. Thus it is better to have a clear mind at all times to cope well with diabetes.

**4** When you’re at work, out with friends or trying to get to sleep, write down your thoughts or worries to revisit later. Do keep a daily record of things you need to do to take charge of your diabetic condition eg. when to take those tablets or have the jab, how much sugary food or drink you had for the day etc. It will make for good analysis later during your free time to assess how your day went viz your coping with diabetes.

**5** Participate in a meditation or yoga class or simply visit a religious place of worship, if need be, to keep your mind occupied and away from eating at whim or indulging in food and drinks.

## Conclusion

It is no point living in dread once afflicted by diabetes at whatever stage in life and at whatever levels as one has to consider there is purpose in living a full life despite the odds, as the saying goes:

*“If you are depressed, you are living in the past.  
If you are anxious, you are living in the future.*

*If you are at peace,  
you are living in the present.”*

~ Lao Tzu

## References

1. Brouhard, R., 2011, Life’s Little Emergencies: A Handbook for Active Independent Seniors and Caregivers, New York: Bang Printing.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National diabetes statistics report, 2017. [www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pdfs/data/statistics/national-diabetes-statistics-report.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pdfs/data/statistics/national-diabetes-statistics-report.pdf). Updated July, 18 2017. Accessed August 1, 2017.

## COOKOUT

Chef Eric Low



# Scallop and Three Grain Congee

SERVES 4

### Ingredients

- 3 cups Cooked Rice
- ½ cup Red Rice (uncooked)
- 50g Dried Scallops, rinse and grind (do not soak)
- 20g Old Ginger, sliced
- 2 pcs Chicken Thigh (skin and visible fat removed)
- 8 cups Water, plus extra to standby

### Assembly:

- 2 tbsps Healthier Choice Endorsed Concentrated Chicken Stock / Seasoning
- 3 tbsps Wolfberries
- 1 pc Corn on Cob, corn kernels extracted
- 2 stalks Spring Onion, diced
- 2 stalks Chinese Celery, diced
- 4 tbsps Toasted Pine Nut Kernels (optional)
- Sesame Oil
- White Pepper Powder

### Method of preparation

1. Combine the two types of rice together in a large stock pot. Add dried scallops and remaining ingredients for congee and bring to boil. Simmer till red rice grains are tender.
2. After the first 30minutes, remove chicken and shred the meat. Return bones to continue simmering with congee.
3. When congee is ready, remove chicken bones, adjust seasoning with concentrated chicken stock. Add the wolfberries and corn on cob. Simmer for 5 minutes and return shredded chicken to the congee.



Diabetes Singapore JAN - MAR 2019

## COOKOUT



# Vietnamese Jack Fruit Salad with Fresh Prawns

SERVES 10

### Ingredients

- 20pcs Peeled Boiled Fresh Prawns

### Jackfruit Salad:

- 50g Thai Palm Sugar
- 30ml Fish Sauce
- 100g Red Onion, sliced
- 120g Tomato, seeded, sliced
- 300g Jackfruit, sliced
- 30g Fried Shallots
- 15g Laksa Leaves, shredded
- 25g Mint Leaves

### Garnish:

- 80g Roasted Peanuts, coarsely chopped
- 30g Coconut Milk

### Method of preparation

1. Combine thai palm sugar and fish sauce. Mix well.
  2. In a mixing bowl, add the salad ingredients and toss evenly. Transfer to a serving plate.
  3. Toss the prawns with some of the dressing and arrange over the salad. Drizzle with some extra dressing before serve. Garnish with roasted peanuts.
- \* If Jackfruits are very ripe and sweet, palm sugar maybe omitted from the recipe.



Source: Diabetic Care Demo Recipes on 10 November 2018 (Diabetes Care & Management course) by Chef Eric Low (Founder and Chef @ Lush Epicurean Culinary Consultancy)



# In support of World Diabetes Day

## REDUCING YOUR FAMILIES RISK OF DIABETES\*



### NEW!

- Super Soft Texture
- Made with 90% Wholemeal, Barley Flour and Rolled Oats.
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- ✓ **Certified Low GI (Glycemic Index)**
  - Provides slow release of glucose into the blood stream.
  - Low GI food help improve diabetes control in the long run and lowers your risk of diabetes.
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- ✓ **High in Dietary Fibre for Healthy Digestive System**
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\* Healthy Eating & An Active Lifestyle Can Reduce The Risk Of Diabetes.

