

## *Kansas Dining with Diabetes: Easing the Burden through Lifestyle Practices*

### **The Situation**

Diabetes adversely impacts the lives of over 282,000 adults in Kansas dealing with this chronic condition. People with diabetes may experience a shorter life expectancy, financial struggles due to higher healthcare costs, and an increased risk for developing long-term health problems associated with diabetes such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, blindness, kidney disease, and loss of limbs. In 2015, diabetes was the seventh leading cause of death in Kansas. The estimated cost of diagnosed diabetes incurred by the State of Kansas is \$2.4 billion (2017).

### **What We Did**

Dining with Diabetes is a national extension program provided to Kansans by certified K-State Research and Extension Family and Consumer Sciences professionals and community health partners. The program is comprised of four 2-hour sessions and a follow-up session. Classes provide support and motivation for participants and include instruction on carbohydrate counting, portion control, menu planning, label reading, diabetes self-care, and healthful food choices. A five to ten minute low-impact physical activity, demonstrations on tasty, healthy familiar foods, food sampling, and cooking techniques are key components. Weekly goal-setting activities help participants apply the information learned at each session. Extension educators presented the program 18 times during the 2017-2018 program year in 14 counties with 224 people attending.

### **Outcomes**

Participants responded to a series of self-efficacy statements regarding their diabetes or caring for someone with diabetes. For the statement “When it comes to diabetes and health, what I do can make a positive difference for me or the person I care for with diabetes,” the number of respondents reporting “agree” significantly increased from before the program compared with after the program. When asked about the statement “I feel confident I can keep my diabetes under control, or help the person I care for keep their diabetes under control,” there was a significant improvement in the number of participants who chose “agree” with this statement from pre-evaluation compared with the post-program evaluation.

As a result of participating in Dining with Diabetes, participants report:

Cooking more at home (77%)

Eating smaller portions (89%)

Using healthy recipes provided in the course (71%)

Responses to post program evaluations also indicated a significant increase in reviewing food labels to make healthy choices and an increase in daily physical activity.

## Success Stories

"When I started the class my HgbA1C was 6.1%. At my next check, it was down to 5.8%. I used the information I learned in the class and it worked!" ~ Sedgwick County Participant~

"Dining with Diabetes is the best thing that's happened around here in a long time and I support it 100%."  
~Wildcat District Physician~

"Through the program I changed how I eat, cut out processed food and haven't had a pop in over a year. It has helped me immensely." ~ Oil field lease operator, Elkhart, Kansas~

"Diabetes doesn't have to be overwhelming if you get the knowledge needed to make better decisions."  
~Cowley County Participant~

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