



YOUR CARE POLMED

December 2023

“It is health that is real
wealth. And not pieces
of gold and silver.”

Gandhi

Dear Member

December is here, which means it's officially the festive season! Whether you plan on spending the holidays at home, soaking up the summer sun and spending time with loved ones, or taking a well-deserved break at your favourite holiday destination, we hope you have a relaxing break.

If you or a loved one has diabetes, now is the time to take extra care to manage blood glucose levels. We share an infographic that explores the importance of managing diabetes over December and how you can live healthier – whether you have type 1 or type 2.

December isn't just a time for good food and festivities. 1 December marked World Aids Day, a day that we raise awareness around HIV/AIDS and remember those who we've lost to this condition. Did you know that with ARV treatment, people living with this condition can live long, healthy lives? Explore more in our infographic.

As always, have a healthy, active and happy month ahead!

YourCare Team

In this issue...

A HOLIDAY GUIDE TO MANAGING YOUR DIABETES

While you look to the holiday season as a time to relax and unwind, you shouldn't push diabetes to the back of your mind.

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LIVING A HEALTHY LIFE WITH HIV

South Africa has the third highest HIV prevalence rate in the world, despite successful HIV management programmes that have ensured the life expectancy of HIV-positive people is over 65 years.

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A HOLIDAY GUIDE TO MANAGING YOUR DIABETES



While you look to the holiday season as a time to relax and unwind, you shouldn't push diabetes to the back of your mind if you're among the



4.2 MILLION SOUTH AFRICANS

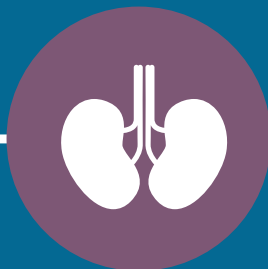
with this chronic medical condition.

Did you know?

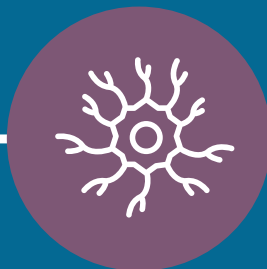
Poor diabetes management can increase your risk of:



Vision loss



Kidney damage



Nerve damage



Poor oral health

TIPS TO REDUCE YOUR RISK FOR DIABETIC COMPLICATIONS

Here are a few guidelines for enjoying the holidays while reducing your risk for diabetic complications.

1. FOLLOW A HEALTHY HOLIDAY DIET

The sweets, fatty foods and alcohol that are part of festive fare can spike blood sugar in those with diabetes.

For healthy diabetic holiday treats, try:

- Seeds
- Nuts
- Trail mix
- Plain unsweetened yoghurt with berries or apples
- Raw vegetables such as carrots and celery sticks with peanut butter (in moderation)
- Water infused with fresh fruit



It's also a good idea to manage your portions. Don't add too much food to your holiday plate.

2. STAY ACTIVE

You may be on holiday but don't have to be idle. Exercise is important for the management of diabetes.

To keep active, try:

- Enjoying dance parties
- Prepping healthy meals rather than eating out – you can stay active and healthy
- Cleaning the house or working in the garden
- Taking an afternoon walk
- Playing games, including netball, soccer, tag or rugby with loved ones
- Planning your workout schedule, especially when travelling – pack workout equipment like a skipping rope



3. TAKE YOUR MEDICATION AS PRESCRIBED

It's essential that you continue taking your medication as prescribed:

- Set a reminder on your cellphone
- Ask a loved one to remind you

4. GET BACK ON TRACK

Managing your diabetes should always be a priority.

If you slip up:

- Measure your glucose levels
- Check for health complications
- Consult your healthcare provider about getting back on track



The festive season is all about taking a break, but that doesn't mean you should take a break from your health – diabetes management is the best gift you can give yourself.

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LIVING A HEALTHY LIFE WITH HIV

South Africa has the third highest HIV prevalence rate in the world, despite successful HIV management programmes that have ensured the life expectancy of HIV-positive people is over 65 years.



On 1 December we commemorated World AIDS Day, shedding light on a condition affecting around

8.45 MILLION SOUTH AFRICANS.

GET TESTED FOR HIV



World Health Organization target:

By 2025, **95%** of people with HIV should know they have HIV.



South Africa:

Around **94%** of people living with HIV know their status.

You should be tested for HIV once a year. This includes those who:

- Have multiple sexual partners
- Engage in regular sexual intercourse without protection
- Engage in sexual intercourse with someone who is HIV-positive
- Engage in sexual intercourse with someone whose sexual history you don't know
- Share needles or syringes
- Are diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease
- Are diagnosed with tuberculosis

If you'd like more information on the POLMED HIV Management Programme, contact us on **0860 765 633**.

A GUIDE TO LIVING WELL WITH HIV

If you're diagnosed with HIV, adopting the following habits can help you live a healthy and productive life.



PRACTISE SAFE SEX

To practise safe sex:

- Limit your sexual partners
- Use a condom or dental dam when engaging in sexual intercourse
- Practise abstinence if possible
- Have regular sexually transmitted infection (STI) screenings, which reduces the transmission risk of STIs



DON'T SHARE NEEDLES

Contact with contaminated blood can increase the risk of HIV transmission.



TAKE YOUR MEDICATION



World Health Organization target:

By 2025, **95%** of those living with HIV should be taking antiretroviral drugs (ARVs).



South Africa:

Only **77%** of people with HIV are on antiretroviral treatment.

While there is no cure for HIV, **ARVs can promote a long and healthy life.**

Did you know?

ARVs also help to achieve **viral suppression**. If the viral load is undetectable, the risk of infecting others (HIV transmission) can be reduced and prevented:

- During sex
- From mother to child during pregnancy, birth and breastfeeding

HIV affects millions of South Africans, but the diagnosis is not a life sentence. With the right habits, you can live a healthy life.

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