### THE LIGHTER SIDE

Gary Yang  
Sport Singapore

The year is almost over and the festive period is slowly but surely creeping up on us. Invitations to Christmas dinners start flooding in, you need to start catching up with old friends before the New Year, you name it, your calendar is probably booked all the way right up to the Lunar New Year in 2019!

Basically, it is the perfect time to catch up and celebrate with our loved ones while feasting on goodies. For many of us, it is also a time when diet plans are thrown out of the window and gone with the wind. We also conveniently forget the New Year resolutions that we made the year before.

I am pretty sure that we have all been through this before. Once the festive period is over, reality sets in and we start to regret our actions and dietary abandonment. In short, prevention is always better than cure, so the key is to eat in moderation and to stay active and exercise even during festive celebrations.

Well, we have good news for those who wish to stay fit, look good and not miss out on the festive feasting. It's really not that difficult!

Thinking of reaching for that festive goodie or cookie in between meals? Don't even think about it! Instead, consider healthy snacks like mixed nuts, Greek yogurt with berries or Kale chips.

Unsalted nuts are full of nutrients and also keep you feeling full so you will not overeat during mealtime. Yogurt is an excellent choice of protein and a healthy yet delicious substitute for ice-cream. Having something like Kale chips as a snack would be a great choice as this leafy vegetable is packed with fibre and anti-oxidants.

If you feel like you have had too much to eat, ActiveSG has in store many programmes and activities for you and your family over the festive period so that you do not have to be worried about stuffing your face with festive goodies!

Besides that, you can also embark on Active Health Journey to have a better understanding on how you can take steps to manage your physical activity, sleep, nutrition and screen time.

How to feast responsibly  
*this festive season?*

**What is Active Health?**

Active Health brought to you by SportSG is a journey that involves taking little steps to form small habits in our daily lives that can make a huge impact by focusing on these four areas - physical activity, sleep, nutrition and screen time.



With Active Health Labs being rolled out island-wide managed by qualified Active Health Experts, an Active Health app to keep track of your fitness progress, and fun community activities, it has never been easier to own your health.

**What is an Active Health Lab and where are they located?**

The Active Health Lab is a key component in the Active Health social movement which encourages Singaporeans to proactively take ownership of their health and wellness.

Leveraging on our Active Health Experts' knowledge of exercise, sport science, medicine, health and wellness that is supported by technology, this one-of-its-kind lab provides guidance to preventive healthcare and exercise advisory to deliver effective and engaging experiences for the community to embrace active living on a sustained basis with the aim of promoting the ownership of one's health.

Do visit us at:

- Active Health Lab at Our Tampines Hub (OTH)
- Active Health Lab at HeartBeat@Bedok (HBB)
- Active Health @ Decathlon Singapore Lab from 19 January 2019 onwards

**What can I do at the Active Health Lab?**

The lab offers the following programmes which allows you to have a better understanding of how you can take steps to manage your physical activity, sleep, nutrition and screen time:

- Standard Onboarding Session (a pre-requisite for subsequent fitness assessment)
- Themed classes and workshops
- Test Stations to measure grip strength, blood pressure, and cardiovascular strength will also be made available under the watchful eyes of our Active Health Experts

Click <https://www.myactivesg.com/Active-Health/Spaces/Lab/Appointment> to book your onboarding session and find out more.

So there you have it. It is actually not rocket science! You can still enjoy your festive goodies during this period if you follow some simple rules and keep to a few healthy habits. Remember #BetterBeatsPerfect

# Exercise in Type-2 Diabetes Mellitus

Did you know that exercise is just as effective as medication in the control of diabetes?

