PREVENT DIABETES

When Monica Chevez found out she was at high risk for type 2 diabetes, “it was a huge shock.” Her insurance provider informed her about the YMCA’s Diabetes Prevention Program, which helps those at high risk for developing type 2 diabetes adopt and maintain healthy lifestyles by eating healthier, increasing physical activity and losing a modest amount of weight in order to reduce their chances of developing the disease.

“When they told me I was in the range for prediabetes and there was nothing I could do to prevent it, I was all for it.”

The program provides a supportive environment where participants work together in a small group led by a trained Lifestyle Coach in a classroom setting. It is delivered over a 12-month period, beginning with 16 weekly sessions followed by monthly maintenance. Research by the National Institutes of Health has proven that programs like the YMCA’s Diabetes Prevention Program can reduce the number of cases of type 2 diabetes by 58% – 71% among adults aged 60 or older.

Currently, more than 70 Ys in 30 states offer the program. In some cases, employers or insurance companies will cover the cost of the program.

TAKE THE FIRST STEP. LEARN YOUR RISK FOR PREDIABETES

Answer these seven questions – for each “Yes” answer, add the number of points listed.

Are you 45 years of age or older? 5
Are you younger than 65 years of age and get little or no physical activity in a typical day? 10
Are you between 45 and 64 years of age? 5
Do you have a brother or sister with diabetes? 10
Have you been told by a doctor that you have high blood pressure or high cholesterol? 5
Do you have a first-degree relative who has diabetes? 10
Are you 65 years of age or older? 5

Total points for all “Yes” responses:

If you scored 0-8, you are considered to be at low risk for prediabetes.
If you scored 9 or higher, you are considered to be at high risk for prediabetes. You will need a blood test to confirm if you have diabetes.

The program was a huge eye opener for me and I learned how the small changes in life can make a big difference in your health,” said Monica. “I was tested again and told I was therefore near the prediabetes range, I was just amazed.”

The YMCA’s Diabetes Prevention Program is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-led National Diabetes Prevention Program and is nationally supported by the Diabetes Prevention and Control Alliance. Go to www.ymca.net/ diabetes-prevention to learn more about the program, take a risk assessment and to find out if it is offered at your Y.

As we enjoy and give thanks for having family and friends around the table this Thanksgiving, we might consider making family meals together more of a regular occurrence. Despite busy schedules and competing priorities, sitting down together to share a meal and the events of the day is valuable time to connect, show genuine interest in and care for one another, create and share traditions, and appreciate one another’s company. Consistently sharing quality time together during meals as a family has been linked to better grades and less tobacco, alcohol and drug use by teens. It’s also an opportunity to talk about and model healthy eating habits like eating a wide variety of foods, especially fruits and vegetables.

EATING TOGETHER AS A FAMILY

As a family, you can:
•  Keep the menu simple, especially for young children.
•  Try breakfast or brunch if dinner is difficult to schedule.
•  Turn off the TV, phones and other electronic devices one meal a week.
•  Prepare the meal together and divide up tasks like setting the table and doing the dishes.
•  Try new foods and menu ideas – it’s fun and will get you talking.
•  Plan menu meals, put them on the family calendar, and enjoy dressing for the occasion.
•  As a family, research a new healthy recipe, prepare it together and then have everyone grade the recipe – it may become a monthly regular.
•  Take your time. Relax and enjoy the food and each other.

Visit the Y online at www.ymca.net and click Healthy Family Home for more healthy living tips.

NOVEMBER 2012

MEMBER NEWS

MISSION IN ACTION

Arts and the incarcerated

You may not think of the Y as the first place you’d go to view an art exhibit, particularly one showcasing work from prisoners at a correctional facility, but in Danville, the University Y at the University of Illinois showed Beyond Lines: Limited Expressions from the Maxville Facility. Prison art is now part of its Art at the Y program.

‘Beyond Lines’ featured art produced by incarcerated artists at Danville Correctional Center, a men’s medium-high security Illinois state prison.

Students from the University’s Education Justice Program organized the exhibition and produced the accompanying catalogue and film "Art @ the Y: Connecting Campus and Community,” which explores the experiences of incarcerated artists in Illinois, and their work on display. The catalogue and film will be available online.

In artist statements and perspectives related to the works, many of the artists described how art can reduce some of the pains of incarceration. Others discuss art as an opportunity to reflect on themselves as individuals instead of as prisoners.

“At the University Y, we recognize that some of the most profound insight, critique, and creative thinking around the issues which comprise the majority of the Y happen in and around the arts” says Ann Rasmus, Program Director. “Art at the Y seeks to engage issues of social justice, international understanding, environmental responsibility, faith and cultural understanding through quality arts programming.”

EAT WELL AT THE Y

Campus Ys develop leaders by “connecting campus to community.” Dating from 1868 at the University of Michigan and University of Virginia, Campus Ys have led the way for young people through many of the religious, social, and political shifts throughout American history. Currently, 108 Campus Ys provide a variety of programming to the students they serve on campus and off, including service trips, internships, opportunities to mentor and engage in community issues.

We can only be said to be alive in those moments when our hearts are conscious of our treasures.

—Thornton Wilder