

DIABETES: EXERCISE AND MEALS

TREATMENT

Audience: adults with diabetes and their families. (About 80% to 90% of diabetic adults have Type II, and about 90% of these are overweight. The film will focus on Type II but will include information for Type I people — such as an overview of food exchanges, which Type II people do not use.)

Music: contemporary, upbeat.

Suggested settings: ``Y" or other health facility (INT and EXT); fast food restaurant or deli bar (INT); various EXT shots of people biking, cross-country skiing, jogging, walking, etc.

Characters:

Main characters are two sisters, one about 50 years of age and the other about 45.

Both are well-groomed, wearing the latest hair styles, attractively and colorfully dressed, and wearing fashionable but not necessarily expensive earrings and other jewelry. Neither woman wears glasses. (These are contemporary, working women who care about their appearance and know how to look attractive.) The older sister is of normal weight, but the younger is about 10-15% overweight.

The younger sister has just been diagnosed as having Type II diabetes. The older sister developed Type II several years ago (Type II tends to run in families) and changed her lifestyle. By eating appropriately and taking up bike riding and swimming, which she enjoys, she has brought her weight — and her blood sugar levels — down to normal. She continues to lead an active, healthy life. Now she's going to help her younger sister do the same thing.

Other characters: approximately 10-12 (most without speaking roles), including a black family.

Objectives:

Inspirational: After viewing the film, people with diabetes will be motivated to:

- 1) select and enjoy appropriate sports or physical activities
- 2) select more healthful foods (For Type II people the focus is on weight control, which should result in normal blood glucose levels; and cardiovascular health. For Type I people, most of whom are of normal weight, the focus is on attaining near-normal blood sugar levels and cardiovascular health.)
- 3) be optimistic about controlling diabetes and achieving a healthy cardiovascular risk profile
- 4) encourage other family members to take up physical activities and eat healthier foods (the appropriate steps of activity and food selection for people with diabetes make good sense for everyone)

Factual: After viewing the film, the audience should be able to:

- State why aerobic exercise is important for cardiovascular fitness
- Select aerobic physical activities
- Select healthful foods
- State the goals of appropriate food selection in Type II (to achieve and maintain normal weight, which should lower blood sugar levels; and to lower cardiovascular risk factors)
- State the goals of appropriate food selection in Type I (to use food exchanges to lower blood sugar levels; and to lower cardiovascular risk factors)
- Identify the exchange list in which various foods belong

Sketch

The film opens in late afternoon with the two sisters going into a "Y" or other health facility. One sister wears a suit, the other a business-type dress. Both carry bags containing exercise clothes. The mood is upbeat. The older sister is self-assured, and the younger is happy to have her help in doing something about her diabetes. (Note: The younger sister has been taking daily walks and has lost a little weight. Her doctor has given her the go-ahead for more vigorous activities.)

As we watch the two — perhaps the younger one is trying out an exercycle and the older is on a ski machine — NARR gives us an overview of diabetes, along with the cardiovascular risks and the importance of physical activity and appropriate food selection (in conjunction with medical treatment). The goal in Type II is to reach and maintain normal weight, because this usually allows the body to use its own insulin effectively.

NARR then feeds us information about aerobic/nonaerobic exercise, cardiovascular benefits, etc. He talks about increasing physical activity gradually, eg, walking to the train instead of taking a bus. (We see people in business clothes walking downtown.) NARR goes into specifics; eg, tennis and golf are fun and help control weight, but they are stop-and-start activities, and don't provide the benefits of aerobic exercise. We see a montage of people of various ages, shapes, and ethnic backgrounds, walking vigorously, biking slowly, cross-country skiing, etc.

We also see some Type I people, who are of average weight. NARR comments on their need for activity to help lower blood sugar levels and to help insulin work more effectively, as well as to lower cardiovascular risk.

Cut back to the sisters, who are now jumping into a pool. NARR points out that there are lots of choices, and people can choose activities they enjoy.

The two sisters leave the ``Y" at dinnertime and need to decide where and what to eat. Logically, they choose a fast-food restaurant or a deli bar. (Since this is a film for the 90s, eating out is appropriate, so we'll skip the stereotype of a colorful plate of roast meat and vegetables, beautifully prepared and presented in a home kitchen.) Possibilities for dinner include a deli bar, where good choices would include vegetable soup, turkey, raw vegetables, roll with margarine, salad with light dressing, fruit, skim milk, etc. Or even a McDonalds (not specifically identified), where chicken salad oriental and frozen non-fat yogurt are possibilities. The older sister comments that you soon get used to going without rich desserts and having fruit instead; and nonfat yogurt tastes better to her now than ice cream.

NARR, VO, gives us information about appropriate choices and foods to avoid. Guidelines are the same as those for everyone who wants to have healthy eating habits: larger amounts of complex carbohydrates, and less fat. CUT TO montage; scenes include waitress serving lunch of turkey, lettuce, and tomato sandwiches, etc.; people at fast-food counter selecting a low-fat muffin, fruit, cold cereal with skim milk, etc.; also people at home eating similar foods in the kitchen.

Now we discuss food selection in Type I diabetes. Return to the deli bar (or use art), while NARR gives us brief overview of the six Exchange Lists. CUT TO black family scene; NARR points out that everyone in the family can eat the same foods, but the portion size may be different, etc.

NARR adds that people with Type I need to be careful about what, when, and how much they eat, and need to balance food intake with activity and insulin dose. But some adjustments can be made. We see the slender black man wearing a suit and working late in his office; he looks at his watch, then reaches for a bagel. NARR points out with today's lifestyle, dinner isn't always at a set time; if dinner will be late, the person with Type I can have a bagel, then skip the bread exchange at dinner.

Now NARR sums up — (CONTEMPORARY, FAST-PACED MUSIC UP). Activities and food choices for people with diabetes are basically those for everyone who wants to lead a healthy life. We see the younger sister out biking on a bike path with her husband. Both are moving at a good clip — not at the 3 mph pace we usually see in such films. NARR points out that a good choice is an aerobic activity that's fun. (Montage of previous shots of joggers, etc.)

CUT TO fast food restaurant. The younger sister orders chicken salad oriental. Husband says, with a smile, "Make that two." NARR comments that the right choice in food for people with diabetes is the healthy choice for everyone. CUT TO montage of previous footage. NARR ends with upbeat comment, something like: "By making the right choices, adults with diabetes can feel better about themselves, improve their overall health — and live longer and healthier lives."