**Short-term benefits:**

- Lower blood sugar for up to 72 hours
- Improves overall blood and sugar control

**Long-term benefits:**

- Improves blood sugar control
- Decreases risk of heart disease
- Improves mood and reduces stress levels
- Increases sleep quality and energy levels
- Increases muscle mass
- Maintain weight loss
- Makes you look good



**Exercise Precautions:**

	Symptoms	What to do
Low blood sugar	Dizziness Headache Trembling Weak and tired Abnormal sweating Blurred Vision Confusion Hunger Irritability	- Stop exercise - Eat carbohydrate snacks - Recheck blood glucose after 15 minute - See a doctor to review your exercise programme
High blood sugar	Frequent urination Increased thirst Drowsiness Mental State Change Weak and fatigue Abdominal Pain Nausea and vomiting Rapid breathing Fruity Breath	- Avoid heavy exercise such as fast cycling, running, basketball - Drink more water - See a doctor to review your exercise programme

# SHAPE UP

## Exercise Prescriptions:

**Aerobic Exercise** – Helps your body use insulin better

### Frequency:

At least 3 times per week, no more than 2 consecutive days of rest

### Intensity:

Moderate or more (refer to RPE chart below)

### Time:

150 minutes or more per week

### Type:

Aerobic exercises that increase heart-rate, such as brisk walking, cycling and swimming

Combine with balance training to reduce fall

**Strength training** – Make your body more sensitive to insulin and lowers blood glucose

### Frequency:

2 times or more per week, non-consecutive days

### Intensity:

Moderate (refer to RPE chart below)

### Time:

5-10 exercises per session, initial phase: 10-15 repetitions per set, progression: 8-10 repetitions per set

### Type:

Weight training; gradually increase weights for optimal insulin action and glucose control

## Attend Our Course Diabetes Care:

Understanding the Truth & Myths

As part of National Silver Academy (NSA)



### Module 1: What is Diabetes?

Can diabetes be cured? What happens if I over-manage my blood glucose level? We will help you clarify all these questions!

### Module 2: Clinical Aspects of Diabetes

You will know all about the chemistry, technology and science behind diabetes medication and screening!



### Module 3: Lifestyle and Exercise

How do you take diabetes "a step at a time"? This exercise-focused module will get you moving!



### Module 4: Stress and Relaxation

Diabetes can involve the mind? Yes, stress management is a great tool for managing diabetes, which you will find out here!



### Module 5: Diet in Diabetes Management

Diabetes doesn't mean no more good food. Reassure your taste buds at this module while staying healthy. It can be done!



## Diabetes Care: Understanding the Truth & Myths

2019 Run 1 dates

**Module 1: What is Diabetes?**

2 March

**Module 2: Clinical Aspects of Diabetes**

9 March

**Module 3: Lifestyle & Exercise**

16 March

**Module 4: Stress and Relaxation**

23 March

**Module 5: Diet in Diabetes Management**

30 March

Duration: 5 Saturday sessions

Time: 2pm to 5pm

Venue: LIFE Centre, SGH, Bowyer Block A (Clock Tower) Level 1

Fees: \$70 (\$14 for Singapore citizens, PRs 50 years old and above)

Email: [dss@diabetes.org.sg](mailto:dss@diabetes.org.sg)

Tel: 65649818

To register, please email [dss@diabetes.org.sg](mailto:dss@diabetes.org.sg)

NATIONAL Silver ACADEMY

## RPE CHART (Rate of Perceived Exertion)

10	<b>Max Effort Activity</b> Feels almost impossible to keep going Completely out of breathe, unable to talk
9	<b>Very Hard Activity</b> Very difficult to maintain exercise intensity Can barely breath & speak a single word
7-8	<b>Vigorous Activity</b> On the verge of becoming uncomfortable Short of breathe, can speak a sentence
4-6	<b>Moderate Activity</b> Feels like you can exercise for hours Breathing heavily, can hold a short conversation
2-3	<b>Light Activity</b> Feels like you can maintain for hours Easy to breath & carry on a conversation
1	<b>Very Light Activity</b> Anything other than sleeping, watching TV, riding in a car, etc.

"RPE Chart". Photo. [Personaltrainerbusinessforms.com](http://Personaltrainerbusinessforms.com)

## EXAMPLES:

**Vigorous (RPE≥7)**  
Running, fast cycling, basketball

**Moderate (RPE 3-6)**  
Brisk walking, climbing stairs, biking, dancing, swimming

**Light (RPE 1-2)**  
Easy walking, golf, laundry, yoga, stretching

I choose  
**Penta**  **point™**  
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**Demonstrated to reduce the pain of injection<sup>1</sup>**



Ref 1. Hirsch LJ, et al. Journal of Diabetes Science and Technology 2012;6(2):328-35.

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Product Catalogue: 320477

