

# Myths and Truths About Diabetes...Coyote's Trickery or Eagle's Wisdom?

Presented by: Rebecca Sovdi

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# Eagle and Coyote



# You have a 'touch' of diabetes...

- If someone says:
  - You have a 'touch' of diabetes
  - You have 'borderline' diabetes
- Who is speaking?



# Coyote



- Myth!!
  - Having a touch of diabetes is like being a touch pregnant – it is not possible!
  - These terms mean blood sugars are too high, and high blood sugars are harmful (even in the early stages)
  - Pre-diabetes – Refers to blood sugars high enough to place a person at increased risk for developing diabetes or its complications
  - When a person has high blood sugars, it is important to DO something about it

# Getting diabetes is your fault...

- If you have ever heard someone say that it is your own fault that you have diabetes because:
  - You ate too many sweets or sugary foods
  - You are too overweight or are too lazy
  - You are being punished for bad behaviour



# Coyote



- Myth!!
  - Getting diabetes is NOT your fault
- Through science and understanding, we have come to realize that:
  - Diabetes is not a character flaw
  - The majority of people in North America and world wide eat the same way
  - Most people get less exercise than their ancestors
- Diabetes is Genetics + Environment (Like the gun + the bullet)

# You should accept the fact that you have diabetes...

- If someone says that you should accept diabetes without being:
  - Angry about it
  - Sad or depressed
  - Frustrated when things are challenging
  - Overwhelmed



# Coyote



- Myth!!
  - Diabetes is a disease and is a lot of hard work
  - Creator doesn't take away all your other problems when he gives you diabetes
  - It is ok to feel sad or angry. Talk to an elder, family member or health care provider about it



# Diabetes is not a barrier to living the life you want...

- You can have a family
- Find balance
- Live a long healthy life



# Eagle



- Truth!
- People with diabetes can:
  - Follow their dreams
  - Live a long life
- Yes diabetes is hard, but dreams are important. You don't have to give up your dreams because of diabetes.

# You should hide your diabetes from other people...

- If someone says that you should hide your diabetes from other people because:
  - It is shameful
  - People will make you feel guilty
  - People will nag you about what you should and shouldn't do
  - People will feel sorry for you



# Coyote



- Myth!!
  - Diabetes is very common, especially in First Nations communities
  - Just about every person in First Nations communities will have a family member with diabetes
  - Diabetes is nothing to be ashamed of! Tell others around you how they can help you and support you.

# Truths about diabetes and feelings

- Depression is common in people with diabetes
  - Depression is feeling sad, hopeless, tired, unmotivated, guilty, worthless, lacking concentration or possibly thoughts of suicide
- You may be depressed if you regularly experience a few of these symptoms
- Talk to your elders, health workers and nurses to make a plan for managing depression

# Truths about diabetes and feelings

- Living with diabetes is hard work and can sometimes lead to feelings of being burned out
- Remember that:
  - No one has perfect diabetes control, it is not possible and not necessary
  - Talk to your loved ones about how they can help to carry the burden of diabetes
  - Become an expert in your own diabetes. You will feel and be more powerful.
  - Find out what tools are available to you to help you manage your diabetes

# You don't have to worry about diabetes unless you feel sick...

- If someone says that you don't have to worry about your blood sugars or managing your diabetes because:
  - You don't feel sick
  - You have other things to worry about in life, like working and/or taking care of your family



# Coyote



- Myth!!
  - You can't always feel when your blood sugars are high
  - High blood sugars cause thick blood and leads to damage
  - You can't manage diabetes by how you feel, you need to manage it by knowing your numbers



Having perfect blood sugar at all times is not possible...



# Eagle



- Truth!!
  - Perfect blood sugars are simply not possible with today's tools
  - You don't need perfect blood sugar all the time to stay healthy, but you do need 'good enough' blood sugar
  - Have your Hemoglobin A1c (measure of your average blood sugar) tested
    - 'Good enough' blood sugars usually produce an A1c of 7% or less, which is the # you are aiming for

# Healthy blood sugar goals

- Although perfect blood sugars all the time are unnecessary and not possible, you can try to get close to normal most of the time
- These are the numbers that most people are looking for
- Hemoglobin A1c = 7% or less (6.5% is desirable for some people or 7.1 – 8.5% for others)
- Blood sugars
  - Before eating = Less than 6
  - 1 hour after eating = Less than 9 mmol
  - 2 hours after eating = Less than 8 mmol



# People with diabetes have to follow a 'diabetic diet'...



# Coyote



- Myth!!
  - Every person – regardless of whether or not they have diabetes, will be stronger, healthier, and more balanced when they are eating good healthy food
  - The difference is a person with diabetes needs to understand how the foods they eat affect their blood sugar



