



# Diabetes *Views*

## Taming Holiday Temptation

*Monica shares some tips for managing cravings for holiday treats*

The holidays are here. It's hard to not be tempted to eat a tasty pastry when there are so many holiday lunches at work and parties to go to. I have a few suggestions for warding off holiday temptations that have worked for me—and they might work for you too!

First, if you're out shopping and know you're going to a lunch party later, try to hold off on buying a pastry in the morning. Sometimes not seeing the treat anymore can take away your craving. So for instance if you're in the supermarket facing a large display of cakes and pastries and starting to feel tempted, just walk away. Go to the produce section and get a healthy snack like a piece of fruit or a handful of nuts—that can help take away cravings too.

But what if you're baking at home? All the ingredients are out on the counter and the kitchen smells delicious—how do you keep from being tempted then? What I usually do is leave a small bowl of dried fruit and nuts on the kitchen table so when we're doing our baking at my house, there's a healthy snack in easy reach to help take care of my

cravings. This is good for other times when you're at home and need a snack, too. You can also put a bowl of hazelnuts (or other type of nut still in the shell) out along with a nut cracker. Cracking open nuts before you can eat them makes you slow down so

there's no repetitive, mindless eating. You also need to chew longer which can help you feel full faster so you eat less. I also find cracking open the nuts myself is therapeutic because all your attention is focused on what you're doing.

Finally, I'm not going to say you can't ever have pastry. But, if you do decide to eat a holiday treat, go lightly and have just a small piece. Have a good holiday!



*Monica has also contributed to the DSME's online blog. If you have a story about your experience with Diabetes you'd like to share for a future issue of Diabetes Views or on the [DSME blog](#), e-mail [diabetesviews@partners.org](mailto:diabetesviews@partners.org)*

### Get your New Year off to a Healthy Start: Schedule Your Yearly Eye Exam

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) recommends seeing an eye care professional at least once a year to check for signs of retinopathy or other complications. Finding eye problems early can help treatment work better—for more information on eye health, visit [massgeneral.org/diabetes](http://massgeneral.org/diabetes) or [cdc.gov/diabetes/pubs/tcyd/](http://cdc.gov/diabetes/pubs/tcyd/)

# Winter Safety Tips

By Eileen B. Wyner, NP

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Winter safety is very important for all of us, but is challenging for people living with Diabetes. Below are a few common issues that can become serious problems if they are not found and dealt with sooner rather than later.

## Foot protection:

Daily foot care is one of the **most important** things you can do to take of your Diabetes. The first place to start is with your shoes. Make sure your shoes fit well—poorly fitting shoes (too big, too small, too narrow) can lead to skin breakdown, blisters, and possible infection. You also need to keep your feet warm and dry. Leaving wet socks on can cause problems such as cuts and blisters that can develop into dangerous infections. Even waterproof shoes have their limits, so always throw an extra pair of socks in your bag or your desk drawer. Here's a tip: When shopping for boots, try them on with heavier socks (since we usually wear thicker socks in the winter).

## Traveling & Commuting:

Bad weather can really disrupt your daily commute to work— as well as long distance travel for work or pleasure. This can affect your schedule when you're trying to keep your blood sugars regular. Trains may be delayed or you may have to walk great distances; if you're driving there may be road closures, detours or traffic jams. It's a good idea to carry some extra snacks, water, and glucose tabs with you in case something happens. Severe weather or unsafe road conditions may make it too dangerous to get out of the car to open the trunk for your supplies. So, keep some snacks in the backseat at all times, and always have a stash of glucose tablets or gel in the glove compartment. Pack your trunk with a sturdy shovel, ice melt, jumper cables, and blankets. Also, make sure you have a working flashlight, extra batteries, flares, a cell phone charger, and a first aid kit.

## Frostbite & Hypothermia:

It's important to stay as warm and dry as you can during bad weather



to prevent two very serious cold weather complications: Frostbite (an injury to the body caused by freezing) and Hypothermia (very low body temperature). Early signs of **frostbite** include redness or pain to an area of skin—usually the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, or toes. Frostbite can cause permanent damage. Warning signs of **hypothermia** include shivering, feeling very, very tired, confusion and slurred speech—like some symptoms of low blood sugar (hypoglycemia). It's important to be sure your blood sugar is at a safe value, and then try to get as warm and dry as possible and get medical attention as soon as you can.

## Miscellaneous:

Winter is also the time for illness. Getting a flu shot, washing your hands, and getting plenty of rest are the most important steps you can take to good health.

Remember home safety, too. Make sure your heating system is in good working order and you have household carbon monoxide (CO) monitors. If you have a fireplace or woodstove, be sure that they are vented properly to avoid fire or CO poisoning.

The most important thing to remember is to try to be prepared...then go out and enjoy all that winter in New England has to offer.



# Ask the Nutritionist

By Annelise McDowell, Dietetic Intern &

Melanie Pearsall, RD, LDN, CDE, Nutritionist at MGH Revere

**More and more I see coconut oil as an ingredient in recipes. Previously I had thought that olive oil or vegetable oil was recommended for healthy cooking and baking, but now I'm confused. Is coconut oil a better choice than another fat or oil?**

No. Coconut oil is a saturated fat, just like butter. It's different than butter because it's a tropical oil, not an animal fat, and contains no cholesterol. However, just like butter, coconut oil can increase total cholesterol levels—as well as LDL or “bad” cholesterol—and increase the risk of getting heart disease.

A better choice than coconut oil or any other saturated fat is an unsaturated fat like olive, canola or vegetable oil - which help lower LDL cholesterol. You should limit the amount of **any** oil you use, since a small amount has a lot of calories.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends that saturated fats (like coconut oil) provide at most 7-10% of total daily calories, while total fat intake should provide 20-35% of calories. This means most fat calories should come from unsaturated fats like olive oil. Less saturated fat in the diet will lessen the risk for getting cardiovascular disease.

*A quick meal couldn't be easier—or more balanced. The fiber and protein from the beans will keep you satisfied, without depriving your taste buds of flavor.*

*Add a salad to round out your meal.*

## Rosemary White Bean Soup

2-15 oz cans of cannellini, great northern or other white beans

¼ cup 0% Greek yogurt

1 tbsp olive oil

1 tsp red pepper flakes

1 tsp hot sauce, such as Frank's Red Hot (or more to taste)

2 tsp dried rosemary

Black pepper (to taste)

Blend all ingredients in food processor or blender; heat on stovetop or in microwave

**Yield: About 4-1 cup servings**



### NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING:

Calories: 216

Protein: 14 g

Sodium: 321 mg

Carbohydrate: 35 g

Fiber: 10.5 g

Fat: 3.5 g

Sat Fat: 0.5 g



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To submit a question for the nutritionist, leave a comment, or sign up to receive *DiabetesViews* in your inbox, please e-mail: [diabetesviews@partners.org](mailto:diabetesviews@partners.org)

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