

# More dietary support needed for those with type 2 diabetes

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People newly diagnosed with type 2 diabetes may require more support to improve their diet quality after diagnosis, especially current smokers.

New Griffith University research published in the journal *Nutrition and Diabetes* is the first study to examine the diet quality changes of people with type 2 diabetes early after diagnosis.

The researchers found certain lifestyle behaviours rather than demographic characteristics were associated with diet quality changes.

"Improving your diet quality and other lifestyle behaviours (such as exercise) is the first step in managing type 2 diabetes," says lead researcher and Ph.D. candidate Emily Burch from Menzies Health Institute Queensland.

"Specific diets can help control type 2 diabetes, but research has shown many people with type 2 diabetes have poor quality diets, which is profoundly affecting their quality of life and risk of developing diabetes-related complications such as cardiovascular and renal disease.

She said when people are diagnosed, they receive considerable amounts of conflicting dietary advice which can be overwhelming and confusing.

"We wanted to find out whether people change their diet quality after diagnosis with type 2 diabetes and what factors, if any, are associated with improvements. We found those who made improvements to their diet quality had poor diet quality early after diagnosis, were non-

smokers, exercised regularly and had a lower body mass index (BMI)."

The researchers interviewed 225 Australian adults newly diagnosed with type 2 [diabetes](#) to collect demographic, diet, physical and health data at baseline and at three months. Participants were categories into those who improved their [diet](#) quality by three months and those who did not.

"Strategies targeted at better supporting smokers, those with low physical activity and a higher BMI are required. This work can help shape future research interventions that can better support all individuals to have long-term success in improving their [diet quality](#) and help reduce the risk of complications."

This research comprises part of the [3-D case-series study](#) conducted over 12 months and reports on outcomes from baseline to three months only. Longer-term study outcomes will be available in coming months.

**More information:** Emily Burch et al. Short-term improvements in diet quality in people newly diagnosed with type 2 diabetes are associated with smoking status, physical activity and body mass index: the 3D case series study, *Nutrition & Diabetes* (2020). [DOI: 10.1038/s41387-020-0128-3](#)

Provided by Griffith University

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