# Food and Diabetes

- Diets don't work
- Good nutrition is vital for everyone
- Most people are willing to change, but unwilling to BE changed
- You don't need to use 'sugar-free' foods
- Skills power produces better results than willpower
- Portion size is important

# Being overweight means you are not healthy...

- If someone says that heavy people:
  - Should lose weight before they can properly control their blood sugar
  - Cannot be healthy
  - Are lazy, eat too much, or lack willpower to change



# Coyote



- Myth!!
  - Blood sugar can be controlled at any weight using a variety of tools
  - Losing a small amount of weight can help control blood sugar in insulin resistance people... big weight loss is not necessary.
  - Don't try to lose weight before attempting to get your diabetes under control – focus on control first



# Facts about body weight

- People come in different shapes and sizes
- We accept that dogs come in many different shapes and sizes and we should do the same for people
- Knowing and accepting your body type is important
  - It can help you set realistic goals for your 'best' weight
  - Your goal weight should be in tune with your inherited body type – look at your ancestors and the types of bodies they had
- Physical activity plays a large role in risk for obesity – life is much easier today than it was for your relatives

# Taking more pills is a sign that your diabetes is worse...

- Who is speaking?



# Coyote



- Myth!!
  - When you have type 2 diabetes, taking more pills is often a sign that you have had good care for your diabetes or have more tools for managing your blood sugars
  - Over time, good therapy usually requires adding more pills or bigger doses of pills to manage blood sugars

# People who take insulin have the 'bad' kind of diabetes...

- If someone says:
  - “Bad diabetes” is the kind where you take insulin
  - Taking insulin means you have failed
  - Taking insulin leads to kidney problems, dialysis, and amputations



# Coyote



- Myth!!
  - “Bad diabetes” is when diabetes is out of control
  - Insulin should not be used as a threat
  - Most people with type 2 diabetes will eventually need insulin – and not because they did anything wrong
  - Kidney damage and wounds result from uncontrolled blood sugar

# You needs to check your blood sugar regularly...

- Who is speaking?



# Eagle



- Truth!!
  - Every person needs to test in order to get control of their blood sugars or to keep control
  - Testing blood sugar is like using the control panel on a car to operate the car
  - Since you are the person with diabetes, the test results belong to you – to help you ‘operate your car’
    - Test results are not just for your health provider
    - Use the results to understand your own diabetes

# Facts about blood sugar testing

- When should you test?
  - First thing in the morning (fasting) and before meals
  - After meals – 1 to 2 hours after you eat
  - Middle of the night – occasionally to get a sense of what happens while you sleep
  - Before driving, before exercising
- Don't change a thing – discovery learning



## Discovery Learning Blood Sugar Tracking Tool

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Month: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Instructions on Back)*



Date	Fasting Blood Sugar (FBS)	Breakfast Foods Eaten	1-2 hr blood sugar	Before lunch blood sugar	Lunch Foods Eaten	1-2 hr blood sugar	Before supper blood sugar	Supper Foods Eaten	1-2 hr blood sugar	Bed time blood sugar	3 AM blood sugar (Optional)	Exercise today and notes
Monday	Time:	I ≡	Time:	Time:		Time:	Time:		Time:	Time:		
	BG		BG	BG								
	MEDS			MEDS			MEDS			MEDS		
Tuesday	Time:		Time:	Time:		Time:	Time:		Time:	Time:		
	BG		BG	BG								
	MEDS			MEDS			MEDS			MEDS		
Wednesday	Time:		Time:	Time:		Time:	Time:		Time:	Time:		
	BG		BG	BG								
	MEDS			MEDS			MEDS			MEDS		
Thursday	Time:		Time:	Time:		Time:	Time:		Time:	Time:		
	BG		BG	BG								
	MEDS			MEDS			MEDS			MEDS		

# Remember these wise messages from the Eagle



- 1. Diabetes is not a character flaw
- 2. You are the one who controls your diabetes
- 3. Taking care of diabetes is hard work
- 4. Support from others lightens the load
- 5. Control helps protect your health
- 6. You can't control diabetes by how you feel, you must manage it by the numbers
- 7. You can eat sugars just like other carbohydrates, if you learn how to count and manage them
- 8. Being physically active is good for your body and your mind – and its good for your diabetes too
- 9. Regular medical care – even when you don't feel sick – is important to stay healthy with diabetes for a lifetime
- 10. Diabetes control and an enjoyable life are a package deal. You cannot have one without the other.

# Ultimate goal

- Our ultimate goal as health care providers is to enable to the people with diabetes to find a balance between:

