Sometimes, when you’re trying to make lifestyle changes, some things may get in your way. These are called barriers.

“It takes time. It’s not going to be all of a sudden, it’s slow. Sometimes it’s hard, sometimes it’s easy. I’ll get moody. Sometimes I get lazy. Sometimes I don’t want to do things. I work too hard all day. I don’t want to do this; I don’t want to do that.”

The important thing is to recognize what is getting in your way, and think of the steps you can take to get around these barriers. To help you solve the problem, enlist the help of your diabetes care team.

Some common barriers people face include lack of skills. It may be difficult to make a healthy food choice if you don’t know how to read the food label.

Knowledge – Keeping up on changes and advances in diabetes care can help you gain greater control of your diabetes, while reducing discomfort.

Resources – You may be trying to lose weight but find the gym too expensive. Try adding exercise into your day by walking in your neighborhood, or at the mall.

Support – It can be stressful to cope with diabetes and still run a busy household. You may need help. Reach out to family, friends or co-workers for the extra emotional support you need.

“When we’re talking about barriers, I think fear is the number one thing … fear of sticking yourself in the morning, fear of changing your lifestyle, fear of changing your diet. You got to exercise, and the fear of letting people know that you’re type 2 diabetic.”

“First I had to get rid of denial. It may not be a goal, but it’s an obstacle.”

And life – Sometimes, life can be your biggest barrier. Something may tempt or trigger you to slide off your healthy path, like: a holiday party, extra work piling up on the job or a winter storm on your exercise day.

“When of course, there are things in your life that happen and you might not be able to reach that goal as fast, but that’s why it’s called a long-term goal. So, you know, even though you might have bumps in the road you have to keep moving forward and keep going to that goal. And you’ll get there eventually.”

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There's no way you can predict everything that may block your path to success. However, now is the time to start thinking about the ones you can predict and ways to work around them.

Remember, making lifestyle changes is an ongoing process. If you get off track, just get back to taking steps towards your goal as soon as you can. And when you achieve your goals, reward yourself. You’re doing a good job.

If you feel that you may need help getting past a barrier, talk with your diabetes care team to help you come up with a plan and to continue on with your successful diabetes management.

What is Pre-Diabetes?

For most people you mention pre-diabetes and it doesn’t mean anything to them. It just means, well I might get it. What they don’t realize is that if your blood glucose level is elevated, then you’re pre-disposed to that, unless you make a change.

Pre-diabetes means that the level of glucose in your blood is higher than normal, but not high enough so that you have diabetes. Yet, if you don’t do something now, you will get type 2 diabetes.

Here’s why. Your body changes food into glucose, a form of sugar, and uses it for energy. When your body is working normally, your blood glucose levels are in a healthy range. But in some people glucose builds up in the bloodstream. If you have pre-diabetes, your blood glucose levels are higher than normal, but not as high as type 2 diabetes.

There are many factors that make you more at risk for pre-diabetes. Some you can’t do anything about like: your age, family history, ethnicity, having a history of gestational diabetes or having a baby that weighed more than 9 pounds at birth. But you can work to change other risk factors like low HDL cholesterol – the healthy type of cholesterol – and high triglycerides, high blood pressure, inactivity and being overweight.

People talk about weight gain in terms of how they look. That’s one thing in terms of vanity, but weight gain can definitely increase your probability or the possibility that you’ll have diabetes.

In order to reduce these risk factors and delay or prevent type 2 diabetes, you need to make a plan.

Your plan should include working with your healthcare team to check your blood glucose on a regular basis to see how well you are doing. Your plan should also include: making healthy food choices, getting regular physical activity, possibly taking oral medications, and finding support.

If you take small steps in these areas, you may improve your glucose levels which can prevent or delay type 2 diabetes, and improve your overall health – now, and in the future.