



THE POSITIVE POWER OF PETS

One of the best factors about having a pet – be it a cat, dog or a bird – is their unwavering companionship. Being able to go for a walk with your dog, snuggle with your feline friend or teach your feathered pal to chirp a word are all enriching experiences that create an irreplaceable bond between human and animal. This companionship is unique because not only is it unconditional, but all your pet wants in return is love.

Studies have shown the bond between humans and their pets can increase fitness, lower stress and contribute happiness to their owners' lives, according to the CDC. Some health benefits of pet ownership include:

Decreased:

- Stress
- Blood pressure
- Heart rate
- Cholesterol levels
- Triglyceride levels
- Feelings of loneliness

Increased:

- Happiness
- Opportunities for exercise and outdoor interaction
- Socialization
- Emotional support
- Immune function against certain illnesses

If you already have a pet, you may recognize some of these benefits in your own life. However, if you have yet to adopt a pet and/or are considering it, there are a few factors to consider before welcoming a furry or feathered friend into your home:

- How long will this animal live?
- What does the pet eat?
- How much exercise does the pet need?
- How large will it become?
- How much will it cost for veterinary care?
- Do I have enough time to properly care for and clean up after the pet?
- What type of habitat does this pet need to be healthy?
- What type of exercise does this pet need?
- Are pets allowed in my house, apartment or condominium?
- Are there young children, older people, or those with weak immune systems who will care for or be around the pet?

At the end of the day, having a pet is a lot of responsibility and work, but the positive benefits are endless!

"The Power of Pets," National Institute of Health, [newsline.nih.gov](https://www.newsline.com/newsline/2018/02/01/the-power-of-pets/), February 2018.

"Health Benefits of Pet Ownership," The Ohio State University Veterinary Medical Center, [vet.osu.edu](https://www.vet.osu.edu/), June 10, 2020.

"About Pets & People," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/), June 10, 2020.

LIVING WELL WITH DIABETES: JUST DIAGNOSED

Approximately one in 10 Americans have diabetes with about 90-95% of them having type 2 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is a chronic condition that is also progressive, but with proper management, you can stop or slow many of the complications related to diabetes. Taking charge of your health will allow you to live and maintain a healthy lifestyle, and it will help prevent life-threatening complications, which can arise from uncontrolled diabetes.

A diabetes diagnosis can be daunting but is very manageable. You may not even have many symptoms; you may be in shock or disbelief; you may question the reality of your situation; or you may be very disheartened. You may also have feelings of anger, sadness, guilt or a sense of loss. This is normal and it's definitely OK to feel the gamut of emotions. A new diagnosis of diabetes can be overwhelming, but taking it one day at a time, connecting often with your physician, and educating yourself with diabetes resources can help make this diagnosis manageable.

The Symptoms of Type 2 Diabetes Are:

- Increased thirst
- Frequent urination
- Increased hunger
- Fatigue
- Blurred vision
- Unintended weight loss
- Slow-healing sores
- Frequent infections
- Areas of darkened skin, usually in armpits and neck

What Causes Type 2 Diabetes?

With type 2 diabetes, your body becomes resistant to insulin or the pancreas can no longer produce enough insulin to properly break down the sugar from the foods you eat. Insulin is a hormone that regulates the movement of sugar (glucose) in your body, so with diabetes, your body isn't able to use insulin properly, which causes your body to not be able to maintain proper glucose levels.

This is the first article in our Living Well With Diabetes series. Stay tuned for future newsletters highlighting the many ways to live well with this diagnosis!

Steps to Begin Managing Your Diabetes

Learn how to manage your diabetes through healthy living: Weight loss, healthy eating and regular exercise can all help you feel better and reduce the possibility and/or severity of complications.

Manage blood sugar levels: Monitoring your blood sugar levels and possibly the use of diabetes medications or insulin therapy will be key factors in managing type 2 diabetes.

Build and maintain a relationship with your health care team: Your physician may suggest you increase your visits with them with your new diagnosis along with seeing other health care professionals (e.g., a certified diabetes educator, nurse, registered dietitian, pharmacist, endocrinologist, podiatrist, etc.).

Get the support you need: Whether you need help beginning your diabetes management or you need help managing your mental wellbeing surrounding your diagnosis, reach out to your physician and ask them to connect you with organizations who can help. Also, ask for support among your family and friends.

Type 2 Diabetes Resources

American Diabetes Association:
www.diabetes.org/diabetes/type-2

Diabetes Education Programs:
diabetes.org/diabetes/find-a-program

"Type 2 diabetes," mayoclinic.org, Jan 9, 2019.
"Living with Diabetes," cdc.gov, June 27, 2019.

Protein Popsicles

Serves: 10

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ripe banana
- 1 cup milk (nonfat or skim)
- ½ cup nonfat, plain Greek yogurt
- ¼ cup peanut butter (no sugar added)
- 2 scoops protein powder (no sugar added)

OPTIONAL TOPPINGS

- Fresh or frozen berries
- Shredded coconut
- Chia and flax seeds
- Chopped almonds and walnuts
- Dark chocolate chips (no sugar added)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth.
2. Pour the mixture into molds and freeze for 30 to 40 minutes.
3. Remove the molds from the freezer and add desired toppings plus popsicle sticks.
4. Return the popsicles to the freezer and allow them to freeze until they are completely solid.
5. When ready to eat the popsicles, remove them from the freezer and run the bottom under hot water for a few seconds to remove them from the mold.

HOW TO MAKE THESE POPSICLES DAIRY-FREE

Use a no-added-sugar, plant-based yogurt, milk and protein powder (of your choice).

Recipe adapted from ohsodelicioso.com

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