



** This news release from K-State Research and Extension is available online at www.ksre.k-state.edu/news/stories/2021/02/dining-with-diabetes-now-offered-online.html

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Popular Dining with Diabetes course now offered online

K-State expands reach to address growing interest in diabetes education

MANHATTAN, Kan. – A popular diabetes education program that has helped hundreds of Kansans manage the disease since 2016 is now expanding its reach.

[Dining with Diabetes](#), a series of four, two-hour classes taught by K-State Research and Extension agents in Kansas, was launched in February as an online course, with additional classes beginning in March.

“Even prior to the COVID pandemic, we had decided that we had an audience that wanted to have access to the program but in a remote, digital form,” said Gayle Price, program director for Dining with Diabetes and an extension specialist at the Southeast Kansas Research-Extension Center in Parsons.

The online courses are self-paced, which means that participants can complete each of the four modules on their own time, during a five-week period. The lessons include presentations on:

- Diabetes self-care or healthful food choices.
- 5-10 minute low-impact physical activity.
- Tasty, healthy and familiar foods.
- Cooking techniques using artificial sweeteners, reduced-fat foods, herbs and spices.
- Food demonstrations, including healthy, diabetes-friendly recipes.

“There is so much information that people get on the Internet or from well-meaning family and friends, but it’s not always accurate,” said Sara Sawer, the lead trainer and a family and consumer sciences agent in Sedgwick County. “Our information is evidence-based and we encourage healthy lifestyle changes, which might be picking one thing to work on until it becomes part of your routine.”

In Kansas, 9.4% of adults have been diagnosed as having diabetes. It is the seventh leading cause of death in Kansas, and those with diabetes have medical expenses that are – on average – 2.3 times higher than those who don't have diabetes.

Nationally, 34.2 million people have diabetes, or about 1 in every 10 people in the U.S. Health officials estimate that 1 in 5 people don't know they have the disease. The risk of death for adults with diabetes is approximately 60% higher than for adults without diabetes, and the total medical costs, lost work and wages for people with diabetes tops \$327 billion annually.

"Diabetes is a public health epidemic," Sawyer said. "It can be scary and overwhelming. So to have information that people can take and apply to their everyday lives is so important."

Dining with Diabetes is available to people beyond those diagnosed with pre-diabetes or Type II diabetes. Sawyer notes that family members, caregivers and other support persons are encouraged to join the course.

Price added that the online courses provide a good opportunity for family members in separate locations to participate together.

"People can log on at any time," Sawyer said. "That is a benefit for those who are not able to get out because of the pandemic, but also for those who are working full time. This is more convenient for them. And it's beneficial for those who want the information on their own time and at their own pace. Some people learn better that way."

The full list of online classes is [available online](#). Interested persons can also contact their [local K-State Research and Extension office](#) for more information.

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FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this story
Dining with Diabetes, www.k-state.edu/diningwithdiabetes

Online courses (including registration), <https://noncreditksu.catalog.instructure.com/browse/k-stateglobalcampusnoncreditprograms/ksre-noncredit>

K-State Research and Extension local offices, <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/stateandareamaps.html>

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