When you support Extension, individuals with type 2 diabetes adopt healthy eating and physical activity habits that minimize complications and reduce health care costs.

Individuals with diabetes need to regularly monitor their blood glucose level and blood pressure. 82% of Extension participants check their glucose at least once a day and 72% had their A1C checked as a result of the Extension program.

Taking Ownership of Your Diabetes
Improved Diabetes Management and Prevented Complications in Individuals with Type 2 Diabetes

Extension conducts diabetes education and empowers participants to achieve measurable behaviors in planning and preparing healthy meals, monitoring blood glucose, and setting and accomplishing personal goals.
One out of every 10 people living in Kentucky has diabetes and many others are at risk of developing the disease (CDC, 2012). Taking Ownership of Your Diabetes is a curriculum developed by a College of Agriculture, Food and Environment faculty member who is a Licensed Diabetes Educator. The series of programs are presented by Extension Agents with local health professionals and community partners. The program addresses healthy nutrition practices, regular physical activity and working with a team of health professionals to manage diabetes. In the first two years, Extension has reached 1,980 adults in 51 counties.

To encourage healthy eating, the Wolfe County Family and Consumer Sciences Agent and the Diabetes Educator teach meal planning, and demonstrate food preparation. Class participants reduce sodium by adding herbs and spices. They practice skills in portion control, carbohydrate counting, reading labels, how to adapt family favorite recipes, and ways to make healthy choices when dining out.

Regular physical activity is needed to reduce the risk of chronic disease and maintain health. The Henry County Extension Service and Diabetes Coalition developed a walking program to promote health and socialization for adults with diabetes at the new park in their community.

The Taking Ownership of Your Diabetes curriculum encourages participants to create a team approach to managing health. Extension collaborates with certified diabetes educators, registered dietitians, registered nurses, ophthalmologists and other health care professionals. In Carroll County, Extension agents worked with a local podiatrist to discuss foot care. As a result of the program, a participant was able to get medical care to avoid amputation, received properly fitted shoes and is now able to walk without assistance of a walker.

Poorly controlled diabetes often results in complications such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, blindness, kidney disease, nervous system damage, dental disease, and amputations. Extension programs promote healthy lifestyle choices to reduce diabetes, improve the quality of life, and avoid financial instability associated with chronic disease. As a result of the program, 88% have seen a medical professional during the year, 70% changed 3 or more eating habits, and 45% are active 30 minutes or more five or more days a week and have accomplished a personal goal in the management of their disease.

70% of participants reported making 3 or more changes in their eating habits after participating in Taking Ownership of Your Diabetes.

-Kentucky Extension Reporting System, 2014